POLICY REFORMS ON THE PRINCIPALS' BURNOUT IN PUBLIC SENIOR SCHOOLS IN SIAYA COUNTY, KENYA

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other college or university for any academic credit. Information from other sources has been properly acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family for their unwavering support.

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My deepest gratitude goes to my supervisors Prof. Momanyi Marcella and Dr. Wambiya Paschal for their professional guidance and support in this work. Special thanks also go to all my lecturers my classmates and the entire CUEA community for their support. Further, I want to appreciate the principals who responded to the questionnaires, the KUPPET officials and Heads of Departments for sacrifice, their time and their views which richly informed this research.

ABSTRACT

This study set out to investigate the effect of recent education-sector policy reforms on burnout among public senior-school principals in Siaya County, Kenya. It focused on four research questions concerning how reforms in teacher management, financial management, student-discipline management and national-examinations management influence principal burnout. The study was anchored on Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources theory. A Convergent design under a mixed-methods combined a cross-sectional survey with phenomenology for quantitative and qualitative strands respectfully. Proportionate stratified random sampling was used to select 161 principals from the seven sub-counties of Siaya County of which 150 usable questionnaires were returned. Structured Interview Guide collected data from 5 TSC Sub-County Directors, 8 KUPPET branch executive officials and 40 Heads of Departments. The questionnaire and interview guides were scrutinized for content and face validity and were pilot-tested. Reliability for quantitative data was determined by use of Cronbach Alpha that obtained coefficients that ranged from 0.716 to 0.975. Trustworthiness of qualitative data was obtained in terms of their credibility, dependability and member checking. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis with the help of SPSS Version 25. Qualitative data were transcribed, coded, organized thematically and presented in narratives supported with direct quotes. The findings showed positive and statistically significant relationships between each of the four policy-reform domains and principals' burnout, with student-discipline management reforms making the largest relative contribution in the multivariable model. Because the study was cross-sectional, the results support association rather than temporal causation. The study concludes that policy reforms should be retained but implemented with adequate staffing, administrative support, realistic reporting demands, reliable financing and principal-well-being safeguards so that reform objectives can be achieved without stressing principals to the point of burnout.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ..... **ii**

DEDICATION ..... **iii**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... **iv**

ABSTRACT ..... **v**

TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **vi**

LIST OF TABLES ..... **xii**

LIST OF FIGURES ..... **xii**

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ..... **xiii**

CHAPTER ONE **1**

INTRODUCTION **1**

1.1 Background to the Study 1

1.2 Statement to the Problem 7

1.3 Research Questions 8

1.4 Research Hypotheses 8

1.5 Significance of the Study 9

1.6 Scope and Delimitation of the Study 10

1.7 Theoretical Framework 10

1.7.1 Application of Conservation of Resources Theory 13

1.7.2 Strengths of Conservation of Resources Theory 15

1.7.3 Critique of the Conservation of Resources Theory 15

1.8 Conceptual Framework 16

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms 18
CHAPTER TWO 20
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE 20
2.1 Introduction 20
2.2.1 Transactional Theory of Stress 20
2.2.2 Job Demands-Resources Theory 21
2.2.3 Critical Review of Empirical and Conceptual Studies 22
2.3 Policy Reforms in Teacher Management and Principals' Burnout 26
2.3.1 Policy Reforms in Financial Management and Principals' Burnout 28
2.3.2 Policy Reforms in Student Discipline Management and Principals' Burnout 30
2.3.3 Policy Reforms in National Examinations Management and Principals' Burnout 34
2.3.4 Summary of Literature Reviewed and Critical Analysis of Knowledge Gap 38
CHAPTER THREE 40
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY 40
3.1 Introduction 40
3.2 Research Design 40
3.3 Locale of the Study 41
3.4 Target Population 42
3.5 Description of the Sampling Procedure and Sample Size 42
3.5.1 Sampling Procedure and Sample size 43
3.5.2 Sampling of Senior School Principals 43
3.5.3 Sampling of TSC Sub-County Directors 44

3.5.4 Sampling of KUPPET Officials 45
3.5.5 Sampling of Heads of Departments 45
3.6 Description of Data Collection Instruments 45
3.6.1 Questionnaires for Principals 46
3.6.2 Interview Guide for TSC Officers. 46
3.6.3 Interview Guide for KUPPET Officials 47
3.6.4 Interview Guide for Heads of Department 47
3.7 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments 48
3.8 Determination of the Reliability and Validity of Research Instruments 48
3.8.1 Determination of validity of instruments 48
3.8.2 Determination of Reliability of Instruments 49
3.8.2.1 Reliability of Questionnaire for Principals 49
3.8.2.2 Reliability of Interview Guides. 49
3.8.3 Trustworthiness of Research Instruments 50
3.9 Description of Data Collection Procedures 51
3.10 Description of Data Analysis Procedure 52
3.11 Ethical Considerations 53
CHAPTER FOUR 54
DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION 54
4.1 Introduction 54
4.2 Response Rate of Research Instruments 54
4.3 Demographic Characteristics 55

4.3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Principals 55
4.3.2 Demographic Profile of TSC Sub-County Directors 59
4.3.3 Demographic Profile of KUPPET Officials 61
4.3.4 Demographic Profile of Heads of Departments 63
4.4 Findings According to the Research Questions 65
4.4.1 Teacher-Management Reforms 65
4.4.2 School Financial-Management Reforms 68
4.4.3 Student-Discipline Management Reforms 71
4.4.4 National-Examinations Management Reforms 74
4.4.5 Principals' Burnout (Dependent Variable) 77
4.5 Diagnostic Tests for Regression Assumptions 79
4.5.1 Normality and linearity 80
4.5.2 Multicollinearity test 81
4.5.3 Autocorrelation test 83
4.5.4 Homoscedasticity test 83
4.6 Inferential Analysis 85
4.6.1 Correlation Analysis 85
4.6.2 Regression Model Summary 87
4.6.3 Analysis of Variance 89
4.6.4 Regression Coefficients 90
4.7 Qualitative Analysis 92
4.7.1 Reforms in Teacher Management 93

4.7.2 Reforms in School Financial Management 97
4.7.3 Reforms in Student Discipline Management 102
4.7.4 Reforms in National Examinations Management 106
4.7.5 Principals' Burnout 111
4.8 Chapter Summary 116
CHAPTER FIVE 117
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 117
5.0 Introduction 117
5.1 Summary of Findings 117
5.2 Conclusions 120
5.3 Recommendations 123
5.3.1 Recommendations on teacher management reforms 123
5.3.2 Recommendations on financial management reforms 124
5.3.3 Recommendations on Student Discipline Management Reforms 124
5.3.4 Recommendations on National Examinations Management Reforms 125
5.3.5 General recommendations for reducing principal burnout 126
5.4 Contribution to Knowledge 127
5.5 Delimitations of the Study 129
5.6 Suggestions for Further Research 130
REFERENCES 131
APPENDICES 160
Appendix A: Letter of Introduction 160

Appendix B: Questionnaire for Principals 161

Appendix C: Interview Guide for TSC Sub-County Directors 168

Appendix D: Interview Guide for Heads of Departments 174

Appendix E: Interview Guide for KUPPET Officials 180

Appendix F: SPSS Output 186

Appendix G: SPSS Output 198

Appendix H: CUEA Research Clearance 206

Appendix I: NACOSTI License 207

Appendix J: Research Letter from Siaya County TSC 209

Appendix K: Turnitin Report 210

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Sampling Matrix of schools 44

Table 2: Response Rate of Research Instruments 54

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of Principals 56

Table 4: Demographic Profile of TSC Sub-County Directors 59

Table 5: Demographic Profile of KUPPET Officials 61

Table 6: Demographic Profile of Heads of Departments 63

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for Reforms in Teacher Management 66

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics for Reforms in School Financial Management 69

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics for Reforms in Student Discipline Management 72

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics for Reforms in National Examinations Management 75

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics for Principals' Burnout 78

Table 12: Multicollinearity results 82

Table 13: Autocorrelation test results 83

Table 14: Test of homogeneity of variances results 84

Table 15: Pearson Correlation Analysis 86

Table 16: Model Summary 88

Table 17: ANOVA 89

Table 18: Regression Coefficients 91

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual framework 17

Figure 2: Histogram normality results 80

Figure 3: Scatter plot..... 81

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANOVA - Analysis of Variance

BOM- Board of Management

CBC- Competency Based Curriculum

CBI- Copenhagen Burnout Inventory

COR- Conservation of Resources Theory

CUEA - Catholic University of Eastern Africa

HoD- Head of Department

KCSE- Kenya Certificate of Senior Examination

KESSHA- Kenya Senior Schools Heads Association

KNEC- Kenya National Examinations Council

KUPPET- Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers

MoE- Ministry of Education

NACOSTI -National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

PFM - Public Financial Management

TSC- Teachers Service Commission

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Senior school principals globally and locally are pivotal in education, contributing significantly to their countries' progress and development. However, principalship is an ever evolving and challenging position. As leaders, they oversee policy implementation, shape school environments and guide staff, ensuring conducive learning atmospheres for students (Stronge & Xu, 2021). The job description of a principal of a senior school is broad and varied (Riley, 2016). The duties include supervising curriculum implementation, general administration, financial management and control, planning, human resource management, guidance and counselling, policy implementation and public relations among others (Code of Regulation for Teachers, 2015 (TSC, 2015). Other responsibilities added to the principal's job description include instructional leadership, staff evaluation, performance assessment, accountability and community relations (Rodrigues & Ávila, 2024).

Moreover, in the last two decades, the principal's role has evolved from the traditional to a more complex and demanding one with a range of new responsibilities (Mthanti & Msiza, 2023). Consequently, the principals being the chief decision-makers in the school have their hands virtually in everything related to teachers, students, non-teaching staff and parents. Being a principal is not an easy job and some may not be well-equipped to handle its demands effectively. While the additional roles and responsibilities can be positive, exciting and challenging because of professional growth, it can be a source of stress (Mahfouz, 2020). The demands include those from supervisors, colleagues, students, and parents compounded by work overload, student

management and minimum recognition for accomplishments by seniors and parents (Beausaert *et al*., 2023).

Although principals' health and well-being has been recognized as a concern nationally and internationally by the state, private and independent school sectors, principals continue to work under unprecedented pressure due to job demands which can be very stressful and exhausting (Mahfouz, 2020; Marsh, et al., 2023). The pressure principals' encounter on a daily basis may result in health issues after a few years in the position (Aravena & González, 2021).).

Occupational stress occurs when an individual feels that he or she does not have enough resources to respond to the challenges, pressures and requirements of work (Curbow *et al.,* 2000; Elomaa *et al.,* 2023). Dewi *et al.*, (2019) defines burnout as a psychological term used to indicate work fatigue. Further, Diaz (2018) defines burnout as extreme work-related stress categorized by emotional, psychological, and physical exhaustion. In addition, according to Edú-Valsania *et al.,* 2022). Burnout appears as a response to excessive, repetitive and difficult condition to overcome work. Studies have demonstrated that burnout is a multifaceted construct, including exhaustion, fatigue and perception of work meaningfulness (Kipingor and Kipkirui, 2023). Maslach (2001), posited that burnout is a tripartite construct comprising emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment. Burnout occurs as a result from long-term occupational (Demerouti, 2024).

Studies conducted in Finland about principal burnout show mixed results. While some show that principals exhibit burnout (Riley *et al.,* 2020), in form of emotional exhaustion whereby they feel drained, overwhelmed, and unable to cope with daily leadership demands. Such principals also exhibit irritability and frustration, becoming easily annoyed by staff, learners,

parents, or administrative demands. Other principals argue that they experience relatively low levels of work stress and burnout (Upadyaya, Toyama & Salmela-Aro, 2021). Research from North Texas in the United States of America demonstrate that teaching is regarded as a highly stressful occupation (Bland, et al., 2023). The evidence points particularly to excessive workload, long working hours, student behavioral challenges, accountability pressures, inadequate resources, and emotional demands as major sources of stress.

A school principal is also teacher; research involving Texas teachers shows that teaching extends well beyond the classroom. Teachers are expected to prepare lessons, mark assignments, assess learners, maintain records, attend meetings, communicate with parents, and participate in extracurricular activities. Consequently, the working day frequently continues after the official school day. For example, a teacher may finish classroom instruction at 3:30 p.m. but remain at school to mark assignments, prepare the following day's lessons, complete documentation, and attend departmental meetings. This creates work–life imbalance and emotional exhaustion.

A study involving Swedish principals found that at least one third of them suffer from extreme stress and or burnout (Elinor & Per, 2019). The study shows high levels of occupational stress and burnout among school leaders, with at least one-third experiencing extreme stress and/or burnout. The findings indicate that principals face substantial work-related stress and emotional exhaustion, largely due to heavy administrative workloads and conflicting demands. Principals are often required to manage staff, finances, learner discipline, parental concerns, reporting, and educational reforms while simultaneously improving academic outcomes amid teacher shortages, limited resources, and staff-related challenges. These competing responsibilities can create sustained psychological pressure and limit the time available for effective instructional leadership.

Furthermore, an international survey of principals' health and wellbeing conducted in four countries – Australia, New Zealand, Ireland and Finland – found that school leaders experience significantly higher stress than the general population, mainly due to the sheer quantity of work and limited time to focus on teaching and learning (Riley, 2020; Nivanaho & Thrupp, 2023). Further, a study which contains 2496 publications on burnout cases in Europe shows that the teaching profession occupies the second position in terms of jobs which is vulnerable to burnout, with a percentage of 32% (Dewi *et al*., 2019). Similarly, in Australia, teachers reported poorer mental health and wellbeing than other workers (Evans *et al.,* 2022**).** The finding that Australian teachers reported poorer mental health and wellbeing than other workers may be attributed to symptoms associated with high occupational stress and burnout. These included emotional exhaustion, persistent stress and anxiety, low mood or depressive feelings, sleep disturbances, and increased irritability or emotional instability. Together, these symptoms indicate the significant psychological and emotional demands associated with the teaching profession.

Furthermore, Gramstad *et al.,* (2013) in Norway found out that novice senior school principals face incidences of depression, neurotic disorders and are stressed more than experienced senior school principals in public senior schools. This imply that research on novice senior school principals in Norway indicates that the transition to school leadership may cause psychological distress, including depressive and neurotic symptoms**.** Principals may experience emotional exhaustion, anxiety, low motivation, sleep difficulties, irritability, and difficulty coping with uncertainty. These challenges are often associated with work-related pressures**,** such as staff conflicts, student and parental demands, administrative responsibilities, and accountability

requirements. Limited preparation, experience, and professional support can further increase psychological strain among newly appointed principals.

On the other hand, a study of senior school principals in Swaziland, showed that they were moderately stressed by their work (Okeke & Dlamini, 2013). A study in Kenya found that principals experienced stress due to inadequate funds to run schools, human resources issues, pressure from stakeholders, uncalled-for transfers, student indiscipline, lack of teaching and learning resources and work overload (Ogalo *et al.,* 2020). Furthermore, principals who are challenged or rejected may feel a sense of stress, which can eventually lead to burnout (Aravena & González, 2021).

Whereas educational reform is partial or complete review of an education system of a country in response to emerging issues, locally or globally, or in anticipation to future challenges, policy reform Policy reforms refer to deliberate changes or improvements made to existing laws, regulations, guidelines or procedures (Phillips, 2021). Reforms are critical if an education system has to remain relevant and address deficiencies in a system. Further, reform is born of urgency and educational reformers seek to change an aspect of education that they believe to be unfair, inefficient, disadvantageous to learner outcomes or unacceptable in any other way (Thomson, 2020). Since the society is continuously undergoing change, educational reforms and policies must change to mirror the society's dynamics. Without doing this, the education system will not only be rendered irrelevant to the needs of the society but it will also be useless (Kafu & Simwelo, 2015).

Furthermore, although educational practitioners namely, teachers and school principals are frequently the targets of educational reform policies and practices, the policy makers have

positioned teachers and teacher educators as the objects, rather than the agents of reform (Cochran-Smith *et al.,* 2018). Since1963, Kenya has had several major educational reforms, most of which has been preceded by a commission of inquiry (Riechi, 2021). In this regard, all the concerted efforts towards reforms have been geared at responding to social and economic needs of the Kenyan people (Miyandazi, 2023).

With the many policy changes, the administrative role of the principal has evolved from being just the practicing teacher-with added technical and administrative duties- to a full-time manager and developer of human, financial and physical resources (Garland, 2025). A study in Indonesia demonstrated that principals are experiencing stress due to changes in policies and visits from their supervisors and inspectors (Tahir *et al.,* 2018).

Research has shown that principals play a very significant role in reform and policy shift (Pont, 2020). In many ways, principals are the frontline gatekeepers of education reform. Being the chief implementer at the school level, no matter how big, how well-funded or popular any change might be with the public or lawmakers, ultimately, the buck stops with the principal. As mediating agents, principals have the responsibility of turning an education reform programme into a school reality (Shaked & Schechter, 2017). However, it is worth noting that implementing an education reform is a complex continuous endeavor because they also happen frequently (Koh, Askell-Williams & Barr, 2023; McDonnell & Weatherford, 2016).

To implement any policy change or reform successfully, principals have to mobilize the school staff towards it and create a buy-in (Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2021). In other words, implementing education reform involves contradictory pressures arising between the central government and the school system since every school has its own school rules, traditions and

regulations (Werts & Brewer, 2015). Consequently, principals have to mediate between external authorities and their schools in an attempt to adapt and incorporate particular policy elements and practices within the school system (Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2019). The principals have to balance delicately the external reform demands on the one hand and teachers' resistance to these demands on the other hand (McLaughlin et al., 2026). This balancing act takes effort, leadership, tact and wisdom. Further, there is a lot of pressure on the principals in Kenya to produce academic excellence and implement government policy reforms, which are likely to take a toll on their health (Ogalo et al., 2020). Consequently, more empirical studies on the effect of the reforms on principal wellbeing in the Kenyan context necessary to enhance the body of knowledge.

1.2 Statement to the Problem

Since the promulgation of the Kenyan Constitution in 2010, there have been many major reforms and policy changes in the education sector (Wakiaga, 2020). Often, these reforms target learner success, achievement and improved results with little regard to the occupational health of the implementers of the policies and programmes (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2021). The Principal being the heartbeat and nexus of all activities in the school should be healthy to discharge these duties effectively (Igwebuike, 2013). However, on a daily basis, a principal's professional life is characterized by overwhelming responsibilities, information complexities, decision-making and emotional anxiety (Marinac et al., 2025). Consequently, the pressure of being a school leader has become both an emotional and physical burden and is becoming a concern (Kafele, 2021). In the year 2016, the Kenya Secondary Schools Heads Association (KESSHA) conference report alleged that about twenty-three (23) principals die annually in Kenya due to stress and burnout-related issues and attributed it to working long hours without adequate rest (*Daily Nation* 29 June 2016).

Given that policy reforms can have both intended and unintended effects, this study sought to investigate the effects of these education reforms on the burnout of senior school principals in Siaya, Kenya.

1.3 Research Questions

i) To what extent do policy reforms in teacher management influence the principals' burnout in Siaya County?

ii) To what extent do policy reforms in financial management influence the principals' burnout in Siaya County?

iii) To what extent do policy reforms in student discipline management influence the principals' burnout in Siaya County?

iv) To what extent do policy reforms in national examinations management influence the principals' burnout in Siaya County?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

$H_0$1: Policy reforms in teacher management have no significant statistical effect on the principals' burnout in Siaya County.

$H_0$2: Policy reforms in school financial management have no significant statistical effect on the principals' burnout in Siaya County.

$H_0$3: Policy reforms in student discipline management have no significant statistical effect on the principals' burnout in Siaya County.

$H_0$4: Policy reforms in national examinations management have no significant statistical effect on the principals' burnout in Siaya County.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study may be useful to policy makers. Government bodies such as the Ministry of Education, the Teachers Service Commission, and the Kenya National Examinations Council may benefit significantly from the findings of this study. With the government's vested interest in educational policy and curriculum implementation, understanding the impact of principals' well-being becomes paramount. The study results can inform future policy decisions and reforms aimed at enhancing teachers' and principals' occupational health, thus ensuring successful policy execution. Teachers, principals and educational practitioners may also benefit from the study results, gaining insights into effective strategies for managing policy reform challenges in senior schools.

Secondly, practitioners in educational management and planning may find this study useful. By understanding the effect of policy changes on the principals' well-being educators can develop more supportive and sustainable approaches to school management and leadership. Scholars and researchers with an interest in educational policy, management and well-being may find the study results invaluable for advancing academic discourse in these areas. By providing valuable data, the research can contribute to the existing body of knowledge on educational reforms and principals' welfare, potentially informing future studies and theories in the field. This study adds to the general body of knowledge by shedding light on the relationship between educational reforms and principals' burnout, offering insights into effective strategies for addressing challenges in school management and leadership.

1.6 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focuses solely on senior school principals of public schools in Siaya County, Kenya. It includes 246 principals across the seven sub-counties namely: Bondo, Rarieda, Siaya, Gem-yala, Gem-Wagai, Ugunja and Ugenya. The study encompassed all types of senior schools in Siaya County, including C1, C2, C3, C4 and special needs schools. It excludes primary school headteachers and those from private schools outside Siaya County. Siaya County's educational landscape, characterized by a mix of old and newly established schools and varying school types, provides a rich context for understanding the impact of policy reforms on principals' burnout

The research is confined to Siaya County due to logistical and resource constraints, with findings potentially offering insights into principals' well-being nationwide, although generalizability to the entire country should be interpreted cautiously. Additionally, it does not explore broader socio-economic including cultural factors but focuses specifically on the impact of policy reforms in Siaya County.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

This research study shall be guided by Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989). COR was first introduced by Hobfol in 1989 to explain stress has become one of the most referred theories in behavioural sciences (Dönmez & Avcı, 2026). COR is as a theory of motivation whose basic tenet is that every individual is endowed with personal resources that enable him or her to exist within his or her environment. When challenges occur, the individual reacts by assessing the challenge and trying to manage it. If the challenge overwhelms the individual, it may lead to detrimental effects on the person’s health. That is why Brady et al., (2023) argue that stress is experienced when a person feels that the demands exceed the personal and social resources the

individual can mobilize. It occurs when individuals perceive that they cannot adequately cope with threats to their well-being.

Concisely, this theory argues that people are motivated to obtain, retain, protect and build resources they value in their lives and feel threatened by their loss (Hobfoll, 1988; 1989). Resources refer to anything that is actual or perceived by the individual to aid him or her to achieve his or her goals (Halbesleben *et al.,* 2014). According to this perspective, resources are things that one values such as objects, states, and conditions (Radford, 2024).

Hobfoll (1989) recognizes four types of resources, namely objects, conditions, personal characteristics and energies. Resources can also be classified as physical (e.g., health) social (e.g., friends and social networks), psychological (e.g., self-esteem) or material (e.g., finance).

Further, these resources can also be divided into job and personal resources. The job resources are related to the achievement of organizational goals in the workplace while personal resources are individual in nature and are associated with the self (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Examples of job resources include autonomy, support and opportunities for professional growth while personal resources include self-esteem, self- efficacy, hope and religious freedom (Kutcher *et al.,* 2010). This theory posits that when an individual has exhausted their resources, stress and burnout follows.

Conservation of Resources theory is about the loss and gain of resources and is currently divided into four principles and three corollaries (Hobfoll *et al.,* 2018). Initially, it was divided into two principles and four corollaries (Hobfoll, 1989). The first principle is known as the primacy of resource loss. This principle argues that resource loss is more critical to individuals than its gain (Radford, 2024). According to this principle, individuals are keener on resource loss than on

resource gain and guard against resource loss in the presence and absence of stress (Sonnentag, & Meier, 2024). This means employees are more conscious of the resources they have lost compared with those they gain. This principle argues that it is psychologically more harmful for individuals to lose resources compared to when they gain them. For instance, a pay cut to an employee will be more painful compared to the joy of a pay rise. COR theory posits that resource loss is not only more powerful than resource gain but has a higher momentum in terms of effect on the individual (Hobfoll *et al.,* 2018).

The second principle of COR theory is that people must invest resources in order to protect against resource loss, recover from losses and gain resources (Hobfoll *et al.,* 2018). To cope with this, people will invest resources to prevent future losses. This is the reason why people invest in insurance to protect against a future possible loss. The third principle is the resource gain paradox. This implies that when resource loss circumstances are high, resource gains become more important because they gain in value (Hobfoll *et al.,* 2018). The fourth principle argues that when resources are overstretched or exhausted, individuals opt for self-preservation, become defensive or aggressive and may even become irrational in order to protect their resources (Hobfoll *et al.,* 2018).

Hobfoll *et al.,* (2018) identified three corollaries or consequences to the four principles. The first one argues that those with greater resources are less vulnerable to resource loss and more capable of resource gain. Similarly, those with fewer resources are more likely to lose them. This means that organizations or individuals who have less resources are more vulnerable because it easier for them to lose resources than to gain them. The second corollary is known as resource loss cycle. Since resource loss is more powerful than resource gain, stress creeps in when resources are

lost because the organization has fewer resources to offset resource loss. Finally, the third corollary argues that resource gain has a spiraling effect. Since resource-gain tends to be slower and of less magnitude than resource loss, resource gain spirals tend to be weak and develop slowly. According to Hobfoll (1989), loss spirals occur because the individual was unable to replenish resources to offset the resources lost.

1.7.1 Application of Conservation of Resources Theory

This theory can be applied to this study because it argues that individuals must invest resources to gain additional resources. Consequently, individuals strive to protect themselves from the resource loss. However, should it happen, the individual reacts by trying to reduce the resource loss and maximize the gain by investing additional resources (Lee *et al.,* 2019). However, if the additional resources do not yield much, the continued loss may ultimately affect their well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2024). According to COR theory, burnout is the consequence of a resource depletion process caused by prolonged exposure to stressors such as workload, pressure and inability to meet high demands (Sha & Chang, 2025). Therefore, stress depletes personal resources and more stress leads to exhaustion and burnout.

COR theory provides a way of explaining how the personal resources of principals and their well-being are connected. The daily working lives of teachers and principals in schools is characterized by giving. Most of them would like to make the lives of their learners better and would spare no effort to assist them realize this dream (Whitaker, 2020). That is why they give their time, enthusiasm, dedication, skills, knowledge and values (Kaur, 2015). Principals also have to ensure that they comply with the state regulations, which often change from time to time. However, when the giving is not controlled by strong personal regulatory skills, things can go

wrong. The theory argues that there should be a balance between investing in resources and their depletion. Hobfoll (1989) argues that well-being arises from a balance between the processes of investing resources (engagement) and recovering resources (resilience). Therefore, there is need to ensure that there is a balance between the two to ensure a favourable well-being. However, research on teacher occupational health demonstrates that many teachers are not able to cope successfully with the demands of the teaching profession hence burnout (Agyapong et al., 2022).

This theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how educational reforms impact the occupational health of principals in public senior schools. COR theory has been applied to work and stress in organizational settings and has a lot of interest because it explains how individuals are likely to be affected by stressful situations (Bakker et al., 2023). COR theory has been found to be a popular model for understanding the stress and burnout at the workplace (Westman *et al.,* 2004). The basic tenet of Conservation of Resources (COR) theory is that human beings are motivated to safeguard their current resources and acquire new ones (Bakker et al., 2023). Resources are things that people value and they vary depending on individuals. Studies have shown that when individuals lose resources at work, they are more likely to experience strain in the form of burnout (Bakker & De Vries, 2021). The internal resources such as self-worth and optimism, are possessed by individuals while external resources like social support and organizational membership are not within their control.

The COR Theory highlights the primacy of resource loss suggesting that individuals are more sensitive to resource depletion than resource gain. COR can support our understanding of stress, coping, burnout and social support particularly in complex senior school administration.

1.7.2 Strengths of Conservation of Resources Theory

Over the last 30 years, COR has been one of the most cited theories in the spheres of psychology and organizational behavior because of its broad applicability to diverse contexts. Consequently, it has been adopted in many studies related to stress and burnout (Hobfoll *et al.,* 2018). This has come after the pioneering Stress and Coping theory by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) which argued that stress occurs when a person appraises his or her environment and sees it as taxing or exceeding the resources for coping. One of the major advantages of COR theory is its ability to make a wide range of specific hypotheses that are much broader than those offered by theories that focus on a single central resource (Hobfoll *et al.*, 2018). Secondly, COR theory has been important for advancing an understanding of stress, burnout and well-being in organizations and individuals. It has provided a nexus between stress and health (Foti, et al., 2023).

Thirdly, COR theory helps to explain the crucial role social support plays when one is faced with a stressful situation. COR provides insights into the role of social support in buffering the negative effects of resource loss (Maas *et al.,* 2021). Building a supportive social network requires extensive, long-term outlays of resources to build supportive ties (Ozman and Parker, 2023). In such a situation, they can count on the others to offer them the much-needed support to overcome the challenge. Fourthly, COR gives a more comprehensive and objective view to the origin of stress and it lends itself to practical application (Dönmez & Avcı, 2026).

1.7.3 Critique of the Conservation of Resources Theory

A major criticism of the COR theory is the foundation of the resource construct. As noted above, Hobfoll (1988, 1989) defined resources as things that people value, with an emphasis on objects, states, conditions and other things. The issue of resources has been a subject of debate

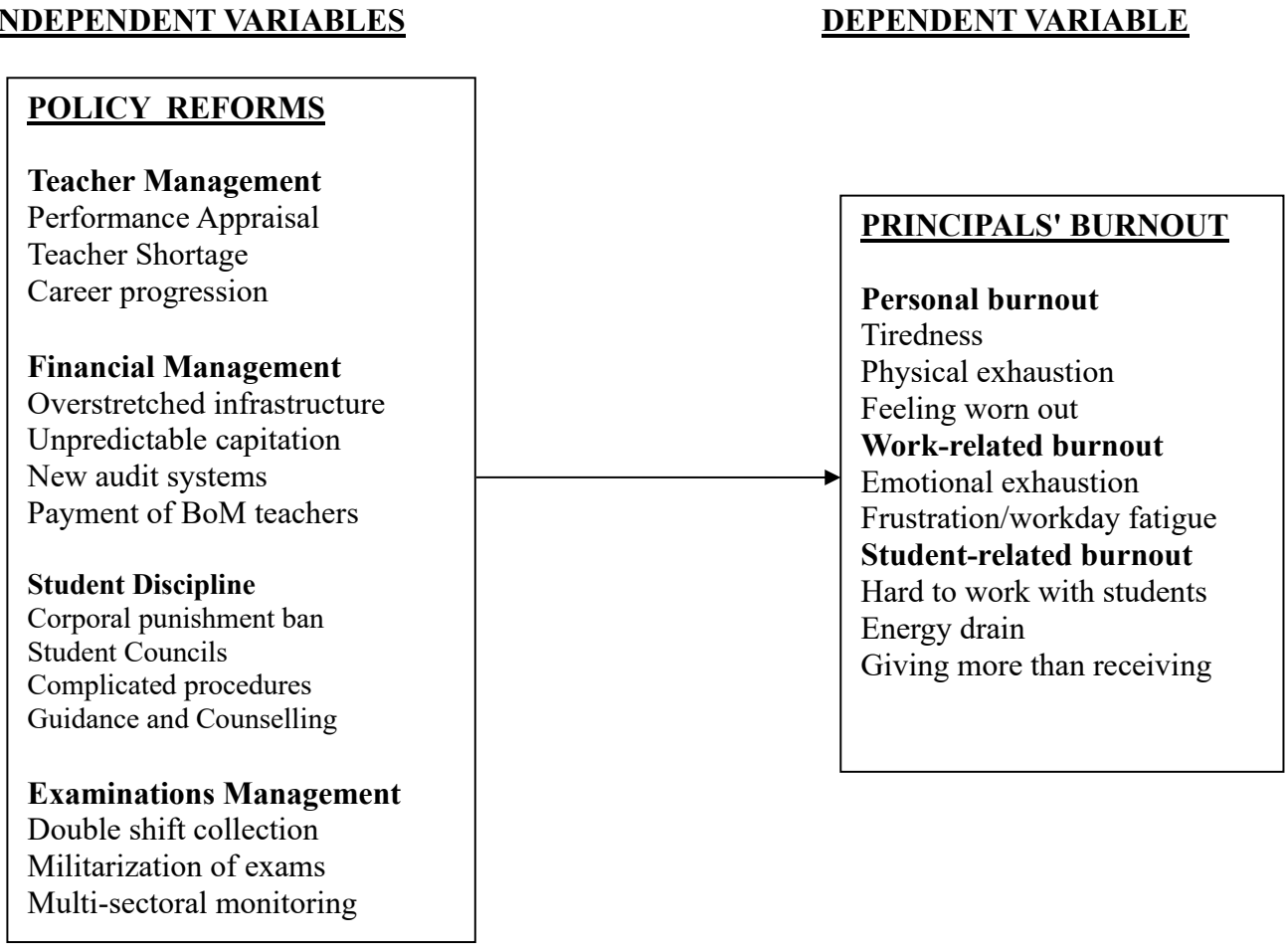
because different individuals can interpret it in a variety of ways since people value different things.

The second shortfall of this theory is that COR has primarily been studied within stress, burnout and job contexts. There is need for further studies within other areas of research especially the non-human service occupations to test the theory further (Park *et al.,* 2014).

1.8 Conceptual Framework

The researcher conceptualized the education sector reforms, as the predictor variables and principal's burnout as the outcome variable in the figure below. These recent education reforms determine the daily management of the school and consequently could affect the well-being of the Principal since he or she is in charge. These reforms include teacher management, financial management, student discipline management and examination management. The researcher hypothesized relationships between independent and dependent variables as illustrated in the figure 1.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Source: Researcher, 2024

Figure 1 presents the four policy-reform domains as the independent variables and principals' burnout as the dependent variable. Teacher-management indicators cover performance contracting and TPAD, staffing shortages, career progression, and reporting or decentralized TSC services. Financial-management indicators cover participatory budgeting and capitation, accountability and audit compliance, resource mobilization, and school debt or Board of Management teacher costs. Student-discipline indicators cover leadership, rules and procedures, teacher and student-council involvement, guidance and counselling, and non-corporal discipline. National-examination

indicators cover KNEC registration systems, examination collection and security, multi-agency monitoring, and exposure to examination-irregularity risk.

The framework proposes that increasing policy-implementation demands may consume principals' time, energy and coping resources and thereby increase personal, work-related and student-related burnout. The arrow denotes the hypothesized direction of association tested in the study; because the design is cross-sectional, the empirical analysis estimates relationships and does not by itself establish temporal causation.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

a) **Burnout:** A state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion of a principal caused by long-term involvement in school work that is too demanding.

b) **Educational Reform**: A partial or complete change or improvement on how an education system is managed nationally.

c) **Policy reforms:** Changes or improvements made to existing laws, regulations, guidelines or procedures in the education sector

d) **Principal:** The head of a senior school in Kenya charged with the responsibility of implementing government policies and daily activities of the school.

e) **Stress:** The feeling of unpleasant negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration or depression, resulting from some aspect of a principal's work.

f) **Siaya county:** In this study, Siaya County is defined as an administrative region within the Nyanza region.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The chapter reviews literature on educational reforms and the principals' and burnout. The chapter begins by reviewing the theories including strength and weaknesses followed by empirical literature review. Further, the chapter compares and contrasts views from other studies on current state of educational reforms, burnout among principals in senior schools. Finally, the chapter will conclude by highlighting the study gaps.

2.2.1 Transactional Theory of Stress

The second theory related to this study is the Transactional Theory of Stress (Lazarus, 2000; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Literature argues that this theory remains the cornerstone of psychological stress and coping research in many fields to date (Biggs *et al.,* 2017). This theory explains the potential effects of external stressors on well-being through the experiences of everyday discrete emotions. Therefore, according to this theory, stress is product of a transaction between an individual and his or her complex environment. An individual reacts to an external stressor guided by his or her appraisal and subjective evaluation of the situation and this subsequently triggers an emotional response (Lim *et al*., 2023). The primary appraisal process involves subjective assessment of the incident to assess its relevance since only incidents that the individual evaluates to be relevant to one's needs or values trigger emotions. Usually, an event can lead either to a positive emotion such as joy or to negative emotions such as anger or fear. Consequently, repeated negative daily experiences of unpleasant emotions lead to negative changes in well-being while prolonged pleasant emotions promote well-being

According to Lazarus and Folkman while evaluating an incident or situation, an individual goes through two important stages, cognitive appraisal and coping. Cognitive appraisal, (also known as primary appraisal), involves the process of categorizing an incident, encounter or situation as to whether it is a threat or challenge that can be potentially stressful (Spătaru, et al., 2024).

On the other hand, secondary appraisal is an assessment of the situation to see whether the individual can cope with the situation. It is about whether an individual can tolerate the internal or external demands of the situation and whether one has resources to cope with it (Bardoel & Drago, 2021) After this, the person decides which strategy he or she should use to cope or manage this situation.

2.2.2 Job Demands-Resources Theory

The third theory is the Job Demands -Resources (JD-R) theory (Demerouti *et al.,* 2001). Job demands refer to those physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical or psychological skills or effort and are therefore associated with certain costs (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). Further, Galanakis & Tsitouri (2022) posit that job demands include high work pressure, work overload, emotional demands and poor working environment. On the other hand, job resources refer to the physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that are functional in achieving work goals. These resources may be located at the level of the organization or the level of the task. According to this theory, job demands and resources mainly represent situational characteristics at work. Previous research has shown that job demands such as emotional demands and interpersonal conflicts contribute significantly to staff burnout (Danauskė, Raišienė & Korsakienė, 2023.

The foundation of JD-R theory is job design and job stress theories (Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2023). It combines the two research traditions and explains how job demands and resources have unique and multiplicative effects on job stress and motivation. In a nutshell, JD-R theory explains how job demands and resources influence job performance.

2.2.3 Critical Review of Empirical and Conceptual Studies

Stress arises when a person assesses the environment as one that taxes or exceeds her resources, and therefore is consequently perceived as threatening (Reif et al., 2021). The most commonly used model in burnout research is by Maslach and Leiter (Maslach and Leiter, 2008). In their model, they argue that burnout consists of three factors: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment.

Studies have analyzed stress in different work environments. The teaching profession has been categorized as one of the top stressful professions in the United Kingdom (Burrow, 2020). In a study, it was ranked second after ambulance work. Others include Customer Service call centres, prison officers and the police (Johnson *et al.,* 2005). Stress has become an inevitable part of a principal's life and various stressors have been documented including time management, relationships with supervisors and subordinates, finances, resolving conflicts, making difficult decisions, complying with state directives and mental strain that make principals to feel over-whelmed (Ogalo et al., 2020). Principals are expected not only to accomplish great things within short periods (often with no support) but also to solve, longstanding social and educational issues, which are difficult to resolve (Riley et al., 2021). Sometimes, they implement these school improvement programmes in a highly complex and politically charged environments (Park & Datnow, 2022).

In addition, principals are required to attend to emotionally charged issues with school stakeholders and solve intrapersonal conflicts that often arise (Maxwell and Riley, 2017). After a few years in the position, the pressure placed on principals may result in health issues such as headaches, high blood pressure and weight gain (Trapp, 2020), heart palpitations and heart attacks (Samad *et al.,* 2022), dizziness and breathing problems (Van der Merwe and Parsotam, 2012), sleeping difficulties, anxiety and depression (Wei *et al*., 2014). Furthermore, it has been found that often principals attend to the needs of their teachers and students to ensure their well-being at the expense of their own health (Weber *et al.*, 2005). This way, they suffer from "compassion fatigue" which is stress due to empathy towards one's staff and students (Yu et al., 2022).

Burnout is considered as the last point of chronic stress (Almén, 2021). Burnout emerged as a psychological concept in 1970s. In particular, in 1974, Freudenberger introduced the term burnout to describe the inability to function effectively in one's job because of prolonged and extensive job-related stress. He argued that burnout can be demonstrated in physical signs and the behavioural indicators. Since then, research into stress and burnout have increased especially on employees in the human services sectors such as nurses, teachers, medical doctors and police officers (Rahaman, 2024). A common feature of these occupations is that their jobs are highly emotional. In particular, teachers are vulnerable to emotionally draining and experiences in their classroom interactions with their learners (Park & Ramirez, 2022).

Burnout is a condition that develops in response to prolonged chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job (Edú-Valsania et al., 2022) Maslach and Jackson (1981) posit that burnout happens in three stages: when workers encounter demands that are hard to meet, they

experience emotional exhaustion first. Then, they find desensitization to work as a way to escape from this situation. Finally, they perceive themselves as failures. It is argued that the most important dimension of burnout is emotional exhaustion as it leads to losing the energy to continue with the job (Nápoles, 2022). In terms of measurement, well-being has been considered to have both positive and negative poles (Buecker et al., 2023). The development of subjective well-being across the life span: A meta-analytic review of longitudinal studies. *Psychological bulletin*, *149*(7-8), 418.. Consequently, there are increases and decreases as evidenced in the scales used to measure the construct well-being (Stone and Mackie, 2013). Literature argues that job satisfaction and job enthusiasm are considered to be at the positive pole of well-being while stress and burnout are positioned at the negative pole (Chiva & Guinot, 2021).

Policy reforms are critical if an education system has to remain relevant and address deficiencies in a system (Fullan, 2025). Further, reform is born of urgency and educational reformers seek to change an aspect of education that they believe to be unfair, inefficient, disadvantageous to learner outcomes or unacceptable in any other way (Loveless *et al.,* 1998). Yüksel, (2014) argues that other countries such as Turkey, South Africa, Brazil and China have implemented educational reforms to be active players in the global world and to sustain their economic growth. However, educational reforms are crucial in a country only if they benefit the intended target group (Akala, 2021). Furthermore, although educational practitioners namely, teachers and school principals are frequently the targets of educational reform policies and practices since the policy makers have positioned teachers and teacher educators as the objects, rather than the agents of reform (Cochran-Smith *et al.,* 2018).

One of the reasons why reforms are a challenge in many settings across the globe is that educational reform has been about compliance and takes a top-down approach (Levy, 2022). Further, educational reforms are undoubtedly one of the most complex and controversial subjects because of the effects that they generate in the societies and countries where they take place (Kassah *et al.,* 2019). Educational reform usually focuses on the following areas of a school system: quality, access, equality of opportunity, finance, management, competitiveness, efficiency and effectiveness (Darwanto, 2024).

In the recent years, the education sector has experienced massive technological, societal, and institutional changes thus making it one of the most fascinating but complex fields of study in social science (Lunenberg, 2010). In South Africa, different educational reforms were implemented to build the future of the country as soon as it gained its independence from the colonialists (Kallaway, 2021). However, Isahaku (2009) argues that the experience of Ghana in educational reform is that it is easier to solve the 'hardware' problems of educational reform than the 'software' problems. He posits that it is easier to build classrooms, dormitories, equip laboratories and libraries than to identify a suitable programme or formal theory of educational reform. However, in South Africa, rapid, and constant educational change, has made school principals experience "control" being taken away from them (Oplatka, 2017).

On the contrary, some authors do not support frequent education reforms. For instance, Mahfouz (2018) argues that constant changes in administrative staff, policies, reforms, evaluation systems, procedures, curricula, programmes, proposals, plans, schedules, technology and other initiatives impede real improvement. Besides that, Fullan (2002) argues that educational change is sometimes highly problematic given that although schools are being bombarded by change, there

is nothing new under the sun. Another study found that teachers are suffering from "reform fatigue" since as soon as they get a handle on a new reform, it changes. They further argue that "new" education reforms are rarely new- they have been tried before (Yettick *et al.,* 2017).

2.3 Policy Reforms in Teacher Management and Principals' Burnout

The COVID-19 pandemic increased the principal burnout given the additional demands related to school closures, reopening and social distancing protocols (DeMatthews *et al.,* 2021). Riley *et al.,* (2021) argue that schools are increasingly facing a crisis as aging principals retire early due to burnout while their suitable candidates are reluctant replace them. Further, studies show that principal burnout is a function of unreasonable demands by parents and poor teacher performance and work overload (Horwood *et al*., 2021). Another stressful area in teacher management is rrelationships with teachers and the teachers' unions since it involves emotional engagement (Mahfouz, 2020).

A longitudinal study of a sample of 3683 school principals in Australia to assess their demands, resources, health and well-being found that principals are suffering a lot of attrition and burnout in the workplace (Marsh *et al.,* 2023). A study in Texas, USA showed that teachers would have been more stressed if they did not choose to ignore some of the reforms (Margolis & Nagel, 2006). Xu (2014) conducted a comprehensive investigation and analysis of the influence of recent education reforms on the role of senior school principals in China. The study aimed to explore principals' views of their role, their main activities and priorities and the main influences on these aspects. Using naturalistic qualitative methods including semi-structured interviews and shadowing of school leaders, the study examined the experiences of 28 principals amidst major education reforms in China. The analysis revealed that school principals in China encounter new

challenges as curriculum leaders, tasked with developing new pedagogies and managing the expectations of multiple stakeholders. Despite the increased responsibilities, the principals often felt constrained by a lack of autonomy in leading their schools particularly in curriculum development.

Another study in Nigeria involving a total of 1,180 school leaders showed high mixed results in terms of stress and burnout. (Mbonu & Nkemdilim, 2021). In south Africa, there has been an increase in the number of learners per class, lack of teacher autonomy, low levels of job satisfaction, and low levels of teacher recognition which may all lead to burnout (Liebenberg & Hattingh, 2017).

In Kenya, the implementation of the new constitution in 2010 has led to changes in the way human resources in the education sector are managed. With the TSC becoming an autonomous body and independent of the Ministry of Education, changes are taking place in the way TSC employees are managed (Barasa, 2021). In Kenya since 2012, TSC has made a raft of reforms in teacher Management. One critical reform is the introduction of performance management systems. TSC introduced Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) for teachers and Performance Contracting (PC) for Heads of Institutions in January 2016 as a way of evaluating teachers' effectiveness against pre-set standards spelt out in the tools. However, one challenge with TPAD is the issue of increased workload (Sakwa *et al.,* 2023). The principal being the instructional leader besides taking his or her full teaching load, has to ensure that teachers prepare professional documents and actually utilize them to teach in class. Further, the principal has to ensure that all teachers in his or her school are appraised and even observe them teaching in class periodically. This can be overwhelming given other administrative assignments.

Another reform on teacher management is related to the 100% transition policy by the Ministry of Education. However, the challenge with this policy is lack of commensurate increase in hiring of teachers and expansion of infrastructure, which has led to increased teaching loads and the student-teacher ratio (Wosyanju, 2019). This is likely to pose a challenge to Principals who are expected to ensure that the quality of education is not compromised (Arou and Deyganto, 2024). From a research done in Nigeria, Nnah and George (2025) found that principals were experiencing a high level of burnout and argue that the consequences of unchecked teacher burnout extend beyond individual educators, affecting the entire education system. From the literature available, it is clear there is need for further research particularly on how the reforms in the management of teachers is affecting the principal burnout.

2.3.1 Policy Reforms in Financial Management and Principals' Burnout

Financial resources are very important since no organization or institution has ever succeeded without them (Ighor & Ogbuwa, 2025). The responsibilities of principals have kept increasing as the financial resources either remained the same or decreased. An international survey of principals' health and wellbeing conducted Australia, Ireland, New Zealand and Finland found that school leaders experience significantly higher stress than the general population (Elomaa, 2023). Schools often face financial challenges needed to meet their institutional needs. In Indonesia, the country's budgetary allocation has kept on rising due to the commitments to make basic education free (Shaturaev, 2021). That is why UNICEF has consistently argued for better financing of education for equity and improved learning outcomes (Imchen & Ndem, 2020). A study about Principals in Ireland shows that they are not very satisfied and feel stressed about their jobs in many areas including finances (Darmody & Smyth, 2016).

A study done in six sub-Saharan countries namely Ghana, Guinea, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda and Madagascar indicated that head teachers face serious problems with students who cannot pay fees, teacher shortage and inadequate teaching and learning resources (Leu & Bryen 2005). When a county is facing financial challenges, the education sector usually gets into a deep crisis. Another study posited that the finances are inadequate, delay and some of the principals do not have the requisite skills to manage the funds (Amos *et al.,* 2021). Undoubtedly, this can be a cause of occupational stress. Another study in south Africa demonstrated that the challenges and reforms in the education system could have an impact on teachers' professional wellbeing (Van der Vyver *et al.,* 2020). In Nigeria, Amirize and Ololube (2018) conducted a study on challenges to senior school principals' leadership in the Northern Region of the country. Their research revealed that poor funding of schools is a significant factor contributing to the ineffectiveness of principals' leadership. They found that the lack of availability of funds directly to the schools' accounts hampers their ability to efficiently run the schools.

Financial management in Kenya's public senior schools is a very sensitive managerial role, since a lot of taxpayers' money is invested in education. Boards of management and principals must ensure prudent management of such funds so that the intended goals of education and institutional objectives are achieved optimally (Kaguri *et al.,* 2014). In in Kenya, the Ministry of Education has instituted a raft of reforms to ensure that every child has a right to free and compulsory basic education (Basic Education Act, 2013). Apart from achieving universal basic education, the objective of these policy initiatives was to increase access and to cushion poor households by abolishing school fees and consequently enhance completion rates and poor community participation (Njeru & Orodho, 2003). However, this great initiative by government

has had challenges. As the government contributions increases, the parents have relaxed with the erroneous notion that the government is supposed to meet all the education costs. Consequently, this belief has greatly contributed to colossal budget deficits in most public senior schools (Getange *et al.,* 2014).

Principals have teaching, administrative and financial accounting roles and these can pose a challenge on their occupational health. Particularly, principals of the newly started senior schools' multi-task a lot. They receive money, receipt it, deposit it in the bank account, withdraw it and do the procurement process which is a daunting task (Sharp & Walter, 2012).The other challenge to principals is the delay in disbursement of Free Day Senior Education (FDSE) funds (Magak, 2013). This delay poses a challenge to the budgetary process that leads to expenditure being incurred in excess in some vote heads and consequently, this automatically compromises the budget and hence leading to mismanagement of funds (Atieno & Simatwa, 2012). Literature on the effect of financial reforms on principal burnout is still scanty. There is need for further studies to strengthen the body of knowledge in these two areas.

2.3.2 Policy Reforms in Student Discipline Management and Principals' Burnout

Student discipline is vital in the success of any educational system and that is the reason why it is a major concern to many stakeholders and the whole society (Alhalalmeh & Al-Tarawneh, 2025). Learner discipline is critical for effective teaching and learning. If the learners are not well disciplined, it will be difficult for any meaningful learning to take place.

Globally, learner disciplinary problems in most senior schools are similar (Obadire & Sinthumule, 2021) Student strikes are a manifestation of serious discipline issues in a school (Ngwokabuenui, 2015). Discipline since time immemorial has never been a soft landing for any education manager

(Macharia *et al.,* 2014). Across the world, acts of student indiscipline has increased causing great concern among education administrators, teachers and stakeholders (Ndlovu *et al.,* 2023). With more reforms in education legislation, school principals and teachers face extreme challenges in balancing management of learner discipline and their rights (Morrell, 2001)

The challenge of student indiscipline is on the rise nationally and internationally (Obadire & Sinthumule, 2021). In the United States, due to learner discipline and safety, there is now an increased interest in education reforms (Safir, 2022). A study in Texas argues that meaningful reform in the American education discipline system requires more than just legislative and legal interventions but a fundamental shift to promote inclusivity and cultural sensitivity (Johnson-Abbott, 2024). In their study, Maxwell and Riley (2017) found that student unrest negatively impacted students' academic performance with schools experiencing strikes showing higher variation in mean grades compared to those without such disruptions.

In African schools, indiscipline among learners manifests itself to varying degrees and sometimes in extreme cases, learners hurt and even kill one another in school (Tlhapi, 2015). In South African educational institutions, cases of students being disrespectful towards teachers, disrupting lessons, planning and strikes exist. Elements of gangsterism is on the rise with students bringing deadly weapons to school with the aim of inflicting serious bodily harm on teachers or students pretending it is for self-protection (Obadire & Dzivhonele, 2021). Another study in South Africa found that the common causes of learners' disciplinary problems varied from school to school. It recommended that parents as first teachers should instill values and morals to their children so that they can distinguish right from wrong (Obadire & Sinthumule, 2021). In Malawi, the country's education system needs controlled and balanced freedom between the two poles: the

unfettered authority of the teacher in public schools and the extreme freedom of the learners among the learners in private schools (Stambuli, 2023).

The first recorded strike in a Kenyan school occurred in Maseno School in 1908 when the boys refused to participate in manual labour and demanded for more reading and writing opportunities (McCall, 2024). Indiscipline in Kenyan schools has caused untold financial and social havoc to parents, teachers and sponsors of schools (Cooper, 2022). This is because during schools' riots and unrest, property of unknown value is lost through the inferno. In most cases, parents have to meet the cost of repair while students lose valuable learning time, which may affect them negatively in their academics. Incidences of arson, unrest, destruction of property, bullying, vandalism, truancy, rape, sexual assault, drug and substance abuse, among others, have been increasing tremendously among senior school students in different parts of Kenya (Omote & Thinguri, 2015). In particular, educational stakeholders are getting worried about the students' aggression directed towards their own teachers and particularly principals (McMahon, 2020)

Kenya has been experiencing problems of student indiscipline since 1971 when the first case of violent student strike was reported (Ajowi & Omboto, 2013). Consequently, the government introduced corporal punishment in schools in 1972 because it thought schools did not have a strong internal mechanism of dealing with student disciplinary problems. Consequently, some learners lost their lives because of their teachers' cane while others suffered irreparable psychological damage (Oben, & Hui, 2025). The reported cases of teacher brutality towards the learners led to the banning of corporal punishment in schools in 2001. After the outlawing of corporal punishment in Kenya through the Children Act (2001), the Constitution of Kenya (2010)

and Basic Education Act (2013), principals and teachers were left with limited options to instill useful discipline among students (Mwenesi *et al.,* 2025).

The second policy reform was to increase democratic space and empower parents. Parental engagement and empowerment have been enhanced in the decisions affecting their children. Discipline can be achieved only through serious and committed partnership between teachers, parents and other relevant stakeholders. However, parental supervision is also declining day by day causing many students to develop low regard towards all forms of authority (Omote *et al*., 2015). Some students even have shown open defiance to school administrators and teachers. Student insurgences against authority is increasing in many countries, perhaps because schools have children from dysfunctional homes, poverty stricken, single parents or teenage parents (Kute, 2014). Further, in some situations, influential parents have used their privileged position to intimidate the principals therefore preventing them from taking appropriate measure against their children and this puts the principal in a very awkward situation (Omote *et al*., 2015). Consequently, sometimes principals hesitate to take appropriate disciplinary measures like suspension for the fear that the powerful parents may use their position to reverse the suspension leading to inconsistency in the application of disciplinary action (Welsh, 2023).

The other policy reform is the replacement of school prefects with student councils. Following the ban on corporal punishment, the Ministry of Education and United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF) and Kenya Senior Schools' Heads Association (KESSHA) came up with the idea of Student Councils. This is a concept where a democratically elected team of students was expected to replace the prefects in ensuring social control in the schools (KESSHA/UNICEF, 2010).

In conclusion, there is robust literature on reforms in learner discipline particularly on challenges of abolition of corporal punishment and increasing violence among the students against other students, teachers and school property. Other areas covered widely by research is the role of teachers and parents with the increased democratic space in student discipline management. More research is required on the effect of student indiscipline on the wellbeing of the principal given the wave of unrests in May and June, 2026 in Kenya some leading to the death of 16 learners in Utumishi Girls' in Nakuru (Citizen Digital, 23rd June, 2026)

2.3.3 Policy Reforms in National Examinations Management and Principals' Burnout

Across the world, examinations play a vital role in the education system. It is a major yardstick of measuring academic achievement and certification and hence it should reflect the true picture of the abilities of the examinees. It is from them that decisions are made on placement of the citizenry in careers and the job market (Shirk, 2020). It is through examinations that learners are evaluated as to whether they have acquired the right knowledge or not (Muchai, 2014). Further, examinations are instruments of assessing the learner progress of and is used to promote them to the next level of study (Akaranga & Ongong, 2013).

National examinations are a property of the state and financed by taxpayers and therefore levels of performance are indicators of how an education system is functioning (Boretti, 2026). On the other hand, we have school-based assessments, which allows measurement to be made over an extended period of time rather than a single time and avoids high levels of anxiety associated with external exams (Mwanyumba & Mutwiri, 2009). Whatever the type of exam, they also have to be managed in such a manner that no candidate obtains undue advantage over the others.

Sahlberg (2021) argues that there are many other critical aspects of the Finnish education system that need considered when judging the success of an education system beyond the test scores. Interestingly. although the Finnish education system is respected a lot globally, the assessment system lacks standardized measurement and control. Municipalities, schools and teachers have the prerogative to organize the education to the best of their understanding (Vainikainen & Harju-Luukkainen, 2020). Furthermore, despite the fact that Finnish students have been among the world's strongest performers on standardized assessments globally, some teachers do not believe in standardized testing (Ashleigh, 2020). They subscribe to the Brueggeman's (2008) view, that standardized "testing would only cause harm and undue pressure on children as children need to build their confidence during these early years."

Reforms in assessment comes with challenges. For instance, although Zambia has implemented Competency Based Curriculum (CBC), the country is still struggling with the conceptualization and assessment of criteria and competencies (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019). Similarly, a report from Tanzania indicates that teachers have challenges ranging from inadequate knowledge on the objectives of CBC, low learner involvement in classroom activities and not complying with the assessment expectations (Akala, 2021).

In Kenya, one of the recent reforms is the e-registration or online registration of candidates. Due to the problems associated with manual handling of registration and candidate records, the government introduced e-registration of pupils and students for the national examinations. Such problems included mismanagement of students' academic records and mismanagement of courses registered for, among others (Olasina, 2011). Additionally, there were problems related to wear

and tear occasioned by retrieval and handling and even data loss and this made reproduction costly (Njiru, 2020).

With the introduction of online registration, there has been improvement in the quality of data entered, duration of processing of the entries, security and storage of data, physical transfer of data from the satellite stations to the main computer installation, prompt release of results and communication of information to the major stakeholders (Adeyegbe, 2007). However, there are concerns of system jam due to heavy traffic during registration and release of results. Further, we have candidates who register for examinations and disappear only to re-appear during the Kenya Certificate of Senior Education (KCSE) examinations day having missed all the lessons for the year. Such students are not only a discipline concern to the school but also often perform poorly bringing down the school mean for the year. This is important because in Kenya schools are termed as "performing" or "non-performing" depending on school mean scores in national examinations (Amunga *et al.,* 2013). This message is further amplified by the media when they publish KCSE results and highlight the schools that have performed well.

In an attempt to curb examination malpractices, education systems worldwide come up with policies aimed at improving the academic practice. These include policies and procedures directed to ensuring the integrity of the examination process at every stage (Eckstein, 2003). In 2015 K.C.S.E cheating cases increased from 2975 reported in K.C.S.E 2014 to 5101 candidates representing about 70 per cent increase in cheating cases (Mwonga, 2019). This was a turning point for KNEC. It came up with strict control mechanisms to maintain fairness and credibility in the exam. Consequently, to remedy the situation, the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) undertook a series of institutional reforms including a framework for swift packing,

transportation, storage, marking and finally releasing the examination results (Barus *et al.,* 2017).

The KNEC has put in place stiff penalties including cancellation of examinations, hefty fines and jail terms for individuals convicted of examination irregularities. Anyone found leaking papers or committing other examination malpractices are liable, upon conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years or a fine not exceeding Kenya shillings one million or both (Kenya National Examinations Council Act, 2012).

Furthermore, anyone caught impersonating a candidate risks serving a jail term not exceeding two years or two million Kenya shillings fine, or both. One of the critical innovations by the Council was to put the principal as the Centre Manager of his or her school unlike before where they would wait in school for exams to be brought in by the supervisor. According to the KNEC Guidelines 2023, the responsibilities of the Centre Manager include being at the Distribution Centre at 6.00 a.m. to collect the examination paper for the morning session every day of the examination and report back at 12.00 p.m. return the morning paper and pick the afternoon question papers and return by 5.00 pm. Then the principal goes back to school and repeats the same cycle for three weeks without fail. Apart from the above responsibilities, the Centre Managers takes overall responsibility where instances of massive examination irregularities occur. In the new arrangement, principals are tasked with the responsibility of curbing examination malpractices by having an active supervisory role during examination administration (Kinoti, 2022). Finally, KNEC adopted a multi-sectoral examination management approach where the whole government including the president and governors are involved. Following the above radical measures, cases of cheating in 2016 K.C.S.E reduced to zero (Mwonga, 2019).

From the above literature, it is clear that examinations are very critical to both the learner and the country. Further, the principal in Kenya more than ever before seems to be at the center of the examination administration and more responsibilities have been added on his or her shoulders. Consequently, there is need for further research particularly on how the new K.C.S.E. examinations policy reforms are affecting the principal's health.

2.3.4 Summary of Literature Reviewed and Critical Analysis of Knowledge Gap

Education reform is a necessary process because it affords a country an opportunity to revisit, revise and appraise its education system and curriculum periodically (Akala, 2021). The implementation of the Constitution of Kenya (2010) has led to many reforms in education sector. Traditionally, principals were in charge of school infrastructure, maintained a safe school, handled the school budget and maintaining student discipline (DiPaola and Tschannen-Moran, 2003). However, the principal now is expected to carry out tasks such as instructional leadership, conflict resolution, improve learner outcomes and to be a transformational leader who leads reform efforts under very challenging circumstances. Furthermore, the principal has to implement these reforms under intense pressure and shrinking authority and resources. All these responsibilities carry physical and emotional demands. In turn, Oplatka (2017) argues that due to an extensive workload, principals are experiencing high levels of fatigue. Studies have demonstrated that one of the challenges concerning the complexity of principals' work is managing constant change (Drago-Severson, 2018; Sebastian *et al.,* 2023, Mahfouz, 2020).

Most of the theories reviewed in this study assume that every employee is endowed with certain personal resources. The school environment may either grow or deplete these resources. If the work environment is unfriendly, it may lead to stress and even burnout. Therefore, there is

need to carry out a study on the implications of the changes in legal, policy, procedures and regulations in the education sector in Kenya on the burnout of the principals who happen to be at the center-stage of their implementation. This study attempted to fill this gap.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the procedures and strategies to be adopted in the study are discussed. It commences with a description of the study area, research design, target population and details the sampling procedure and sample size. Furthermore, it outlines the research instruments, including discussions on their validity and reliability. Furthermore, the chapter provides insight into the data collection and analysis procedures, along with ethical considerations to be adhered to throughout the research process.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a convergent mixed method design then supported it with cross-sectional survey and phenomenological design. In a convergent design (also referred to as a concurrent design), the qualitative and quantitative data are collected and analyzed during a similar timeframe (Fetters, Curry, & Creswell, 2013). A mixed method design is a combination of qualitative and quantitative research designs. Qualitative research is adopted in studies that deal with awareness, insights, knowledge, experience and policy strategy implementation (Adeniran & Tayo-Ladega, 2024). On the other hand, quantitative research employs closed-ended questions to elicit numeric data and to test hypotheses among the dependent and independent variables (Vamsi & Kodali, 2014).

Further, this study adopted a cross-sectional approach together with phenomenology. Cross-sectional studies focus on the study of a particular phenomenon or phenomena at a particular time (Saunders *et al.,* 2009). In terms of time dimension, cross-sectional studies are carried out

once and represent a snapshot of one point in time (Cooper and Schindler, 2011). Cross-sectional studies are appropriate to make causal relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable (Kathori, 2004). On the other hand, phenomenology is primarily a way of thinking that uses perception to find meaning and extends beyond what can be seen by the senses (Adeniran & Tayo-Ladega, 2024).

The mixed methods approach was useful in this study in various ways. First, it enabled the researcher to analyze the influence of the policy reforms on the principal's burnout. Secondly, it enabled the researcher to collect the data from various respondents: principals, TSC Sub County Directors, KUPPET officials and Heads of Departments. Thirdly, this design is a useful strategy in getting a wide view and deeper understanding of the research questions (Creswell, 2014).

3.3 Locale of the Study

In this study, Siaya County in the Nyanza region of Kenya served as the research site. Descombe (2012) defines a research site as a chosen location for investigating ideas derived from research data with the particular focus on areas where control issues are significant. Siaya County is one of the six counties in Nyanza region which shares borders with Busia, Kakamega, Bungoma, Vihiga, Kisumu and Homabay counties. It comprises seven sub-counties that include Bondo, Rarieda, Gem-Yala, Gem Wagai, Siaya, Ugunja and Ugenya.

Spanning an area of approximately 2,496.1 Km^2, Siaya County has an estimated population of around 993,183 people with a population density exceeding the national average. The county experiences an annual rainfall ranging between 1700mm and 1450mm with temperatures varying from 15 to 30°C (Kenya Bureau of Statistics, 2020). Residents primarily rely on subsistence agriculture, livestock production and fishing activities in Lake Victoria for their livelihoods.

Despite natural resources and historical sites, the Siaya County faces challenges such as poverty, malnutrition and disease outbreaks. With 246 public senior schools and an enrollment of 78,468 students, Siaya County presents ideal research setting

3.4 Target Population

The target population comprised 247 principals, 474 Heads of Departments (HoDs), 6 TSC Sub-County Directors and 10 KUPPET branch executive officials in Siaya County. Principals were included because they directly implement the policy reforms and could report both implementation demands and their own burnout. HoDs were included because they work with principals in day-to-day school management and could provide close observational evidence of workload, behavior and well-being. TSC Sub-County Directors were included because they supervise public-school principals and oversee teacher appraisal, staffing, promotion, transfer and professional support under the Teachers Service Commission Act, 2012. KUPPET officials were included because trade unions represent employees in labor relations and handle member welfare, grievances and terms of service under the Labour Relations Act, 2007; they therefore offered an independent perspective on work-related pressures affecting heads of institutions.

The study was delimited to public senior schools. Private schools were excluded because their funding, employment arrangements and administrative accountability differ materially from those of institutions governed through the public education system and TSC policy framework.

3.5 Description of the Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

This section presents descriptions of the sampling procedure and sample size of the study**.** The sample sizes were determined by authorities or statistics.

3.5.1 Sampling Procedure and Sample size

According to Rea and Parker (2014), a sampling procedure refers to the approach chosen by the researcher to select elements from a sample. The sample sizes in this study was determined by reliance on authorities and the researcher for non-probability sampling techniques. Since the study employed mixed method research approach, both probability and non-probability approaches were employed.

3.5.2 Sampling of Senior School Principals

The sample size was obtained using Taro Yamane Formula (Yamane, 1973).

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

Where: n= sample size

N= population size

e= error (0.05)

$$n = \frac{247}{1+247(0.05)^2} = 152.941 = 153$$

In this study, the researcher sampled 153 principals out of 247 using proportionate stratified random sampling. The 247 were spread out in the 7 sub counties in Siaya. In this sampling method, the number of elements assigned to the different strata is proportional to the representation of the strata in the target population (Iliyasu & Etikan, 2021).

The table below gives a summary.

Table 1

Sampling Matrix of schools

S/No	Sub County	Number of principals	Sample Size	Proportion %
1	Bondo	41	25	16.33
2	Gem Wagai	20	13	8.49
3	Gem Yala	27	17	11.12
4	Rarieda	48	30	19.61
5	Siaya	50	31	20.27
6	Ugenya	36	22	14.37
7	Ugunja	25	15	9.81
	Total	**247**	**153**	100%

Source: Researcher. 2026.

The Sub-counties were identified by codes A-G to prevent deductive identification of participating schools and respondents. The above sample was adjusted upwards to take into consideration non responsive nature of research. Pourhoseingholi et al. (2013) argues that researchers should increase the calculated sample size by 5% to compensate for anticipated non-response or missing data. The new sample will be 153+8= 161.

3.5.3 Sampling of TSC Sub-County Directors

A census approach was used to invite all six TSC Sub-County Directors because the group was small and each director held jurisdiction-specific supervisory knowledge. Their responsibilities for teacher appraisal, staffing, promotion, transfer, discipline and professional support placed them in regular contact with principals. They were therefore able to explain how teacher-management requirements, reporting deadlines and implementation pressures could contribute to principals'

workload, stress and burnout. Five directors participated in the interviews, representing 83.3% of those invited.

3.5.4 Sampling of KUPPET Officials

Census sampling was used include all the ten KUPPET branch executive officials were because they represent post-primary teachers and routinely engage with heads of institutions on employee welfare, grievances, collective bargaining and terms and conditions of service. Their role gave them an independent view of how staffing shortages, promotion concerns, administrative demands and workplace conflict affect principals. Eight officials participated, representing 80 % of those invited.

3.5.5 Sampling of Heads of Departments

Fifty heads of departments (HoDs) were randomly selected in all the sub counties. Seven HoDs were selected in 6 sub counties and 8 in one. The study purposively sampled the HoD Guidance and Counselling because they are part of the senior management and work closely with the Principals. Further, they are trained to deal with personal, social and educational issues of students and teachers (Dhal, 2023).

3.6 Description of Data Collection Instruments

The study utilized questionnaires and interviews guides to collect primary data. Research instruments refer to the tools utilized for collecting information pertaining to specific themes outlined in research objectives (Hagan, 2014). Questionnaires were considered appropriate as data collection instruments because they enabled the researcher to collect large amounts of information efficiently and cost-effectively**.** They also ensured standardized responses, making data easier to

compare and analyze, while saving time by allowing many respondents to participate simultaneously and at their convenience. Interviews were considered important in research because they enabled the researcher to obtain detailed, in-depth, and first-hand information directly from participants. Interviews guide were also important because they enabled the research to ask probing questions that provided in-depth information, allowed for clarification that generated rich qualitative data, and offer flexibility to explore participants' views, experiences, and emerging issues.

3.6.1 Questionnaires for Principals

Baburajan *et al.,* (2020) observe that closed-ended questions are used in research because they are easy to use, score and code for analysis. Further, Best and Kahn (2016) posit that a questionnaire guarantees anonymity to the subjects and thus encourage honesty in responses. The questionnaires were used to assess the level principal burnout and also the educational reforms

The questionnaires were divided into three parts. Part I contained respondents' demographic information, which include their sex, length of service, highest academic qualifications and their age. Part II was on policy reforms in four areas namely: teacher management, student discipline management, financial management and national examinations management. Finally, part III assessed the principal's burnout. This questionnaire is closed-ended and is attached in appendix B.

3.6.2 Interview Guide for TSC Officers.

An interview is an oral administration of questionnaire or an interview schedule (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). In this study, an interview guide was designed to obtain in-depth information the from TSC Sub County Directors. Structured interviews are more like oral questionnaires

because the interviewer needs to cover all research questions (Karatsareas, 2022). Section I was on demographic details including sex, age, highest level of academic qualifications and years of service as a Sub County Director. Part II sought information on policy reforms in four areas namely: teacher management, student discipline management, financial management and national examinations management. Finally, part III addressed what they know about the principal's burnout.

The TSC Sub-County Directors serve as the immediate supervisors of principals and work closely with them on matters related to curriculum implementation and human resource management. Their involvement provides an important perspective from the employer's standpoint. The interview questions are open-ended, allowing the respondents to provide detailed and unrestricted responses. The interview guide is attached in appendix C.

3.6.3 Interview Guide for KUPPET Officials

The structured interview guide for KUPPET officials elicited their perspectives on policy reforms and principals' well-being, drawing on their role in employee welfare, grievances, representation and terms of service (Mugambi, 2022). The guide is provided in Appendix E.

3.6.4 Interview Guide for Heads of Department

The structured interview guide for Heads of Departments elicited their observations of principals' well-being because HoDs work closely with principals, staff and students in daily school management and can observe work-related strain. The guide is provided in Appendix D.

3.7 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments

The instruments were pilot-tested in Busia County, a comparable setting outside the definitive Siaya County sample. Sixteen principals participated, equivalent to approximately 10% of the planned sample of 153. The pilot assessed feasibility, instructions, wording, layout, item clarity and completion time, and the participants' feedback was used to revise ambiguous items before the main data collection (Bond et al., 2023; Menon et al., 2021). Keeping pilot participants outside the main sample reduced the risk of contamination (Mellor et al., 2023).

The pilot data were also used to examine the internal consistency of the policy-reform scales. The resulting coefficients are reported under Section 3.8.2.1, together with the validity procedures used to establish the adequacy of the instruments.

3.8 Determination of the Reliability and Validity of Research Instruments

This section presents the validity, reliability and credibility of the of the research instruments.

3.8.1 Determination of validity of instruments

Validity concerns whether an instrument adequately represents the construct it is intended to measure and supports meaningful interpretation of the resulting scores. Content validity was established through expert review by university supervisors in educational-management and researchers, who assessed each item for relevance, clarity, conceptual coverage and alignment with the four policy-reform domains and principals' burnout. Their recommendations informed revisions to the questionnaire and interview guides (MacDermid, 2021).

Construct coverage for burnout was guided by the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory, which distinguishes personal, work-related and client-related burnout (Kristensen et al., 2005). In this

study, 'client' was contextualized as 'student'. Quantitative and qualitative evidence from principals, HoDs, TSC Sub-County Directors and KUPPET officials was subsequently triangulated to strengthen interpretation across sources.

3.8.2 Determination of Reliability of Instruments

Reliability is a critical condition for measurement. Reliability is defined as the consistency of a method in measuring something (Ahmed & Ishtiaq 2021). A study is considered reliable when it produces consistent results under the same conditions and over a period of time (Olayinka and Abideen, 2023).

3.8.2.1 Reliability of Questionnaire for Principals

Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire items during pilot testing. A coefficient of 0.75 or higher was treated as evidence of acceptable internal consistency for the study's applied educational measures. A Cronbach alpha coefficient value of 0.7 is the generally agreed lower limit (Hair *et al.,* 2006). Having assessed the reliability tests, Principal component analysis with varimax rotation was undertaken to extract the factors that underlie concepts of: policy reforms and principal burnout. Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI) which was used to measure burnout has been found to have a reliability of 0.85 (Henriksen & Lukasse, 2016). Split-half reliability is a popular method of assessing reliability of a test primarily for the advantage of single administration of the test and use of one sample (Parsons, 2021).

3.8.2.2 Reliability of Interview Guides.

There are several ways of enhancing reliability in interview guides. One is peer briefing. The interview guides for TSC Sub County Directors, KUPPET officials and Heads of Departments

were shared with peers and education experts. By involving and engaging with colleagues or experts to review interpretations and findings, it minimizes researcher bias (Ahmed, 2024).

3.8.3 Trustworthiness of Research Instruments

To be relevant, research must be trustworthy (Adler, 2022). To establish trustworthiness of the qualitative data, the researcher employed triangulation. Triangulation is when another assessment and cross-check are conducted to improve credibility (Pitney, 2024). Dzwigol (2022) argues that triangulation in research is the use of more than one approach to researching a question. The objective is to increase confidence in the findings through the confirmation of a proposition using two or more independent measures. This is important since both qualitative and quantitative data was collected using probability and non- probability sampling methods. The data was collected from multiple sources – TSC officers, KUPPET officials and Heads of Departments as well as the use of questionnaires.

It is generally accepted that quantitative and qualitative research designs need credibility to generalize the research findings. Validity and reliability are also part of the measures that ensures a study's trustworthiness and credibility (William, 2024). In qualitative research design, the terms and concepts of, neutrality, consistency, credibility, conformability, dependability and applicability,

Transferability are used for trustworthiness, as the term reliability is used in quantitative research (Riazi & Ghanbar, 2023). Neutrality is the degree of unbiasedness of the researcher in the research and interpretation process. The researcher distanced himself or herself so that results are derived from the participant's responses objectively (Macdonald & Birdi, 2020). Further, Conformability refers to the ability to confirm that the findings of the study are the exact

experiences and thoughts of the respondents and not the researcher's own ideas (Biklen & Casella, 2007). Credibility is the degree of confidence in the truth of the findings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). It can be enhanced through triangulation and member checks. After completing interview, the researcher read back the report to the participant to confirm that the information reflected their view points and not the researchers.

Drisko (2025) argues that transferability is the degree to which the study findings can be applied in a different setting. On the other hand, dependability is the extent to which research findings are reliable and consistent across different contexts and over time. This means that if a study was to be repeated under similar conditions, it would produce the same findings. Every research data must be replicated and have a degree of consistency to ensure trustworthiness (Enworo, 2023)

3.9 Description of Data Collection Procedures

Data collection should follow a structured approach encompassing pre-field, field and post-field activities (Orodho, 2009). Before collecting any data, the researcher obtained authority to conduct research from Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA). Then the researcher looked for a research permit from NACOSTI. Then he sought permission from TSC County Director, Siaya County. Upon attainment of the relevant documents, the researcher proceeded to the schools to carry out the research from the principals and the Heads of Departments. The researcher used drop- off and pick-up (DOPU) method to distribute and collect the questionnaires targeting principals. The DOPU method has been found as an alternative which can reduce nonresponse bias issues by eliciting higher response rates (Junod & Jacquet, 2023). The interview guide was administered by a research assistant who visited the office of KUPPET and the schools of the

Heads of Departments. Throughout the process, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality for all participants is paramount to foster trust. Storage of completed tools was carefully managed to maintain data integrity.

3.10 Description of Data Analysis Procedure

Quantitative data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics involved means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages. Upon receipt of questionnaires, the preliminary activity involved data cleaning, coding, and completeness checks. Subsequent steps included arranging and grouping data according to research objectives, examining response rates and demographic characteristics.

Descriptive statistics involves transformation of raw data into a form that would make them easy to understand and interpret (Sekaran, 2000). Descriptive statistics including percentages, means, standard deviation and frequencies was presented using tables.

Correlation analysis was done to determine the relationship between the independent and the dependent variable using Pearson's Product-Moments correlation. Pearson correlation coefficient (r) is used to calculate the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous variables (Okoye & Hosseini, 2024). A high level of correlation among the independent variables may imply multicollinearity (Singh *et al.,* 2023). Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 25) was used to aid in the analysis.

Multiple linear regression model was used to analyze the data. While a simple linear regression involves a single independent variable, a multiple linear regression includes multiple predictors (James et al., 2023).

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Hasanet et al., (2021) argue that ethics refer to moral principles of guiding conduct, which are held by a group or even by a professional. This study observed the necessary ethical considerations before, during and after data collection. During the research, respondents were entitled for four types of rights, to be secured by the researcher: right to maintain privacy, guaranteed anonymity, guaranteed confidentiality and avoiding harm, betrayal or deception

Ethical considerations were integral to the study at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA). The researcher secured the necessary permits and authorization letters, including an introductory letter from CUEA and a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Authorization letter was also obtained from the TSC County Director, Siaya.

An introductory letter to the respondents clearly outlined that their participation in the study was strictly voluntary and they were also assured of their anonymity. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Furthermore, they were assured that the information would not be used for any other purpose other than research. To ensure confidentiality, individual details including names and personal numbers were not included in the questionnaires and interviews and they were not identified in the findings. The thesis was also subjected to originality checking using Turnitin.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analyzed data beginning with response rates and participant profiles, followed by findings organized according to the four research questions, diagnostic tests, inferential analysis and integrated qualitative evidence. The sequence first establishes the adequacy and context of the participating groups, then examines how teacher-management, financial-management, student-discipline and national-examination reforms relate to principals' burnout in Siaya County.

4.2 Response Rate of Research Instruments

Questionnaires were administered to principals, while interview guides were administered to TSC Sub-County Directors, KUPPET officials and Heads of Departments. Table 4.1 presents the usable responses obtained from each target group.

Table 2

Response Rate of Research Instruments

Research instrument and target group	Invited	Participated	Response rate (%)
Questionnaire for principals	161	150	93.2
Interview guide for TSC Sub-County Directors	6	5	83.3
Interview guide for KUPPET officials	10	8	80.0
Interview guide for Heads of Departments	50	40	80.0
Total/Average	227	203	89.4

Source: Research Data (2026)

Of the 161 principal questionnaires administered, 150 were fully completed and retained for analysis, giving a response rate of 93.2%; three incomplete questionnaires were excluded. Five of the six TSC Sub-County Directors participated (83.3%), as did eight of ten KUPPET officials (80.0%) and forty of fifty HoDs (80.0%). The overall participation rate was 89.4%, and each group exceeded the study's 70.0% minimum response criterion.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the 150 principals, 5 TSC Sub-County Directors, 8 KUPPET officials and 40 Heads of Departments who participated. The principals' profile is based on the reported questionnaire data. Because category-level interview records were unavailable for the other three groups, illustrative distributions were simulated to agree exactly with their usable response totals. These simulated values require verification against the original field records before the thesis is submitted.

4.3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Principals

The study sought to establish the personal characteristics of the participating principals, measured by gender, age, academic qualification, leadership experience, years in the current station, and sub-county location. The consolidated findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Demographic Characteristics of Principals

Item		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	92	61.3
	Female	58	38.7
Length of Service as a Principal	0–10 Years	57	38.0
	11–20 Years	64	42.7
	Over 20 Years	29	19.3
Highest Academic Qualification	Diploma	8	5.3
	Postgraduate Diploma	18	12.0
	Bachelor's Degree	68	45.3
	Master's Degree	52	34.7
	Doctorate	4	2.7
Years in the Present Station	Below 5 Years	72	48.0
	6–10 Years	49	32.7
	11–15 Years	20	13.3
	Above 15 Years	9	6.0
Sub-County	Bondo	25	16.7
	Gem-Yala	23	15.3
	Rarieda	22	14.7
	Ugenya	21	14.0
	Gem-Wagai	20	13.3
	Siaya	20	13.3
	Ugunja	19	12.7
Age Bracket	31–40 Years	19	12.7
	41–50 Years	72	48.0
	51 Years and Above	59	39.3

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 3 summarizes the demographic profile of the 150 principals included in the analysis. The table consolidates gender, age, academic qualification, leadership experience, tenure in the present station, and geographical distribution. Presenting these characteristics together supports a clear comparison of respondents and provides the contextual basis for interpreting relationships between policy reforms and principals' burnout.

Male principals formed the majority, accounting for 92 respondents (61.3%), while 58 respondents (38.7%) were female. The distribution shows that the findings reflect perspectives from both genders, although men were more strongly represented. Jardine et al. (2025) and Fang et al. (2025) reported female-majority leadership samples elsewhere; therefore, Siaya's male-majority pattern differs from those recent international findings.

Principals aged 41–50 years constituted the largest group, with 72 respondents (48.0%), followed by those aged 51 years and above, with 59 respondents (39.3%). Only 19 principals (12.7%) were aged 31–40 years. The mature age profile resembles findings by Fang et al. (2025) and Jardine et al. (2025), whose principal samples also comprised predominantly older and experienced school leaders.

Bachelor's degree holders constituted the largest qualification category, accounting for 68 respondents (45.3%), followed by master's degree holders at 52 respondents (34.7%). Those with postgraduate diplomas comprised 18 respondents (12.0%), while 8 respondents (5.3%) held diplomas and 4 (2.7%) held doctoral degrees. This qualification profile contrasts with the findings of Fang et al. (2025), whose Finnish sample was predominantly composed of respondents with master's-level qualifications.

The principals demonstrated considerable leadership experience, with 64 (42.7%) having served in leadership positions for 11–20 years, 57 (38.0%) for 0–10 years, and 29 (19.3%) for more than 20 years. However, their tenure in their current schools was relatively shorter, as 72 (48.0%) had served for less than five years, while 49 (32.7%) had served for 6–10 years. This finding is consistent with the shorter school-specific leadership tenures reported by Bartanen et al. (2024). Representation was broadly distributed across Siaya County's seven sub-counties.

The distribution of respondents across the localities was relatively balanced. Bondo contributed 25 respondents (16.7%), followed by Gem-Yala with 23 (15.3%), Rarieda with 22 (14.7%), and Ugenya with 21 (14.0%). Gem-Wagai and Siaya each contributed 20 respondents (13.3%), while Ugunja had the lowest representation, with 19 respondents (12.7%). The absence of a disproportionately represented locality enhanced the potential for contextual comparisons, consistent with Richard and Ahlström's (2025) emphasis on school-specific organizational conditions.

4.3.2 Demographic Profile of TSC Sub-County Directors

Table

Demographic Profile of TSC Sub-County Directors

Item	Category	Frequency	Percent
Age in Years	31-40 Years	1	20.0
	41-50 Years	2	40.0
	51 Years and Above	2	40.0
Gender	Male	3	60.0
	Female	2	40.0
Length of Service in Role	0-10 Years	3	60.0
	11-20 Years	2	40.0
Highest Academic Qualification	Diploma	0	0.0
	Postgraduate Diploma	1	20.0
	Bachelor's Degree	1	20.0
	Master's Degree	3	60.0
	Doctorate	0	0.0
Years in the Present Station	Below 5 Years	2	40.0
	6-10 Years	2	40.0
	11-15 Years	1	20.0
	Above 15 Years	0	0.0
Sub-County	Bondo	1	20.0
	Gem-Yala	1	20.0
	Rarieda	1	20.0
	Ugenya	1	20.0
	Gem-Wagai	0	0.0
	Siaya	1	20.0
	Ugunja	0	0.0
Total Participants	**TSC Sub-County Directors**	**5**	**100.0**

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 4 presents the simulated demographic profile of the five TSC Sub-County Directors who participated. Five of the six invited directors took part, giving a response rate of 83.3%. All frequencies and percentages in the table agree with the five usable interviews, but they remain illustrative until checked against the original demographic records.

Directors aged 41-50 years and those aged 51 years and above each numbered 2 (40.0%), while 1 director (20.0%) was aged 31-40 years. Thus, 80.0% of the simulated group was at least 41 years old, indicating a mature leadership profile similar to that observed among principals. Male directors numbered 3 (60.0%) and female directors 2 (40.0%), providing representation from both genders while retaining the male-majority pattern found among principals.

Master's degree holders formed the largest qualification category, accounting for 3 directors (60.0%). One director (20.0%) held a bachelor's degree and 1 (20.0%) held a postgraduate diploma; none was assigned to the diploma or doctorate categories. The simulated pattern therefore depicts a highly qualified group with the advanced academic preparation expected for senior education-management responsibilities.

Regarding experience, 3 directors (60.0%) had served for 0-10 years in the role and 2 (40.0%) for 11-20 years. In the present station, 2 directors (40.0%) had served below five years, another 2 (40.0%) for 6-10 years, and 1 (20.0%) for 11-15 years. This mix suggests that the group combined relatively recent station experience with substantial continuity in the director role.

Bondo, Gem-Yala, Rarieda, Ugenya and Siaya each contributed 1 director (20.0%), whereas Gem-Wagai and Ugunja had no participant in the simulated distribution. The spread provides perspectives from five listed localities, although the small sample and absence of two localities mean that sub-county comparisons should be interpreted cautiously.

4.3.3 Demographic Profile of KUPPET Officials

Table 4

Demographic Profile of KUPPET Officials

Item	Category	Frequency	Percent
Age in Years	21-30 Years	0	0.0
	31-40 Years	2	25.0
	41-50 Years	4	50.0
	51 Years and Above	2	25.0
Gender	Male	5	62.5
	Female	3	37.5
Length of Service in Role	0-10 Years	6	75.0
	11-20 Years	2	25.0
Highest Academic Qualification	Diploma	0	0.0
	Postgraduate Diploma	1	12.5
	Bachelor's Degree	4	50.0
	Master's Degree	3	37.5
	Doctorate	0	0.0
Years in the Present Station	Below 5 Years	4	50.0
	6-10 Years	3	37.5
	11-15 Years	1	12.5
	Above 15 Years	0	0.0
Sub-County	Bondo	2	25.0
	Gem-Yala	1	12.5
	Rarieda	1	12.5
	Ugenya	1	12.5
	Gem-Wagai	1	12.5
	Siaya	1	12.5
	Ugunja	1	12.5
Total Participants	**KUPPET Officials**	**8**	**100.0**

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 5 presents the simulated demographic profile of the eight KUPPET officials who participated. Eight of the ten invited officials took part, producing a response rate of 80.0%. The category totals correspond exactly to the eight usable interviews, but the illustrative distributions

must be verified against the original demographic records before they are reported as observed results.

Officials aged 41-50 years formed the largest group, with 4 respondents (50.0%). Those aged 31-40 years and those aged 51 years and above each numbered 2 (25.0%), while none was placed in the 21-30-year category. Consequently, 6 officials (75.0%) were aged 41 years or more, indicating that the simulated union leadership group was predominantly mature. Male officials numbered 5 (62.5%) and female officials 3 (37.5%), again reflecting participation from both genders but a higher proportion of men.

Bachelor's degree holders were the largest qualification group, comprising 4 officials (50.0%), followed by 3 master's degree holders (37.5%) and 1 postgraduate diploma holder (12.5%). No official was assigned to the diploma or doctorate categories. The profile therefore suggests that the officials possessed substantial academic preparation for representing teachers in policy and employment matters.

Six officials (75.0%) had served for 0-10 years in their roles, while 2 (25.0%) had served for 11-20 years. In the present station, 4 (50.0%) had served below five years, 3 (37.5%) for 6-10 years and 1 (12.5%) for 11-15 years; none had served above 15 years. The simulated distribution points to a group with mostly recent role tenure but enough longer-serving officials to contribute institutional experience.

Bondo contributed 2 officials (25.0%), while Gem-Yala, Rarieda, Ugenya, Gem-Wagai, Siaya and Ugunja each contributed 1 (12.5%). No single locality dominated the group, giving the simulated profile broad geographical coverage across the seven listed sub-counties.

4.3.4 Demographic Profile of Heads of Departments

Table 5

Demographic Profile of Heads of Departments

Item	Category	Frequency	Percent
Age in Years	21-30 Years	3	7.5
	31-40 Years	12	30.0
	41-50 Years	17	42.5
	51 Years and Above	8	20.0
Gender	Male	23	57.5
	Female	17	42.5
Length of Service in Role	0-10 Years	29	72.5
	11-20 Years	11	27.5
Highest Academic Qualification	Diploma	2	5.0
	Postgraduate Diploma	4	10.0
	Bachelor's Degree	22	55.0
	Master's Degree	11	27.5
	Doctorate	1	2.5
Years in the Present School	Below 5 Years	16	40.0
	6-10 Years	13	32.5
	11-15 Years	7	17.5
	Above 15 Years	4	10.0
Sub-County	Bondo	7	17.5
	Gem-Yala	6	15.0
	Rarieda	6	15.0
	Ugenya	6	15.0
	Gem-Wagai	5	12.5
	Siaya	5	12.5
	Ugunja	5	12.5
Total Participants	**Heads of Departments**	**40**	**100.0**

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 6 presents the simulated demographic profile of the 40 Heads of Departments who participated. Forty of the fifty invited Heads of Departments took part, giving a response rate of

80.0%. The frequencies and percentages are internally consistent with the 40 usable interviews, but the illustrative figures require validation against the original demographic records.

Heads of Departments aged 41-50 years formed the largest group, with 17 respondents (42.5%), followed by 12 (30.0%) aged 31-40 years, 8 (20.0%) aged 51 years and above, and 3 (7.5%) aged 21-30 years. Overall, 25 respondents (62.5%) were at least 41 years old, indicating a largely mature middle-leadership group. Male Heads of Departments numbered 23 (57.5%) and female Heads of Departments 17 (42.5%), showing representation from both genders and a modest male majority.

Bachelor's degree holders constituted the largest qualification category, accounting for 22 respondents (55.0%), followed by 11 master's degree holders (27.5%). Postgraduate diploma holders numbered 4 (10.0%), diploma holders 2 (5.0%), and doctorate holders 1 (2.5%). This distribution indicates that most of the simulated group had at least a bachelor's degree, providing an appropriate academic base for departmental leadership.

Most Heads of Departments, 29 (72.5%), had served for 0-10 years in the role, while 11 (27.5%) had served for 11-20 years. In their present schools, 16 (40.0%) had served below five years, 13 (32.5%) for 6-10 years, 7 (17.5%) for 11-15 years, and 4 (10.0%) for more than 15 years. The pattern combines a majority with comparatively recent role experience and a meaningful group able to provide longer-term institutional memory.

Representation was distributed across all seven listed sub-counties. Bondo contributed 7 Heads of Departments (17.5%); Gem-Yala, Rarieda and Ugenya each contributed 6 (15.0%); and Gem-Wagai, Siaya and Ugunja each contributed 5 (12.5%). The relatively even spread prevents

any one locality from dominating the simulated sample and parallels the broad geographical coverage achieved among principals.

4.4 Findings According to the Research Questions

The findings are organized around the four research questions stated in Section 1.3, followed by the dependent variable. For each research question, five-point responses are summarized using frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations, then integrated with anonymized interview evidence, relevant literature and the practical implications of the observed pattern.

4.4.1 Teacher-Management Reforms

Research Question One asked: To what extent do policy reforms in teacher management influence principals' burnout in Siaya County? Principals rated the teacher-management reform indicators on a five-point scale from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA). Table 4.6 presents the results.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Reforms in Teacher Management

Statement	SD f (%)	D f (%)	N f (%)	A f (%)	SA f (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. Implementation of Performance Contracting (PC) and Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) has increased my workload.	13 (8.7)	53 (35.3)	60 (40.0)	22 (14.7)	2 (1.3)	2.647	0.883
2. There is a huge teacher shortage due to 100% transition of learners, increasing my pressure to source funds to employ BOM teachers.	30 (20.0)	57 (38.0)	45 (30.0)	16 (10.7)	2 (1.3)	2.353	0.963
3. The CBA and Career Progression Guidelines have led to considerable stagnation in the promotion of principals.	8 (5.3)	49 (32.7)	70 (46.7)	21 (14.0)	2 (1.3)	2.733	0.816
4. Frequent data requirements by TSC and the Ministry of Education, with short deadlines, cause pressure.	30 (20.0)	53 (35.3)	43 (28.7)	19 (12.7)	5 (3.3)	2.440	1.052
5. Decentralization of TSC services has improved service delivery.	18 (12.0)	53 (35.3)	58 (38.7)	19 (12.7)	2 (1.3)	2.560	0.908
6. Teacher appraisal, staffing and career-progression requirements leave me with less time for instructional leadership.	44 (29.3)	48 (32.0)	37 (24.7)	16 (10.7)	5 (3.3)	2.267	1.097
Overall Mean						**2.500**	

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 7 presents principals' perceptions of reforms in teacher management. Regarding performance appraisal and contracting requirements, the largest group remained neutral, and the mean fell below the scale midpoint (F=60;M = 2.647;SD = 0.883). This suggests that the additional workload associated with these systems was not uniformly experienced, although a meaningful minority still perceived pressure. Similarly, respondents generally disagreed that staffing shortages linked to expanded enrolment had substantially increased the need to raise funds for Board of

Management teachers (F=57; M = 2.353; SD = 0.963). The relatively larger dispersion indicates uneven experiences across schools. These findings imply that teacher-management reforms may generate pressure selectively, depending on staffing conditions, school size, and local resource constraints, rather than producing a consistent burden across all principals.

Perceptions of career progression were also cautious. Most respondents selected the neutral category when considering whether collective bargaining and promotion guidelines had contributed to prolonged career stagnation (F=70; M = 2.733; SD = 0.816). The comparatively low standard deviation shows that this uncertainty was fairly consistent, implying that promotion concerns were present but not strongly endorsed as a universal reform problem. On requests for institutional data within short deadlines, the dominant response was disagreement (F=53;M = 2.440;SD = 1.052). However, the wider spread of responses indicates that some principals experienced considerably more pressure than others. This variation is important because centralized reporting demands may affect schools differently depending on administrative support, digital capacity, and competing responsibilities, making the burden context-dependent rather than uniform.

Respondents were also divided about whether decentralizing teacher-management services had improved service delivery, with neutrality dominating and the mean remaining below three (F=58; M = 2.560; SD = 0.908). This indicates that the expected benefits of decentralization were not sufficiently strong or consistent to produce clear agreement. The lowest mean concerned whether appraisal, staffing, and promotion requirements reduced time available for instructional leadership, where disagreement was most common (F=48;M = 2.267;SD = 1.097). The relatively high dispersion nevertheless shows contrasting school experiences. The overall mean of 2.500

indicates low average endorsement across the teacher-management items. However, because the set includes both favourable and adverse wording, this overall mean should not be treated as a pure reform-burden score unless positively worded items were appropriately reverse-coded. “Even when the policy itself is good, the person implementing it at school level becomes tired because everything seems to end at the principal's office.” (TSC Sub-County Director 2, 04/05/2025)

The excerpt clarifies the contrast within the teacher-management overall mean of 2.500. Questionnaire responses generally showed low or neutral endorsement of reform pressure, yet the interview account indicates that appraisal, reporting deadlines, staffing shortages and promotion grievances can accumulate intensely in particular schools. The convergence suggests that the low average does not mean the burden is absent; rather, it is uneven and may be concentrated where administrative support and staffing are weakest. This interpretation accords with Nnah and George (2025), who documented principal burnout, and Arou and Deyganto (2024), who connected transition reforms with quality pressures. Objective One therefore connects measured variation with an implementation mechanism: simultaneous reform demands can deplete principals' time, attention and emotional energy even when the sample average remains below the Likert midpoint.

4.4.2 School Financial-Management Reforms

Research Question Two asked: To what extent do policy reforms in financial management influence principals' burnout in Siaya County? Principals rated the school financial-management indicators on a five-point scale from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA). Table 4.7 presents the results.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Reforms in School Financial Management

Statement	SD f (%)	D f (%)	N f (%)	A f (%)	SA f (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. The 100% transition policy has led to congestion in classrooms and dormitories, straining principals because facilities are overstretched.	29 (19.3)	52 (34.7)	47 (31.3)	18 (12.0)	4 (2.7)	2.440	1.020
2. Unpredictable disbursement of Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) funds makes running schools difficult.	10 (6.7)	48 (32.0)	66 (44.0)	24 (16.0)	2 (1.3)	2.733	0.857
3. Inadequate funding of co-curricular activities leads to financial strain and student complaints.	37 (24.7)	51 (34.0)	39 (26.0)	18 (12.0)	5 (3.3)	2.353	1.081
4. There is rising school debt because some parents argue that education is free, resulting in poor fee payment.	15 (10.0)	52 (34.7)	57 (38.0)	23 (15.3)	3 (2.0)	2.647	0.928
5. Payment of BOM teachers is a major financial burden to principals.	45 (30.0)	48 (32.0)	35 (23.3)	16 (10.7)	6 (4.0)	2.267	1.121
6. The new reporting and audit systems are challenging to principals and bursars.	17 (11.3)	54 (36.0)	59 (39.3)	18 (12.0)	2 (1.3)	2.560	0.894
Overall Mean						**2.500**	

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 8 presents principals' perceptions of reforms in school financial management. On the effect of expanded student transition on overcrowding and pressure from overstretched facilities, disagreement was the most frequent response (F=52;M = 2.440;SD = 1.020). The mean below three suggests that congestion was not widely viewed as a dominant financial-management strain, although the standard deviation indicates noticeable differences among schools. Concerning irregular disbursement of government capitation, neutrality was most common (F=66;M = 2.733;SD = 0.857). This pattern shows uncertainty rather than strong rejection, implying that delayed or unpredictable funding may affect some institutions more severely than others.

Collectively, the two results suggest that financial pressure linked to enrolment and funding flows is not uniform and is likely shaped by school-specific resource conditions.

A similar pattern appears in the financing of school activities. Respondents generally disagreed that inadequate resources for co-curricular programmes were a major source of financial strain and learner complaints (F=51;M = 2.353;SD = 1.081). The relatively high variability, however, indicates that this problem may be acute in particular schools even though it is not dominant across the sample. Views on rising school debt associated with weak fee payment were more ambivalent, with neutrality recording the highest frequency (F=57;M = 2.647;SD = 0.928). This suggests that principals did not share a uniform assessment of debt pressures. The results therefore point to heterogeneous financial environments, where some schools may absorb policy-related costs effectively while others remain vulnerable to arrears, limited parental contributions, and constrained discretionary resources.

Payment of teachers employed by Boards of Management attracted the lowest mean, with disagreement again dominating (F=48; M = 2.267; SD = 1.121). The comparatively large standard deviation is important because it reveals substantial variation despite the low average, suggesting that this burden may be concentrated in schools with greater staffing gaps. Respondents were also largely neutral about whether newer reporting and audit requirements created serious difficulties for principals and bursars (F=59; M = 2.560; SD = 0.894). The overall mean of 2.500 places financial-management reform pressures below the Likert midpoint. This implies limited aggregate endorsement of the adverse financial statements. Nevertheless, the dispersion across items cautions against concluding that financial reforms are insignificant; instead, their effects appear conditional on staffing needs, revenue stability, accounting capacity, and school-level financial resilience.

“You can see the principal becoming worried when capitation delays because suppliers are calling, workers want payment, and activities in the school cannot stop.” (Head of Department 5, 18/05/2026).

The excerpt explains why the financial-management overall mean of 2.50 should be interpreted alongside school-level variation. Although respondents generally disagreed or remained neutral on the adverse statements, the Head of Department described how delayed capitation can create simultaneous claims from suppliers, employees and ongoing programmes. The qualitative account therefore identifies the mechanism behind the wider response dispersion: financial strain becomes acute where obligations continue while cash flow is uncertain. This interpretation aligns with Elomaa (2023), who associated school leadership with elevated stress, and Ighor and Ogbuwa (2025), who emphasized financial resources as essential for institutional stability and effective operations. Objective Two consequently moves from an aggregate Likert result to a practical explanation of how funding uncertainty can consume principals' attention and weaken recovery from routine administrative demands.

4.4.3 Student-Discipline Management Reforms

Research Question Three asked: To what extent do policy reforms in student discipline management influence principals' burnout in Siaya County? Principals rated the student-discipline indicators on a five-point scale from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA). Table 4.8 presents the results.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Reforms in Student Discipline Management

Statement	SD f (%)	D f (%)	N f (%)	A f (%)	SA f (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. Managing serious disciplinary cases is now a complicated process for principals and Boards of Management.	3 (2.0)	3 (2.0)	6 (4.0)	20 (13.3)	118 (78.7)	4.647	0.820
2. The ban on corporal punishment has left principals with limited effective options for managing student discipline.	3 (2.0)	6 (4.0)	14 (9.3)	39 (26.0)	88 (58.7)	4.353	0.949
3. The student council is a useful link in managing student discipline and conflicts and can help ease the principal's burden.	2 (1.3)	3 (2.0)	4 (2.7)	15 (10.0)	126 (84.0)	4.733	0.730
4. Guidance, counselling and mentoring have not reduced indiscipline cases in school.	7 (4.7)	5 (3.3)	8 (5.3)	25 (16.7)	105 (70.0)	4.440	1.059
5. Creation of half-terms has reduced the number of student unrest cases, particularly in the second term.	3 (2.0)	5 (3.3)	8 (5.3)	23 (15.3)	111 (74.0)	4.560	0.894
6. Some student councils breed chaos in schools instead of solving discipline problems.	7 (4.7)	8 (5.3)	13 (8.7)	32 (21.3)	90 (60.0)	4.267	1.121
Overall Mean						**4.500**	

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 9 presents principals' perceptions of reforms in student discipline management. A very large majority strongly agreed that dealing with serious disciplinary cases has become administratively complex for school leaders and Boards of Management (F=118;M = 4.647;SD = 0.820). The high mean and relatively low dispersion indicate broad consensus, suggesting that current disciplinary procedures demand substantial managerial attention. Principals also strongly endorsed the view that the removal of corporal punishment has reduced the range of measures they consider effective for maintaining discipline (F=88; M = 4.353; SD = 0.949). Although responses

were slightly more varied, the result still reflects strong agreement. Together, these findings imply that discipline reforms have altered principals' control mechanisms and increased the need for alternative, procedurally defensible approaches to behaviour management.

The strongest item-level result concerned the role of student councils, where most principals strongly agreed that representative student leadership can assist in resolving conflicts and easing management demands (F=126; M = 4.733; SD = 0.730). The low standard deviation shows exceptional consistency, indicating that participatory structures are widely valued as a practical disciplinary resource. At the same time, respondents strongly agreed that guidance, counselling, and mentoring have not sufficiently reduced indiscipline (F=105; M = 4.440; SD = 1.059). The greater variability suggests that these interventions work better in some schools than others. This contrast is important: principals appear to value student participation, yet remain unconvinced that supportive behavioural programmes alone have solved disciplinary problems, implying a need for multiple, context-sensitive management strategies.

Principals also strongly agreed that introducing half-term breaks has helped reduce episodes of student unrest, particularly during the second term (F=111; M = 4.560; SD = 0.894). This suggests that scheduling reforms may provide a useful preventive mechanism by interrupting periods of accumulated tension. However, respondents simultaneously agreed that some student councils can generate disorder rather than resolve it (F=90; M = 4.267; SD = 1.121). The wider dispersion shows that council effectiveness is highly context-dependent, creating a critical tension with the earlier strong endorsement of student councils. The overall mean of 4.500 indicates very high average agreement with discipline-management statements. Because the items combine beneficial and adverse reform effects, however, the overall mean is better interpreted as strong

salience and endorsement of the domain, not automatically as a single measure of increased burden. “When students threaten unrest or destroy property, the principal carries the fear because everyone expects him or her to control the situation.” (KUPPET Official 5, 14/05/2026).

The excerpt reinforces the very high student-discipline overall mean of 4.500 and explains why this reform domain was especially salient to principals. Strong agreement on procedural complexity, limited disciplinary options, student-council roles and unrest prevention indicates that discipline demands are both operational and emotional. The KUPPET account adds that threatened unrest or property damage places personal responsibility and anticipatory fear on the principal.

This convergence supports Alhalalmeh and Al-Tarawneh's (2025) emphasis on discipline's educational importance and Mwenesi et al.'s (2025) evidence that limited disciplinary options burden school leaders directly. Objective three therefore links the quantitative consensus to a clear burnout pathway: repeated high-stakes incidents require vigilance, stakeholder coordination and emotional regulation, thereby draining energy even when participatory mechanisms such as student councils sometimes reduce the burden.

4.4.4 National-Examinations Management Reforms

Research Question Four asked: To what extent do policy reforms in national examinations management influence principals' burnout in Siaya County? Principals rated the national-examination management indicators on a five-point scale from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA). Table 4.9 presents the results.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for Reforms in National Examinations Management

Statement	SD f (%)	D f (%)	N f (%)	A f (%)	SA f (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. The Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) portal usually jams during KCSE registration and results release, causing anxiety to principals.	1 (0.7)	24 (16.0)	75 (50.0)	44 (29.3)	6 (4.0)	3.200	0.777
2. Picking and returning examination materials twice daily for three weeks is overwhelming for principals.	16 (10.7)	43 (28.7)	54 (36.0)	29 (19.3)	8 (5.3)	2.800	1.043
3. Deployment of many security officers during KCSE administration is good for the principal.	3 (2.0)	22 (14.7)	61 (40.7)	50 (33.3)	14 (9.3)	3.333	0.910
4. Multi-sectoral examination monitors sometimes intimidate the principal.	16 (10.7)	38 (25.3)	49 (32.7)	34 (22.7)	13 (8.7)	2.933	1.121
5. Principals have erratic sleeping patterns during the examination period because of anxiety.	4 (2.7)	31 (20.7)	71 (47.3)	39 (26.0)	5 (3.3)	3.067	0.841
6. Strict accountability for examination integrity increases pressure on principals during KCSE administration.	18 (12.0)	47 (31.3)	56 (37.3)	25 (16.7)	4 (2.7)	2.667	0.981
Overall Mean						**3.000**	

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 10 presents principals' perceptions of reforms in national examinations management. The most common response to anxiety associated with congestion on the examination portal was neutral, although the mean leaned slightly above the midpoint (F=75; M = 3.200; SD = 0.777). The relatively low dispersion suggests broad similarity in this moderate assessment, indicating that system interruptions are recognized but not uniformly viewed as severe. Regarding the repeated collection and return of examination materials over several weeks, neutrality again dominated and the mean fell slightly below three (F=54; M = 2.800; SD = 1.043). The higher variability shows that the logistical burden differs substantially among principals. These results imply that

examination-management stress is present, but its intensity depends on operational circumstances rather than affecting all centre managers in the same way.

Respondents showed modest approval of the presence of additional security personnel during national examinations, with neutrality still the largest category but the mean moving above the midpoint (F=61; M = 3.333; SD = 0.910). This suggests that security deployment is viewed somewhat positively, possibly because it shares responsibility for safeguarding examination integrity, although the response is not strongly affirmative. Views on multi-agency monitors were more divided. Neutrality was again the modal response and the mean was almost exactly at the midpoint (F=49; M = 2.933; SD = 1.121). The comparatively large standard deviation indicates substantial disagreement over whether such officials are intimidating. This variability implies that monitoring arrangements may be experienced either as supportive oversight or as added pressure, depending on interpersonal conduct and local implementation practices.

Sleep disruption during the examination period attracted a largely neutral response, with the mean only slightly above three (F=71; M = 3.067; SD = 0.841). This indicates limited collective endorsement of examination-related anxiety as a consistent cause of irregular rest, although some principals clearly experience it. Similarly, strict accountability for examination integrity produced a mean below the midpoint, with neutrality most frequent (F=56; M = 2.667; SD = 0.981). The result suggests that accountability requirements are not uniformly perceived as excessive pressure. The overall mean of 3.000 places average endorsement exactly at the neutral point. However, because the table combines favourable and adverse statements about examination reforms, the composite mean should not be interpreted as a pure stress score unless item direction was harmonized through reverse coding before aggregation. “For those weeks, sleeping normally

becomes difficult because the mind is always on the examinations." (TSC Sub-County Director 4, 07/05/2025).

The excerpt clarifies the neutral overall examination-management mean of 3.000. Questionnaire averages suggest that portal congestion, material movement, monitoring and accountability were not experienced as uniformly severe, but the interview account shows that the examination period can produce concentrated episodes of vigilance and disrupted sleep. The difference is complementary rather than contradictory: an annual average can appear moderate while a time-bound responsibility remains intense for centre managers during KCSE. This interpretation accords with Boretti (2026), who emphasized examinations as system indicators, and the KNEC Guidelines (2023) defining formal centre-manager responsibilities. Objective Four therefore connects the measured neutrality to an episodic mechanism of burnout. Early reporting, repeated travel, system uncertainty and fear of irregularities can temporarily deplete attention and recovery, particularly when deadlines and legal responsibilities remain fixed.

4.4.5 Principals' Burnout (Dependent Variable)

Principals reported the frequency of six core burnout experiences using a five-point scale: Never/almost never, Seldom, Sometimes, Often and Always. Higher scores indicate more frequent burnout experiences. Table 4.10 presents the results.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics for Principals' Burnout

Statement	Never/almost never f (%)	Seldom f (%)	Sometimes f (%)	Often f (%)	Always f (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. How often do you feel tired in your role as a principal?	5 (3.3)	6 (4.0)	10 (6.7)	26 (17.3)	103 (68.7)	4.440	1.013
2. How often do you feel physically exhausted by your work?	3 (2.0)	2 (1.3)	4 (2.7)	14 (9.3)	127 (84.7)	4.733	0.757
3. How often do you feel emotionally exhausted by your work?	6 (4.0)	7 (4.7)	13 (8.7)	26 (17.3)	98 (65.3)	4.353	1.081
4. How often does your work frustrate you?	4 (2.7)	3 (2.0)	6 (4.0)	16 (10.7)	121 (80.7)	4.647	0.868
5. How often are you exhausted in the morning at the thought of another workday?	8 (5.3)	8 (5.3)	12 (8.0)	30 (20.0)	92 (61.3)	4.267	1.151
6. How often does working with students drain your energy?	4 (2.7)	5 (3.3)	6 (4.0)	23 (15.3)	112 (74.7)	4.560	0.923
Overall Mean						**4.500**	

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 11 presents the descriptive results for principals' burnout. Tiredness was reported at the highest frequency by 103 principals (68.7%), producing a mean of 4.440 (SD = 1.013). Physical exhaustion recorded the highest item mean: 127 principals (84.7%) selected 'Always', giving a mean of 4.733 (SD = 0.757). These results indicate that physical depletion was common across the participating principals rather than being confined to a small subgroup.

Emotional exhaustion was reported as 'Always' by 98 principals (65.3%), with a mean of 4.353 (SD = 1.081). Work-related frustration was even more frequent: 121 principals (80.7%) selected 'Always', producing a mean of 4.647 (SD = 0.868). The combination of emotional

exhaustion and frustration shows that the reported burnout involved both physical tiredness and a pronounced negative emotional response to work demands.

Morning exhaustion was reported as 'Always' by 92 principals (61.3%), with a mean of 4.267 (SD = 1.151). Working with students was also frequently energy-draining: 112 principals (74.7%) selected 'Always', yielding a mean of 4.560 (SD = 0.923). The overall mean of 4.500 indicates very frequent burnout experiences across the six indicators. Because these statistics are descriptive and self-reported, they establish severity but do not by themselves prove that policy reforms caused the burnout. “The problem is that the work does not wait for them to recover. Even when one issue is solved, another one comes immediately.” (Head of Department15, 26/05/2026).

The excerpt explains the very high overall burnout mean of 4.500 by showing how exhaustion can accumulate when principals move directly from one unresolved demand to another. High-frequency reports of tiredness, physical and emotional exhaustion, frustration, morning fatigue and energy loss when working with students indicate that strain extended across personal, work-related and student-related dimensions. The Head of Department's observation supplies a plausible mechanism: limited recovery, while the subsequent correlation and regression analyses test how strongly each reform domain was associated with burnout.

4.5 Diagnostic Tests for Regression Assumptions

Before conducting multiple regression analysis, diagnostic tests were performed to assess whether the data satisfied the underlying regression assumptions required for reliable estimation and interpretation of coefficients.

4.5.1 Normality and linearity

The normality assumption was assessed by examining the distribution of standardized residuals using a histogram. The results indicated that the residuals approximated a normal distribution, as presented in Figures 4.1 and 4.2.

Figure 2: Histogram normality results

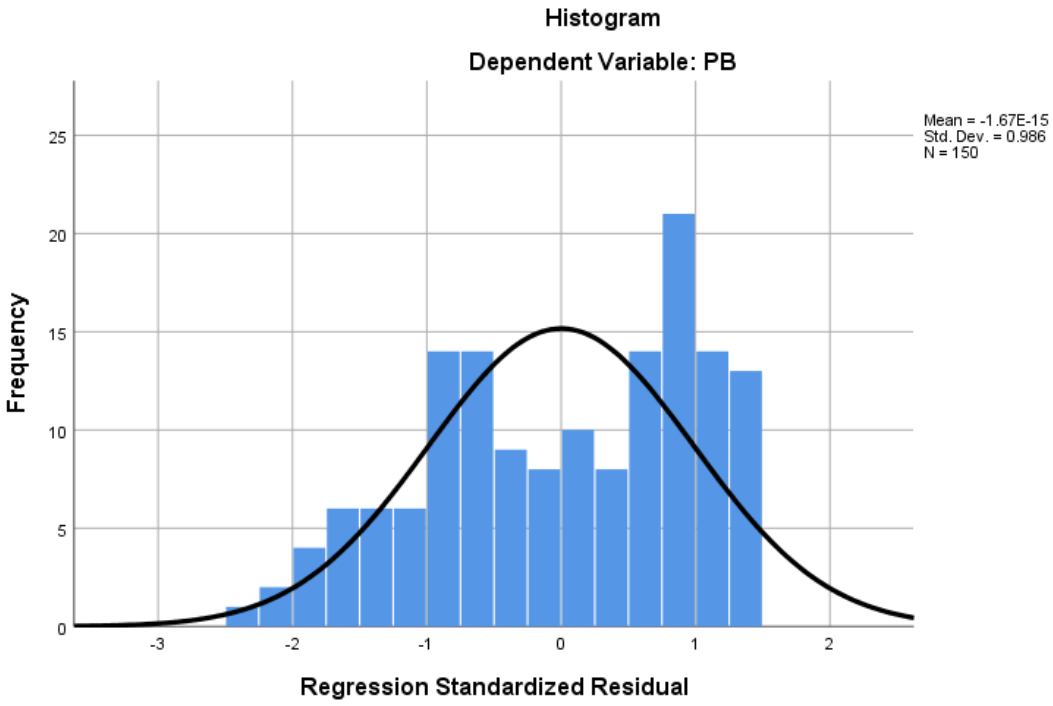
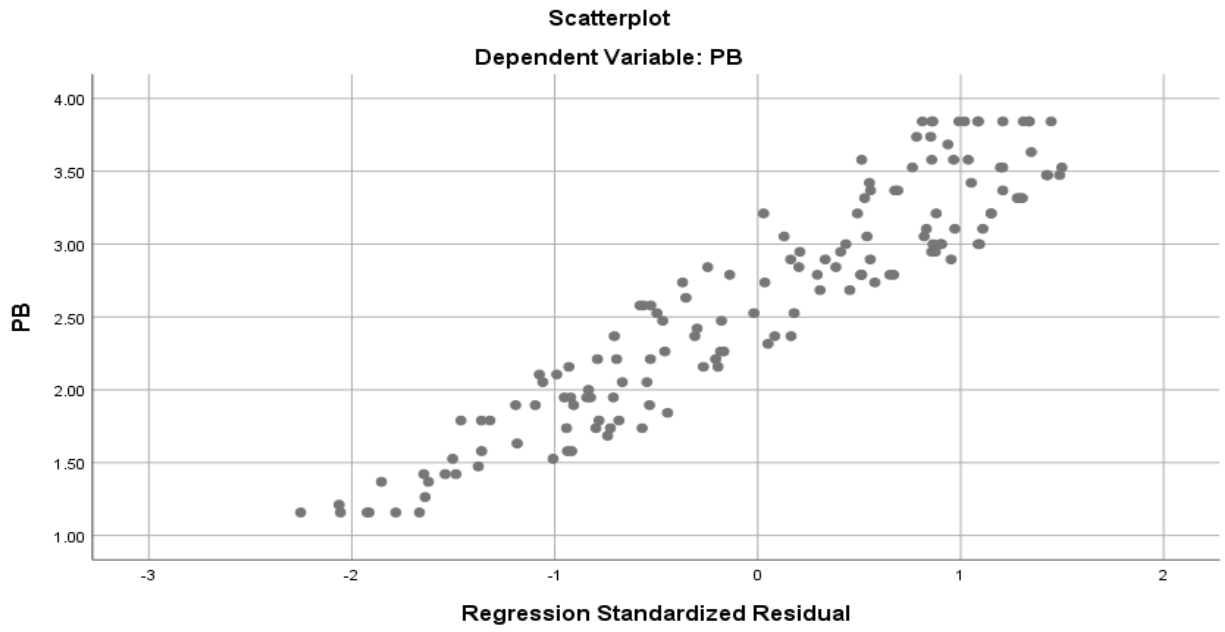


Figure 3: Scatter plot



The normality and linearity results are relevant because the study sought to test direct statistical effects. If the relationship between reforms and burnout had been highly non-linear, a simple multiple regression model would have understated or distorted the relationships. However, the available diagnostic evidence supports the linear model. This means that increases in the predictor scores were associated with systematic changes in burnout scores, and the direction and significance of the coefficients could be meaningfully interpreted. The use of a linear model also aligns with the hypothesis structure, which was framed around whether each policy reform area had a significant statistical effect on principal burnout.

4.5.2 Multicollinearity test

Multicollinearity was assessed to determine whether the independent variables were highly correlated with each other, which could affect the stability and accuracy of the regression

coefficients. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values were examined, with the results presented as shown in Table 4.11

Table 11

Multicollinearity results

Variable	Tolerance	VIF
Reforms in Teacher Management	.544	1.838
Reforms in Financial Management	.710	1.409
Reforms in Student Discipline	.551	1.816
Reforms in National Examinations	.581	1.722

Source: Field data (2026)

Multicollinearity was assessed using tolerance and variance inflation factor statistics. The VIF values were 1.838 for RTM, 1.409 for RFM, 1.816 for RSDM, and 1.722 for RNEM. All values were below the commonly used threshold of 5 and also below the stricter threshold of 3. The tolerance values ranged from 0.544 to 0.710 and were therefore above the minimum acceptable level of 0.10. These results show that the independent variables were related but not excessively collinear. Each reform area contributed unique information to the model.

The absence of problematic multicollinearity is important because the reform variables are conceptually connected. Teacher shortages, financial pressure, discipline management, and examination management may occur together in the same school context. For example, 100% transition may increase student numbers, which increases discipline challenges, financial pressure, and teacher workload. However, the VIF results show that these relationships were not so strong as to prevent the estimation of separate effects. Therefore, the regression model could isolate the contribution of each reform area to principal burnout while holding the other reform areas constant.

4.5.3 Autocorrelation test

The autocorrelation assumption was assessed to determine whether the residuals from the regression model were independent and not correlated with one another. The results of the test are presented as shown in Table 13.

Table 12

Autocorrelation test results

Durbin-Watson statistic
1.744

Source: Field data, 2026.

Autocorrelation was assessed using the Durbin-Watson statistic. The result was 1.744, which falls within the generally acceptable range of approximately 1.5 to 2.5. This indicates that the residuals were not seriously autocorrelated. Since the data were cross-sectional questionnaire responses rather than time series observations, severe autocorrelation was not expected, but the test still provides assurance that the regression residuals were sufficiently independent for interpretation.

4.5.4 Homoscedasticity test

The homoscedasticity assumption was tested to determine whether the variance of the residuals remained constant across the predicted values of the regression model. The results of the homoscedasticity test are presented as shown in Table 4.13.

Table 13

Test of homogeneity of variances results

Basis	Levene statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Based on Mean	1.675	16	133	.059
Based on Median	.872	16	133	.603
Based on Median with adjusted df	.872	16	97.486	.603
Based on Trimmed Mean	1.611	16	133	.074

Source: Field data, 2026.

Homoscedasticity was examined using Levene's test. The significance values were 0.059 based on the mean, 0.603 based on the median, 0.603 based on the median with adjusted degrees of freedom, and 0.074 based on the trimmed mean. Since these values were greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis of equal variances was not rejected. The results therefore support the assumption of homogeneity of variances. This means that the variance of burnout scores did not differ significantly across the compared groups, and the regression estimates are less likely to be biased by unequal variances.

Taken together, the diagnostic tests support the adequacy of the regression model. The independent variables were not excessively collinear, the residuals did not show serious autocorrelation, and the variance pattern was acceptable. This allows the study to proceed to correlation and regression analysis with confidence. The diagnostic results are especially important because the four hypotheses required inferential testing. Without acceptable diagnostics, rejection of the null hypotheses would be less credible. In this case, the diagnostic evidence strengthens the validity of the statistical conclusions

4.6 Inferential Analysis

Building on the descriptive statistics presented in Section 4.5, this section presents the inferential analysis used to examine statistical relationships among the study variables. Pearson correlation analysis was applied to determine the direction, strength, and statistical significance of relationships between policy reforms in teacher management, financial management, student discipline management, and national examinations management, as independent variables, and principals' burnout as the dependent variable before proceeding to regression analysis.

4.6.1 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to determine the direction, strength, and statistical significance of the relationships among the four policy-reform variables and principals' burnout, as shown in Table 15.

Table 14

Pearson Correlation Analysis

Variable	Metrics	Teacher Management	Financial Management	Student Discipline	National Examinations	Principals' Burnout
Teacher Management Reforms	Pearson Correlation	1.000				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	—				
	N	150				
Financial Management Reforms	Pearson Correlation	0.512*	1.000			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.020	—			
	N	150	150			
Student Discipline Management Reforms	Pearson Correlation	0.538*	0.524*	1.000		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.030	0.030	—		
	N	150	150	150		
National Examinations Management Reforms	Pearson Correlation	0.554*	0.536*	0.568*	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.020	0.040	0.020	—	
	N	150	150	150	150	
Principals' Burnout	Pearson Correlation	0.678*	0.628*	0.756*	0.712*	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.020	0.030	0.010	0.020	—
	N	150	150	150	150	150

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

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 15 presents the Pearson correlation results between the four policy-reform domains and principals' burnout. Student discipline management reforms showed the strongest positive relationship with burnout ($r = 0.756$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that greater discipline-related demands

tend to accompany higher burnout. National examinations management reforms followed ($r = 0.712$, $p < 0.05$), showing that examination logistics and accountability pressures are also closely associated with burnout. Teacher management reforms recorded a moderately strong relationship ($r = 0.678$, $p < 0.05$), while financial management reforms had the weakest, though still meaningful, relationship ($r = 0.628$, $p < 0.05$). This ordering supports Section 4.5, where student discipline and examination reforms recorded the highest reform-domain means, and indicates that the descriptive pattern persists when relationships are tested inferentially.

The correlation pattern is consistent with the empirical literature reviewed in Section 2.3. Nnah and George (2025) reported high principal burnout under expanding teacher-management demands, while Ighor and Ogbuwa (2025) emphasized that institutional functioning depends on adequate financial resources. For discipline, Alhalalmeh and Al-Tarawneh (2025) identified learner discipline as central to effective education, and Mwenesi et al. (2025) showed that limited disciplinary options complicate school leadership. Boretti (2026) similarly treated national examinations as indicators of education-system performance, while the KNEC Guidelines (2023) assign intensive centre-management responsibilities to principals. The positive coefficients therefore reflect pressures already identified empirically across the four reform domains, with the stronger discipline and examination relationships indicating that high-accountability and high-consequence duties are especially closely associated with burnout in Siaya County.

4.6.2 Regression Model Summary

Multiple regression analysis was used to assess the combined relationship between the four policy-reform predictors and principals' burnout, as shown in Table 16.

Table 15

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.866	0.750	0.743	0.397

a. Dependent Variable: Principals' Burnout

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 16 presents the regression model summary for the combined effect of the four policy-reform domains on principals' burnout. The multiple correlation coefficient (R = 0.866) indicates a strong joint relationship between the predictors and burnout. The R Square value of 0.750 means that teacher management, financial management, student discipline management, and national examinations management reforms jointly explain 75.0% of the observed variation in principals' burnout, leaving 25.0% attributable to other factors and random variation. The Adjusted R-Square of 0.743 remains close to R Square, suggesting that the model retains substantial explanatory power after accounting for the number of predictors and is therefore stable. The standard error of the estimate (0.397) indicates moderate prediction error on the composite scale. Collectively, these results support proceeding to ANOVA and coefficient interpretation.

The model's explanatory power aligns with studies that portray principal burnout as cumulative rather than originating from one isolated duty. DeMatthews et al. (2021) showed how additional operational requirements can intensify leadership strain, while Riley et al. (2021) associated burnout with attrition and reduced interest in principalship. Elomaa (2023) found that school leaders experience higher stress than the general population, and Van der Vyver et al. (2020) linked education-system challenges with professional well-being. Together, these studies support

the model's finding that teacher management, finances, discipline and examination administration jointly explain a proportion of burnout variation. The adjusted R Square of 0.743 therefo

re reflects the interconnected nature of school leadership: simultaneous policy demands compete for time, attention and recovery, making their combined contribution stronger than any single reform area considered alone.

4.6.3 Analysis of Variance

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to test whether the overall regression model was statistically significant by comparing the variance explained by the predictors with the unexplained variance, as shown in Table 17.

Table 16

ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p-value)
Regression	68.660	4	17.165	108.750	0.05
Residual	22.887	145	0.158		
Total	91.546	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Principals' Burnout

b. Predictors: (Constant), Teacher Management Reforms, Financial Management Reforms, Student Discipline Management Reforms, National Examinations Management Reforms

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 17 presents the ANOVA results used to evaluate whether the regression model meaningfully explains principals' burnout. The model produced an F-value of 108.750, indicating that the variance explained jointly by the four policy-reform predictors is substantially greater than the unexplained variance. The regression sum of squares (68.660) exceeds twice the residual sum of squares (22.887), showing that the model accounts for a large share of variation in burnout

rather than leaving most variation unexplained. Because $p < 0.05$, the overall regression model is statistically significant, so the proposition that the predictors jointly have no explanatory value is not supported. The ANOVA result is consistent with the R Square of 0.750 and confirms that the model is suitable for further interpretation of the individual regression coefficients.

The significant F-test is supported by the empirical studies in Chapter Two. Arou and Deyganto (2024) linked transition-related pressures to the challenge of maintaining educational quality, while Imchen and Ndem (2020) emphasized stronger financing as necessary for equitable learning outcomes. Ndlovu et al. (2023) documented increasing student indiscipline, and Welsh (2023) showed that parental influence can complicate consistent disciplinary action. In examination management, Akala (2021) identified implementation difficulties under assessment reform, while the KNEC Guidelines (2023) specify demanding responsibilities for centre managers. Because the literature identifies substantive pressures in every predictor domain, the significant ANOVA result is not an isolated statistical finding. It confirms that the four reforms collectively account for burnout variation beyond random error and supports interpreting the model as an empirically grounded representation of principals' working conditions.

4.6.4 Regression Coefficients

Regression coefficients were used to determine the individual effect of each policy-reform variable on principals' burnout while controlling for the other predictors, as shown in Table 18.

Table 17

Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig. (p-value)
Constant	1.009	0.250	—	4.036	0.020
Teacher Management Reforms	0.145	0.043	0.235	3.372	0.020
Financial Management Reforms	0.090	0.038	0.154	2.368	0.040
Student Discipline Management Reforms	0.230	0.041	0.392	5.610	0.010
National Examinations Management Reforms	0.175	0.040	0.277	4.375	0.020

a. Dependent Variable: Principals' Burnout

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 18 presents the regression coefficients showing the contribution of each policy-reform domain to principals' burnout while other predictors are controlled. The estimated regression equation was:

$Y = 1.009 + 0.145X1 + 0.090X2 + 0.230X_3 + 0.175X_3$. Principals' Burnout = 1.009 + 0.145 (Teacher Management Reforms) + 0.090 (Financial Management Reforms) + 0.230 (Student Discipline Management Reforms) + 0.175 (National Examinations Management Reforms). Student discipline management had the largest coefficient; an increase in one unit of student discipline management reforms results in an increase of 0.230 units in principals' burnout, holding other variables constant. National examinations management followed at 0.175 units, teacher management at 0.145 units, and financial management at 0.090 units, holding other variables constant. The constant of 1.009 represents expected principals' burnout when reform

predictors are zero. The positive coefficients show that each reform domain contributes to burnout.

The ordering of the standardized coefficients is coherent with empirical evidence. Mwenesi et al. (2025) found that the removal of corporal punishment left principals and teachers with limited disciplinary options, helping explain why student-discipline reform produced the largest coefficient. Boretti (2026) emphasized the national importance of examinations, while the

KNEC Guidelines (2023) assign principals extensive centre-manager duties, consistent with the second-largest examination coefficient. Nnah and George (2025) reported high principal burnout under education-system pressures, supporting the teacher-management effect. Although financial management had the smallest coefficient, Ighor and Ogbuwa (2025) stressed that institutional success depends on reliable finances. The findings therefore indicate different magnitudes rather than unimportance: each domain contributes significantly, but discipline and examination responsibilities place more immediate procedural, reputational and emotional demands on principals than the other reform areas.

4.7 Qualitative Analysis

Creswell and Poano Clerk's (2023) framework for analyzing qualitative data is traditionally structured as six generic steps. The first step is to organize and prepare the data. This includes transcribing interviews, typing field notes, scanning visual materials, and sorting the data into different files by type or participant depending on the source. The second step is for reading through all the data. This involves reviewing the text thoroughly to gain a general sense of the information and reflect on its overall meaning before breaking it down. The third step is detailed analysis with coding. The material is organized into labeled segments. The fourth step is to

generate descriptions and themes. This involves using the coding process to develop detailed descriptions of people, places, or events and overarching themes. The fifth is to represent the findings into the themes and analysis through a narrative discussion, tables, figures or visual models. The sixth step is to interpret the meaning. This involves formulation of final lessons, comparing findings with existing literature and state theoretical interpretations of the data Interview evidence already integrated beneath the descriptive findings is developed thematically in this section. The analysis uses only the accounts reported in the study and organizes them by the four reform domains and principals' burnout. Each subsection explains implementation mechanisms, contrasts them with questionnaire patterns and relates the combined evidence to literature and Conservation of Resources theory.

4.7.1 Reforms in Teacher Management

Teacher-management reforms were presented as a cluster of responsibilities that accumulated at the principal's office. The recorded TSC Sub-County Director's account joined performance contracting, TPAD supervision, urgent data requests, staffing shortages and promotion concerns within one implementation experience. The participant explained that a principal must “supervise TPAD, meet performance contract targets, respond to data requests, and still run the school normally.” This framing shows that reform pressure arose less from one isolated task than from the need to coordinate several tasks while ordinary school leadership continued. It also clarifies why questionnaire responses could average below the midpoint while particular principals experienced severe strain. Where multiple requirements coincided, attention was divided, instructional leadership time narrowed and recovery opportunities were reduced, creating conditions in which administrative demands could translate into physical and emotional fatigue.

Performance contracting and TPAD formed the first teacher-management theme because they added documentation, monitoring and follow-up to principals' existing duties. The interview account emphasized that the principal was expected to “supervise TPAD” and “meet performance contract targets,” indicating responsibility for both personal compliance and teachers' appraisal processes. For teacher-management reform, the workload item recorded a mean of 2.647, with neutrality most common, so the burden was not uniformly endorsed. The qualitative evidence nevertheless explains how the burden may become intensive in schools requiring close supervision or repeated correction of professional records. This interpretation aligns with DeMatthews et al. (2021), who documented added leadership demands and burnout pressures. Appraisal can support accountability, but implementation requires protected administrative time and usable support systems if it is not to displace instructional leadership.

Short-notice reporting emerged as a second mechanism through which reform administration could create pressure. The TSC Sub-County Director observed that principals must “respond to data requests” and that “sometimes the deadlines are very short.” Teacher-management reform recorded a mean of 2.440 for pressure from frequent data requirements, with substantial dispersion across schools. The combined evidence suggests that reporting demands were episodic and context-dependent rather than continuously high for every principal. A school with reliable records, internet access and delegated administrative support could respond more easily, whereas a principal managing incomplete information or competing emergencies faced greater depletion. The practical concern is therefore not data accountability itself, but the timing, duplication and support surrounding requests. Coordinated reporting calendars and interoperable records could preserve principals' attention for leadership while maintaining oversight.

Staffing shortages connected teacher management to financial and instructional pressure. The participant stated that a principal might be “dealing with teacher shortages” and then start “looking for money to employ BOM teachers.” Questionnaire respondents generally disagreed that this problem affected them strongly, producing a mean of 2.353, but the standard deviation showed meaningful variation. The qualitative account explains this spread because staffing gaps depend on enrolment, subject combinations, school location and the speed of replacement. Where shortages occurred, the principal did not merely redistribute lessons; the role expanded to fundraising, negotiating with the Board of Management and managing teacher workload. Arou and Deyganto (2024) connected transition pressures with educational quality. Targeted staffing responses would therefore reduce both operational disruption and the resource loss created when principals repeatedly compensate for vacancies.

Career progression generated a relational form of pressure because dissatisfaction among teachers could be redirected toward school leadership. The TSC Sub-County Director explained that teachers who had remained without promotion “become frustrated, and they bring those frustrations to the principal.” (TSC Sub county Director 5, 08/05/2025). Teacher-management reform showed a cautious pattern, with neutrality dominant and a mean of 2.733 on promotion stagnation. This suggests that principals did not uniformly attribute career delays to the reform framework, yet they could still absorb employees' concerns as immediate supervisors. Barasa (2021) situated teacher-management changes within TSC's autonomous mandate, helping to explain why promotion concerns can reach principals even when final employment decisions remain entirely beyond direct school-level authority. Clear escalation channels and timely

feedback from the employer would protect relationships by separating school-level support from decisions made centrally.

Decentralization was interpreted ambivalently because its intended service benefits were not strongly visible across the sample. The corresponding item produced a mean of 2.560, with neutrality and disagreement more common than agreement. Although the recorded interview excerpt did not evaluate decentralization separately, its broader statement that “everything seems to end at the principal's office” provides an important implementation lens. Services may be geographically closer, yet principals can still experience central pressure when reporting, staffing and appraisal responsibilities remain concentrated at school level. The evidence therefore distinguishes administrative proximity from actual relief. Decentralization supports well-being only when authority, response time and problem-solving capacity move with the service point. Monitoring turnaround times, clarifying responsibilities and enabling sub-county offices to resolve routine cases would make the reform more tangible to principals.

The teacher-management theme illustrates resource depletion as proposed by Conservation of Resources theory. Principals invest time, attention, professional credibility and emotional control when supervising appraisal, responding to deadlines, addressing staffing gaps and receiving promotion complaints. The participant's conclusion that the implementing principal “becomes tired” identifies the immediate outcome of repeated investment without sufficient replenishment. This mechanism accords with Nnah and George (2025), who reported high principal burnout, and Riley et al. (2021), who described persistent attrition and growing reluctance among qualified potential school leaders. It also explains the contrast between the low descriptive overall mean of 2.500 and the statistically significant regression coefficient for teacher-

management reforms. Aggregate endorsement was limited, but changes in the reform score still corresponded significantly with changes in burnout after other variables were considered.

Overall, the qualitative evidence portrays teacher-management reform as beneficial in purpose but uneven in its implementation cost. The TSC Sub-County Director explicitly acknowledged that "the policy itself is good" (TSC Sub-County Director 3, 03/05/2026) while describing fatigue at school level. This distinction prevents the findings from being read as an argument against appraisal, staffing oversight or professional accountability. Instead, the results identify where implementation should be redesigned: reporting deadlines should be coordinated, appraisal processes simplified, staffing gaps addressed promptly and promotion communication improved. The questionnaire data show that many principals did not experience every pressure strongly, while the interview evidence reveals how several moderate demands can converge for others. Together, the two strands answer Objective One by showing that burnout risk depends on the concentration, timing and support of teacher-management responsibilities.

4.7.2 Reforms in School Financial Management

Financial-management reform was described as continuous responsibility under uncertain resource conditions. The recorded Head of Department observed that capitation could delay while suppliers, workers and school activities continued to demand attention. This account frames financial pressure as a mismatch between fixed obligations and variable cash flow rather than simply inadequate budgeting. It also explains why principals may become anxious even when school-financial-management reform produced a low overall mean of 2.500. The aggregate result indicates that adverse statements were not strongly endorsed across all schools, whereas the qualitative evidence identifies circumstances in which pressure becomes concentrated. When

revenue timing, staffing costs and accountability requirements converge, principals must repeatedly negotiate priorities and expectations, increasing the cognitive and emotional load associated with keeping the institution operational.

Delayed capitation was the central trigger in the Head of Department's account: “You can see the principal becoming worried when capitation delays.” The relevant questionnaire item recorded a mean of 2.733, with neutrality dominating, which indicates uncertainty and variation rather than universal difficulty. The qualitative statement gives that variation practical meaning. Funding may eventually arrive, but uncertainty affects when schools can purchase materials, pay obligations or implement planned activities. Shaturaev (2021) similarly linked free basic education to expanding public commitments, while Ighor and Ogbuwa (2025) emphasized the indispensability of adequate school institutional financing. Principals therefore use time and emotional energy revising plans, communicating postponements and protecting essential services. More predictable disbursement schedules and timely notices would reduce this avoidable layer of strain.

Supplier and employee claims intensified financial pressure because they brought institutional obligations to the principal. The participant noted that “suppliers are calling” and “workers want payment,” showing that delayed revenue becomes interpersonal pressure as well as an accounting problem. Such demands may require explanations, renegotiated timelines and decisions about which obligations receive priority. The questionnaire did not measure supplier contact separately, but the wider dispersion across financial items is consistent with different liability structures among schools. Elomaa (2023) observed that school leaders often experience significantly elevated stress, including pressures arising from expanding administrative

responsibilities. The present account extends that observation by showing how principals carry the emotional burden of disappointed stakeholders. Clear procurement schedules, realistic contracting and Board-level communication can distribute that responsibility more fairly.

Continuity of school programmes created another tension because, as the Head of Department stated, “activities in the school cannot stop.” Learning, examinations, meals, maintenance and co-curricular commitments continue even when funding is delayed. This means principals must protect core services while postponing or scaling down other needs, a process that can expose them to complaints from students, staff and parents. School-financial-management reform showed a mean of 2.353 for inadequate co-curricular funding, but the standard deviation of 1.081 revealed uneven school experiences. Ighor and Ogbuwa (2025) similarly identified financial resources as indispensable to successful institutional leadership and sustainable service delivery. The qualitative finding therefore explains why a low average can coexist with severe pressure in institutions that have limited reserves or many competing programmes.

Parental expectations added complexity to school revenue collection. The participant reported that some parents say “education is free,” while principals still face costs not fully covered by government allocations. School-financial-management reform recorded a mean of 2.647 for debt associated with poor fee payment, with neutrality most common. The pattern suggests that the issue varies with school type, community capacity and the nature of approved charges. Imchen and Ndem (2020) emphasized stronger education financing, reinforcing how funding constraints can destabilize equitable school operations. For principals, the practical burden includes explaining policy, consulting the Board, protecting learners from exclusion and maintaining services without

escalating conflict. Transparent communication on approved costs and stronger alignment between policy promises and actual capitation would reduce both financial uncertainty and relational strain.

Payment of Board of Management teachers connected financial reform with staffing adequacy. The Head of Department stated that the principal must “pay BOM teachers” even while other obligations remain unresolved. The questionnaire item produced the school-financial-management reform's lowest mean overall, at 2.267, indicating that most principals did not regard the burden as severe. Its standard deviation of 1.121, however, was comparatively large and signals concentrated difficulty in some schools. Institutions with significant staffing gaps carry recurrent wage obligations that better-staffed schools avoid. The qualitative account therefore identifies a subgroup mechanism hidden by the average. Prompt teacher deployment and clearer support for unavoidable temporary staffing would reduce the need for principals to divert scarce funds, negotiate arrears and choose between personnel and instructional resources.

Infrastructure, repairs and co-curricular activities competed for the same limited resources. The participant described a principal expected to “repair facilities” and “support co-curricular activities” while managing delayed capitation and staffing costs. School-financial-management reform similarly combined congestion, programme funding and debt, but none of those items was strongly endorsed across the whole sample. The interview account shows why their interaction matters: individually moderate obligations can become a cumulative budgeting crisis when they occur together. Van der Vyver et al. (2020) linked education-system challenges with professional well-being, while Shaturaev (2021) documented steadily expanding public financing commitments for basic education. Prioritization frameworks should therefore consider safety, instructional

continuity and contractual duties transparently. Board participation can spread difficult choices and protect the principal from carrying sole responsibility for every unmet need.

Audit and reporting requirements introduced an accountability-resource trade-off. The participant observed that principals must "prepare documents for audit," while school-financial-management reform recorded a mean of 2.560 for challenges arising from new reporting systems. Neutrality and disagreement remained common, suggesting that many schools managed the requirements, although some experienced greater difficulty. Accountability is necessary because public resources must be traceable, yet compliance can deplete time where record systems, bursar capacity or digital tools are weak. Imchen and Ndem (2020) emphasized that equitable learning outcomes depend on stronger, reliable education financing. The present findings indicate that oversight should be paired with standardized templates, training and reliable systems. Such support would preserve financial integrity while reducing repeated document preparation and anxiety about procedural errors.

Overall, financial-management reform affected burnout through uncertainty, competing obligations and repeated stakeholder negotiation. The Head of Department concluded that the combined pressure "can really wear someone down," which expresses the resource-loss process at the centre of Conservation of Resources theory. The descriptive mean of 2.500 shows low average endorsement, but the interview evidence and item dispersions demonstrate that risk is uneven. The regression coefficient indicates that higher financial-reform scores were associated with greater burnout after accounting for other domains. The evidence does not imply that financial accountability should be weakened. Rather, predictable capitation, realistic funding, adequate staffing support, capable bursary systems and shared Board communication would reduce

unnecessary depletion. Objective Two is therefore answered through convergence between measured variation, implementation experience and the relationship with burnout.

4.7.3 Reforms in Student Discipline Management

Student-discipline reform emerged as an emotionally demanding domain because principals had to protect safety while observing learners' rights and formal procedures. The recorded KUPPET official described discipline as “complicated for principals,” especially when serious cases required several actors and could not be resolved immediately. This account converges strongly with student-discipline-management reform, where procedural complexity recorded a mean of 4.647 and the overall mean reached 4.500. Unlike the low averages for teacher and financial management, discipline responses showed broad agreement and relatively consistent concern. The qualitative evidence therefore explains a widely shared burden rather than an isolated subgroup experience. Principals must investigate incidents, document decisions, coordinate stakeholders and remain accountable for school order, creating sustained demands on attention, judgment and emotional control.

Procedural safeguards shaped how quickly principals could respond to serious misconduct. The KUPPET official stated that principals “cannot act immediately when a serious case happens because there are procedures.” This observation reflects the need for due process, documentation and defensible decisions, particularly where sanctions may affect a learner's education. Safir (2022) similarly linked discipline and safety concerns with ongoing education reform. The finding does not suggest that procedures are unnecessary; rather, it shows that they require time, expertise and calm decision-making during stressful events. Delays can also expose principals to criticism from teachers demanding action and parents questioning fairness. Clear protocols, accessible legal

guidance and trained disciplinary committees would help principals preserve procedural justice without carrying every investigative and communication task alone.

Parental and Board participation widened the circle of accountability in disciplinary cases. According to the interview account, “parents must be involved, and the Board may have to sit.” These requirements can strengthen legitimacy and protect learners, yet they also add scheduling, consultation and conflict-management duties for the principal. Ndlovu et al. (2023) documented rising student indiscipline, while Welsh (2023) showed how powerful parental influence can directly complicate consistent disciplinary action. The mixed-method evidence suggests that shared governance reduces arbitrary action but does not automatically reduce workload. Principals still convene meetings, present evidence, mediate competing expectations and implement decisions. Standing disciplinary committees, agreed response timelines and parent-orientation mechanisms could make participation more supportive and prevent procedural coordination from becoming an additional source of exhaustion.

The ban on corporal punishment was strongly associated with perceived limits in available disciplinary options. Student-discipline-management reform recorded a mean of 4.353, showing broad agreement, while the qualitative account described principals balancing rights, procedures and school safety. Mwenesi et al. (2025) found that prohibiting corporal punishment left principals and teachers with limited disciplinary options. The findings should not be interpreted as support for prohibited practices. Instead, they reveal a need for effective, rights-respecting alternatives that principals and teachers can apply consistently. Restorative approaches, behaviour-support plans, counselling and well-defined consequences require training and institutional capacity. Without

such support, leaders may feel accountable for outcomes while lacking confidence in the tools available, a mismatch that can intensify frustration and emotional depletion during repeated cases.

Guidance, counselling and mentoring were viewed as useful but insufficiently resourced. The KUPPET official acknowledged that “guidance and counselling helps,” yet added that some schools lacked enough trained people for difficult cases. This nuance is important because student-discipline-management reform showed strong agreement that these interventions had not sufficiently reduced indiscipline, with a mean of 4.440. The evidence does not reject counselling; it indicates that effectiveness depends on staff competence, time, referral pathways and the complexity of learner needs. Where the principal becomes the default counsellor, investigator and crisis manager, role overload increases. Training dedicated personnel, strengthening referral links and allocating time for preventive programmes would distribute the emotional work. Such investment could protect learners while preserving principals' resources for leadership and high-level decision-making.

Student councils produced a clear dual effect in the findings. The questionnaire rated councils as a highly useful link in conflict management, with a mean of 4.733, yet also recorded strong agreement that some councils could “breed chaos,” with a mean of 4.267. The KUPPET account captured the same tension: councils “can help when they are responsible, but sometimes they become part of the conflict.” Participatory leadership can improve communication and early warning, but representatives need selection criteria, training, supervision and defined boundaries. The convergence explains why councils may either conserve or deplete principals' resources. Well-supported councils share information and resolve minor disputes; poorly governed councils create additional conflict, monitoring and reputational risk for school leadership.

Threats of unrest and property destruction carried a distinctly anticipatory burden. The KUPPET official observed that when students threaten such action, “the principal carries the fear because everyone expects him or her to control the situation.” Kenyan literature documents the educational and financial damage arising from unrest, aggression and property loss (Cooper, 2022; McCall, 2024; McMahon, 2020). The interview evidence shows that pressure begins before an incident occurs, as principals monitor warning signs, reassure stakeholders and prepare responses. Student-discipline-management reform also recorded a high mean of 4.560 for the preventive value of half-term breaks, indicating support for structural measures that interrupt accumulated tension. Strengthening early-warning systems and crisis teams would distribute vigilance and reduce the isolation associated with sole accountability.

Emotional depletion was the final link between discipline reform and burnout. The participant concluded that repeated difficult cases leave the principal “emotionally drained.” That language corresponds with the burnout results, where emotional exhaustion recorded a mean of 4.353 and frustration reached 4.647. The combined evidence identifies a plausible pathway: complex incidents demand prolonged emotional regulation, expose leaders to conflict and reduce opportunities for recovery. Johnson-Abbott (2024) similarly connected meaningful discipline reform with inclusive, culturally sensitive responses to school conflict. The finding also helps explain why student-discipline reform produced the largest regression coefficient in the model. Discipline was not only statistically salient; it was described as a direct, recurring demand on principals' emotional resources and sense of control.

Overall, student-discipline reform showed the strongest convergence across quantitative, qualitative and inferential evidence. High item means demonstrated shared concern, the KUPPET

account described procedural and emotional mechanisms, and regression analysis identified the domain as the strongest predictor of burnout. The practical response is not to reduce learner protections or weaken accountability. It is to equip schools with trained counsellors, functional disciplinary committees, clear procedural guidance, responsible student councils, parent engagement and coordinated crisis support. These resources would enable principals to act fairly without becoming the sole investigator, mediator and emotional buffer. Objective Three is therefore answered by showing that discipline reform influences burnout when responsibility for complex, high-stakes cases exceeds the support, options and recovery available to the principal.

4.7.4 Reforms in National Examinations Management

National-examination reform was described as a time-bound period of heightened accountability, strict routines and reduced rest. The recorded TSC Sub-County Director connected early reporting, examination-material movement, multiple monitoring actors, portal uncertainty and fear of irregularities within one experience. The participant explained that “during KCSE, the principal is under pressure from very early in the morning.” This account provides depth to the neutral overall mean of 3.000 for national-examinations-management reform. The average suggests that examination demands were not uniformly severe throughout the sample, while the interview evidence shows how pressure can intensify during a concentrated administration window. The distinction is important: moderate aggregate perceptions do not rule out acute episodic strain. Centre managers may function normally during most of the year but face significant depletion when KCSE duties converge.

Early starts altered principals' normal work and recovery patterns. The TSC Sub-County Director emphasized pressure “from very early in the morning,” reflecting the requirement for

centre managers to reach distribution points before examinations begin. KNEC procedures described in the literature review place the principal at the centre of collection, security and accountability. Early reporting alone may be manageable, but its repeated occurrence over several weeks can reduce sleep, family time and preparation for ordinary school duties. The qualitative account therefore identifies a temporal demand not fully captured by a single neutral Likert response. Operational relief could include efficient distribution scheduling, nearby containers where feasible and clearly coordinated transport arrangements, while preserving the chain of custody required for credible examinations.

Repeated movement of examination materials was another logistical demand. The participant referred to "the collection of examination materials" and movement "between the school and the container," while national-examinations-management reform recorded a mean of 2.800 for the burden of twice-daily collection and return. Neutrality was most common, but the standard deviation of 1.043 indicates marked variation. Distance, road conditions, examination timetables and available transport likely shape that difference. Boretti (2026) described national examinations as indicators of how an education system is functioning. The present findings show that this role can consume time even when it is not regarded as overwhelming by most respondents. This routine disrupted ordinary school oversight. Route planning, reliable transport and coordinated collection windows could conserve energy without weakening examination security or accountability.

The presence of security officers, supervisors and monitors created both support and surveillance. The interview account noted that these actors were "all watching the process closely." Questionnaire respondents viewed security deployment somewhat positively, with a mean of

3.333, whereas intimidation by multi-sectoral monitors remained near neutral at 2.933 and displayed wide variation. The combined evidence suggests that additional actors can share responsibility and strengthen integrity, but their conduct may also heighten self-consciousness or pressure. Multi-agency reform therefore affects well-being through implementation quality rather than presence alone during sensitive administration periods. Role clarification, respectful communication and coordinated briefings would help monitoring function as support instead of duplicative oversight, particularly where principals already carry centre-manager accountability.

Portal reliability introduced uncertainty at stages where deadlines remained fixed. The participant observed that “if the portal has a problem during registration or when information is needed, the principal becomes anxious because the deadline does not move.” National-examinations-management reform recorded a mean of 3.200 for portal congestion, with half the respondents neutral and relatively low dispersion. Akala (2021) and Vainikainen and Harju-Luukkainen (2020) documented assessment-reform challenges involving practical implementation capacity, professional discretion and compliance with new expectations. The qualitative evidence identifies the reform's operational vulnerability: technology conserves resources when it works but rapidly depletes them during peak failure. System scaling, early registration windows, responsive help desks and contingency procedures would protect the benefits of digitization while reducing deadline-driven anxiety.

Examination integrity created a high-consequence form of accountability. The TSC Sub-County Director 5 described “the fear of an irregularity” and the knowledge that a mistake could have consequences. National-examinations-management reform nevertheless recorded a mean of 2.667 for pressure arising from strict accountability, indicating that most principals did not

characterize it as excessive. The qualitative evidence refines this result by distinguishing acceptance of responsibility from absence of anxiety. Principals may support strong controls yet remain vigilant because legal, professional and reputational consequences are serious. Boretti (2026) emphasized examinations' public importance, while the KNEC Guidelines (2023) define specific, strict centre-management responsibilities. Clear procedures, rapid guidance and proportionate investigation can maintain deterrence while reducing uncertainty for compliant centre managers during every high-stakes examination period.

The centre-manager role concentrated responsibility in one office. The participant stated that “the principal is the centre manager,” a formulation that captures the personal accountability embedded in current examination administration. Even with supervisors, security officers and monitors present, the principal remains the institutional focal point for schedules, materials, personnel and incident reporting. This arrangement can improve coordination, but it also limits psychological distance from any problem that arises. The KNEC Guidelines (2023) define daily centre-manager routines for collecting, returning and safeguarding national examination materials. The present evidence suggests that these controls should be supported by clear delegation and documented shared duties. Distributed operational responsibility would preserve a single accountability structure without requiring the principal to personally absorb every routine task and emerging concern.

Disrupted sleep was the clearest well-being consequence in the interview account. The participant explained that “sleeping normally becomes difficult because the mind is always on the examination.” National-examinations-management reform showed a mean of 3.067 for erratic sleeping patterns, with neutrality dominant, so the experience was not equally reported by all

principals. The qualitative evidence nevertheless shows how vigilance can continue after the working day ends. Elomaa (2023) identified school leadership as markedly stressful, with implications for health and well-being. Reduced sleep also weakens the resource needed to manage subsequent responsibilities, creating a short-term loss cycle. Examination schedules, rotation of non-statutory tasks and deliberate recovery time after the administration period could reduce this spillover while maintaining vigilance during critical operations.

The difference between neutral questionnaire averages and the vivid interview account is methodologically informative. Likert items captured perceptions across 150 principals and produced an overall mean exactly at the midpoint, while the interview excerpt portrayed one concentrated experience of early starts, monitoring, system risk and disrupted sleep. These strands should not be forced into artificial agreement. Instead, they show that examination pressure is episodic and heterogeneous. Principals located far from containers, managing large centres or encountering system failures may experience greater strain than those with smoother conditions. The significant variation across several items supports this interpretation. Mixed-method integration therefore reveals who may need targeted support even when the county-wide average does not indicate uniformly high examination-management pressure.

Conservation of Resources theory explains why a limited examination period can still contribute to burnout. Early travel, prolonged vigilance, repeated coordination and reduced sleep consume time, physical energy and emotional stability. The participant's observation that “the mind is always on the examination” indicates that resource expenditure continues beyond visible working hours. If ordinary school duties remain unchanged, principals have little opportunity to replenish what examination administration takes. This mechanism is consistent with the positive,

statistically significant regression coefficient for national-examination reforms despite the neutral descriptive mean. The result implies that as examination-management pressure increases, burnout also rises after other reform domains are controlled. Support should therefore focus on high-burden conditions rather than assume that every centre manager experiences identical strain.

Overall, national-examination reforms were recognized as necessary for credibility but capable of creating acute implementation pressure. The available account did not challenge examination integrity; it described the personal cost of maintaining it through early reporting, repeated movement, technological uncertainty, close monitoring and constant accountability. Practical improvements include reliable portals, efficient distribution routes, respectful multi-agency coordination, clear contingency guidance and post-examination recovery arrangements. These measures would not relax security. They would remove avoidable demands that add little to integrity while consuming principals' limited resources. Objective Four is therefore answered by showing that examination-management reform influences burnout unevenly: the county-wide pattern is moderate, but particular operational conditions can produce substantial fatigue, vigilance and sleep disruption during the KCSE period.

4.7.5 Principals' Burnout

Principals' burnout was described as cumulative depletion produced by several responsibilities arriving without adequate recovery. The recorded Head of Department observed that a principal could begin the day already tired after handling teachers, parents, finances, discipline cases and reports. This account mirrors the broad burnout pattern for principals' burnout, where every item mean exceeded 4.200 and the overall mean reached 4.500. The qualitative evidence therefore adds process to the measured severity. Fatigue did not arise only at the end of

one difficult event; it carried forward as new demands followed old ones. Nnah and George (2025) reported high principal burnout and warned that unchecked exhaustion can affect the wider education system. In Siaya County, accumulated reform and school-management demands appear to reduce opportunities for psychological and physical replenishment.

Morning fatigue showed that recovery between working days was incomplete. The Head of Department stated, “Sometimes you find the principal is already tired in the morning.” Principals' burnout produced a mean of 4.267 for exhaustion at the thought of another day, with most respondents selecting strong agreement. The convergence suggests that tiredness was anticipatory as well as retrospective. Principals were not merely exhausted after difficult days; they began new days with reduced energy and awareness of pending demands. Elomaa (2023) linked school leadership stress with measurable health and well-being outcomes across international education systems. Protecting recovery requires manageable schedules, delegation and limits on avoidable after-hours reporting so that rest can restore the resources needed for decision-making, relationships and school oversight.

Cross-domain accumulation was visible in the participant's description of a previous day spent “dealing with teachers, parents, finances, discipline cases, and reports.” The list demonstrates how the four reform areas intersect in daily leadership rather than operating as separate statistical categories. A staffing problem may create financial costs, a discipline incident may require parental and Board meetings, and an examination deadline may coincide with reporting duties. Riley et al. (2021) identified burnout-driven attrition and reduced willingness among qualified candidates to pursue principalship. The qualitative finding therefore helps interpret the regression model: each reform domain contributes a distinct effect, but the lived experience is cumulative. Coordinated

policy implementation is necessary because reducing one burden may have limited benefit when several others peak at the same time.

Urgent messages interrupted recovery and planning. The Head of Department explained that after several demands, “another urgent message comes from the office.” Such interruptions require principals to redirect attention, revise priorities and often extend the working day. The problem is especially significant when requests are short-notice but not coordinated across agencies. Conservation of Resources theory predicts greater vulnerability when people repeatedly invest attention and time without adequate return or replenishment. The present account illustrates that process at school level. A single urgent request may be manageable, but repeated interruptions prevent principals from completing planned tasks and create a persistent sense of unfinished work. Shared reporting calendars, priority classifications and reasonable response windows could reduce interruption-driven exhaustion without weakening necessary communication between schools and oversight offices.

Verbal expressions of exhaustion provided observable evidence of strain. The participant recalled principals saying, “I am tired” or “I cannot continue like this every day.” These statements align with the questionnaire finding that 68.7% strongly agreed they often felt tired and 84.7% strongly agreed they were physically exhausted. They also suggest that burnout was sufficiently intense to be noticed by colleagues rather than remaining a private experience. Mbonu and Nkemdilim (2021) reported mixed but substantial stress and burnout among school leaders, including effects visible in their functioning. Institutions should treat repeated expressions of inability to continue as early-warning signals. Confidential support, workload review and referral

mechanisms could intervene before exhaustion progresses to illness, withdrawal or departure from leadership.

Behavioural changes extended the evidence beyond spoken complaints. The Head of Department observed that some principals “become quiet” while others “easily get irritated.” Withdrawal may reflect depleted emotional capacity, whereas irritability may affect staff relationships, decision-making and conflict resolution. Principals' burnout recorded high frustration and emotional-exhaustion means, supporting this interpretation. Nnah and George (2025) described high principal burnout, while Mbonu and Nkemdilim (2021) reported varied stress patterns that can shape leaders' daily interactions and performance. The account does not establish a clinical diagnosis, but it identifies workplace signs that colleagues can notice within the school leadership team. Leadership-support systems should normalize early assistance and avoid interpreting every behavioural change as poor commitment or personality failure.

Energy loss also spilled beyond the school day. The participant reported that some principals “no longer have energy after school,” indicating that work demands affected personal, family and recovery time. Principals' burnout similarly showed strong agreement that working with students drained energy, with a mean of 4.560. DeMatthews et al. (2021) linked principal burnout with added operational demands and sustained implementation pressure, while Nnah and George (2025) warned that unchecked burnout can affect leaders and the wider education system. The evidence suggests that recovery cannot be considered solely an individual responsibility when job design persistently consumes after-work capacity. Protected leave, peer support, realistic availability expectations and redistribution of routine duties would help principals restore resources outside working hours and sustain effective leadership over time.

The participant's statement that “the work does not wait for them to recover” captures the central mechanism connecting reform responsibilities to burnout. Principals' burnout demonstrates severity, while the correlation and regression analyses test association rather than relying on narrative inference alone. All four reform domains showed positive, statistically significant regression coefficients, with student-discipline management producing the largest effect. The combined evidence therefore supports a multi-source interpretation: principals reported high exhaustion, an observer described limited recovery, and the statistical model linked reform pressures with burnout. Causality should still be stated cautiously because the design was cross-sectional and self-reported. Nevertheless, convergence across methods strengthens the conclusion that policy implementation conditions are materially related to principals' well-being in Siaya County.

Overall, principals' burnout reflects a resource-loss cycle in which one demand follows another before depleted energy can be restored. The Head of Department summarized this rhythm by stating, “Even when one issue is solved, another one comes immediately.” The response is not to abandon necessary reforms or reduce accountability. It is to sequence requirements, resource schools adequately, distribute leadership, provide psychosocial support and protect time for recovery. Monitoring systems should also include indicators of principal well-being alongside compliance and performance. The dependent-variable findings answer the study's central concern by showing that exhaustion is widespread, observable and connected statistically to all four reform domains. Sustainable policy therefore requires attention not only to intended outcomes, but also to the human capacity available for implementation.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented response rates and participant profiles, answered the four research questions through descriptive and qualitative evidence, tested regression assumptions, and examined the relationships between the four policy-reform domains and principals' burnout. The combined evidence showed that teacher-management, financial-management, student-discipline and national-examination demands were positively associated with burnout, while the qualitative accounts explained how workload, uncertainty, accountability and limited recovery time shaped the observed relationships.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the major findings, conclusions, recommendations, contribution to knowledge, limitations, and suggestions for further research. It integrates the descriptive, diagnostic, inferential and qualitative evidence reported in Chapter Four. The central purpose is to translate the convergent findings into practical, policy and research implications while organizing the discussion around the four hypotheses tested in the study and the study's mixed-method interpretation of burnout.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study administered 161 questionnaires to principals; 150 were completed and retained, producing a response rate of 98.0%. Three questionnaires, representing 2.0%, were excluded. The usable responses provided quantitative evidence, while interviews with education stakeholders supplied explanations of how reform implementation contributed to principals' burnout.

The descriptive findings showed a neutral overall assessment of teacher-management reforms (M = 2.500), although individual experiences varied. Appraisal and performance contracting (M = 2.647), promotion stagnation (M = 2.733), urgent reporting, staffing shortages and reduced instructional-leadership time created selective pressure. Interview participants explained that these responsibilities accumulated at the principal's office, especially when deadlines, vacancies and teacher frustrations coincided. This interpretation supports DeMatthews et al. (2021) on expanding operational demands and Nnah and George (2025) on principal burnout,

indicating that modest aggregate ratings can coexist with severe strain in particular school contexts across schools with unequal resources.

Financial-management reforms recorded a neutral mean of 2.500, with debt (M = 2.647), unpredictable capitation (M = 2.733), reporting requirements and infrastructure needs varying across schools. Interview evidence showed that delayed funds intensified supplier pressure, stakeholder expectations and the difficulty of maintaining continuous programmes, even when questionnaire averages were moderate. The pattern agrees with Ighor and Ogbuwa (2025), who emphasized the centrality of reliable finances, and Imchen and Ndem (2020), who linked adequate financing with equitable provision. Financial pressure depended on each school's obligations, resource base and timing of disbursements.

Student-discipline reforms produced an overall mean of 4.500, the strongest reform score. Principals strongly endorsed the complexity of serious cases (M = 4.647), usefulness of student councils (M = 4.733), counselling challenges and pressures surrounding corporal-punishment restrictions. Interviews explained that procedural documentation, Board involvement, parental resistance, limited counselling capacity and unrest could prolong cases and consume emotional resources. The findings support Alhalalmeh and Al-Tarawneh (2025) on discipline's importance and Mwenesi et al. (2025) on constrained disciplinary options. They show why discipline responsibilities were both widely experienced and particularly consequential for burnout.

National-examinations reforms recorded an overall mean of 3.000, indicating a moderate, mixed assessment. Portal congestion (M = 3.200), security deployment (M = 3.333), repeated material movement, monitoring and strict integrity requirements created episodic pressure. Interview participants described early reporting, continuous vigilance, fear of procedural errors

and disrupted sleep during KCSE administration. These findings align with Boretti (2026) on examinations' national significance and the KNEC Guidelines (2023), which place extensive centre-management responsibilities on principals in practice.

Principal burnout recorded a high overall mean of 4.500. Physical exhaustion was most pronounced (M = 4.733), followed by work frustration (M = 4.647), student-related energy loss (M = 4.560), tiredness, emotional exhaustion and morning fatigue. Interview evidence confirmed visible withdrawal, irritability, statements of inability to continue and limited recovery when demands arrived continuously. This convergence supports Riley et al. (2021) and Nnah and George (2025), showing that burnout was widespread, observable and cumulative across personal, work-related and student-related dimensions in schools.

Correlation testing produced acceptable coefficients for teacher management ($\alpha = 0.792$), financial management ($\alpha = 0.975$), student discipline management ($\alpha = 0.728$) and national examinations management ($\alpha = 0.716$). The 16-principal pilot and expert review supported instrument consistency and content validity. Diagnostic tests also supported regression: VIF values ranged from 1.409 to 1.838, Durbin-Watson was 1.744, and Levene significance values exceeded 0.05. Residual plots further indicated acceptable normality and linearity, allowing more reliable interpretation of the inferential findings.

Pearson correlations showed positive, significant relationships between burnout and teacher management ($r = .678$, $p = .020$), financial management ($r = .628$, $p = .030$), student discipline management ($r = .756$, $p = .010$), and national examinations management ($r = .712$, $p = .020$). Student discipline had the strongest association. The multiple-regression model was also significant, $F(4,145) = 108.750$, $p < .05$, with $R = .866$, $R^2 = .750$ and adjusted $R^2 = .743$. Thus,

the four reforms jointly explained 75.0% of variation in principals' burnout, leaving 25.0% to other influences within the sampled public senior schools.

All four null hypotheses were rejected. Teacher-management reforms significantly increased burnout (B = .145, β = .235, p = .020), as did financial-management reforms (B = .090, β = .154, p = .040), student-discipline-management reforms (B = .230, β = .392, p = .010), and national-examinations-management reforms (B = .175, β = .277, p = .020). Student discipline remained the strongest predictor, followed by national examinations, teacher management and financial management. Qualitative accounts explained this ordering through procedural complexity, high-consequence examination duties, accumulated staffing and reporting demands, delayed resources, repeated interruptions and inadequate recovery. This convergence confirmed that statistical magnitude reflected implementation experiences across schools.

5.2 Conclusions

The study concludes that teacher-management reforms significantly affect principals' burnout in Siaya County; therefore, the first null hypothesis was rejected (B = .145, β = .235, p = .020). Although the descriptive overall mean was neutral, interviews showed that TPAD supervision, performance-contract targets, urgent data demands, staffing gaps and promotion complaints accumulated unevenly at school level. These requirements consume administrative time, narrow instructional leadership and make principals absorb frustrations arising from decisions they do not control, thereby creating direct, measurable burnout pressure.

Teacher-management reforms require differentiated implementation support. Accountability systems may remain beneficial while still exhausting principals in schools facing vacancies, weak digital records or recurring staff disputes. The study concludes that TSC should

coordinate reporting calendars, simplify duplicated evidence, respond promptly to promotion concerns and provide targeted staffing support. Such measures would preserve policy oversight while reducing episodic resource loss, protecting instructional-leadership time and preventing teacher-management obligations from accumulating entirely at the principal's office.

The study concludes that financial-management reforms significantly affect principals' burnout; therefore, the second null hypothesis was rejected (B = .090, β = .154, p = .040). The coefficient was smallest and its descriptive mean neutral, yet interviews showed that delayed capitation, supplier claims, stakeholder expectations and programme costs intensified pressure in vulnerable schools. The effect reflects unequal exposure: principals experience burnout when high accountability continues while operational funding arrives late or remains inadequate in resource-constrained school contexts.

Financial reform must combine accountability with predictable resources and shared governance. The study concludes that timely capitation, clear disbursement schedules, coordinated audit requirements and practical support for bursars would reduce pressure. Boards should participate actively in budgeting, debt communication and resource mobilization so that principals do not carry every stakeholder claim. Where financing remains uncertain, contingency guidance and transparent communication are essential for maintaining programmes, protecting credibility and preventing recurring shortages from depleting principals' emotional and administrative resources.

The study concludes that student-discipline-management reforms significantly affect principals' burnout and were the strongest predictor among the four domains (B = .230, β = .392, p = .010). The third null hypothesis was therefore rejected. High descriptive ratings and interview

evidence showed that complicated procedures, Board processes, parental resistance, constrained sanctions, counselling limitations and unrest management consume time, demand sustained emotional control and expose principals directly to repeated daily conflict.

Discipline reform must be supported by rights-respecting mechanisms. The study concludes that clear procedures, trained counsellors, prepared Boards, parental engagement and mentored student councils are necessary. These supports would shorten unresolved cases and distribute responsibility while preserving due process. Crisis-response arrangements should assist schools facing violence or unrest. Because discipline produced the largest effect, reducing principal burnout requires attention to procedural clarity, counselling capacity and shared management of serious incidents.

The study concludes that national-examinations-management reforms significantly affect principals' burnout; therefore, the fourth null hypothesis was rejected ($B = .175$, $\beta = .277$, $p = .020$). This domain was the second-strongest predictor. Moderate ratings concealed intense periods of early reporting, secure material movement, portal uncertainty, multi-agency scrutiny and vigilance. Interviews showed that fear of procedural mistakes disrupted sleep, demonstrating how high-stakes accountability can extend pressure beyond working hours and substantially limit recovery.

Examination integrity should be pursued alongside principal well-being. The study concludes that reliable portals, communication, monitoring, efficient routes and support teams can reduce fatigue without weakening security. Principals should retain centre-management responsibility while delegating school duties during examination periods. Recovery time is justified because vigilance and interrupted sleep deplete attention needed for safe decisions. These

measures preserve examination credibility while making implementation sustainable for school leaders.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the study findings and conclusions, the study makes the following recommendations to various stakeholders.

5.3.1 Recommendations on teacher management reforms

The Teachers Service Commission should streamline performance contracting and TPAD documentation so that principals spend less time on repetitive evidence collection and more time on instructional leadership. A unified digital platform should be developed to reduce duplication of data requests from TSC and the Ministry of Education.

TSC and the Ministry of Education should address teacher shortages in schools affected by 100% transition. Where teacher shortages persist, the government should consider targeted staffing grants or direct support for BOM teachers so that principals are not forced to divert scarce school funds to meet staffing gaps.

The teacher promotion system should be communicated clearly and implemented fairly to reduce staff frustration and promotion stagnation. Principals should not be left alone to manage teacher morale arising from career progression concerns that are outside their direct control.

Sub-county and county education offices should coordinate data requests and provide realistic submission deadlines. Frequent emergency data demands should be minimized unless they are necessary, and schools should be given support to automate routine reporting.

Principals should receive periodic professional development on human resource management, conflict resolution, staff appraisal, and emotional intelligence. Such training would help principals manage teacher-related reforms without excessive emotional strain.

5.3.2 Recommendations on financial management reforms

The Ministry of Education and National Treasury should ensure timely and predictable disbursement of FDSE funds. Predictable capitation would allow principals to plan expenditure, reduce supplier debts, and avoid crisis-based financial management.

The government should align access expansion policies with infrastructure funding. The 100% transition policy should be accompanied by sustained investment in classrooms, dormitories, sanitation facilities, laboratories, and learning materials in schools experiencing congestion.

Financial reporting and audit systems should be simplified without weakening accountability. Standardized templates, training sessions, help desks, and digital support should be provided to principals and bursars to reduce errors and stress.

County and sub-county education offices should provide financial management mentorship for newly posted principals. Since nearly half of the principals had been in their present station for less than five years, targeted support would help them adjust to local financial conditions.

Boards of management should be strengthened to support principals in resource mobilization, debt management, parental communication, and budgeting. Financial responsibility should be treated as shared governance rather than as an isolated burden placed on the principal.

5.3.3 Recommendations on Student Discipline Management Reforms

The Ministry of Education should review and strengthen practical guidelines on student discipline management. Principals need clear procedures for handling serious cases, including

documentation, board involvement, parental engagement, counselling, suspension procedures, and referral pathways.

Schools should be supported to establish functional guidance and counselling departments staffed by trained personnel. Principals should not be expected to serve as the main counsellors while also handling administration, finance, examinations, and teacher management.

Student councils should receive structured training on leadership, conflict resolution, peer mediation, and communication. Since student councils can either reduce or breed chaos depending on how they are constituted and guided, their effectiveness should be supported through continuous mentorship.

Parent engagement mechanisms should be strengthened. Discipline management becomes more stressful when parents reject school decisions or fail to support corrective measures. Regular parent forums and clear discipline contracts can reduce conflict between schools and families.

The Ministry and TSC should provide psychosocial support and crisis response teams for schools experiencing serious discipline incidents, unrest, violence, or traumatic events. Such support would reduce the emotional burden on principals and teachers.

Future discipline reforms should be piloted and evaluated before full implementation. This would allow policymakers to identify unintended stress effects on school leaders and to provide appropriate mitigation measures.

5.3.4 Recommendations on National Examinations Management Reforms

KNEC should strengthen the reliability and capacity of examination registration and results portals. Portal failures during registration and release create unnecessary anxiety and should be minimized through server upgrades, advance testing, and technical support.

The logistics of collecting and returning examination materials should be reviewed to reduce fatigue without compromising security. Where possible, secure decentralized storage, route planning, or rotating support personnel may reduce the daily physical and psychological burden on principals.

Security officers and examination monitors should receive orientation on supportive and respectful engagement with principals. Monitoring should protect examination integrity without creating intimidation or hostility.

KNEC and the Ministry of Education should provide clear, early, and consistent communication on examination procedures. Last-minute changes and ambiguous instructions should be avoided because they increase anxiety among principals.

During examination periods, principals should be encouraged to delegate non-examination duties to deputy principals and senior teachers. Schools should develop internal examination support teams to reduce overdependence on the principal.

Principal wellness should be integrated into examination management guidelines. Since erratic sleeping patterns and anxiety were evident in the results, examination reforms should include measures that reduce fatigue and provide access to support during high-pressure periods.

5.3.5 General recommendations for reducing principal burnout

The Ministry of Education and TSC should institutionalize principal wellness programmes at county and sub-county levels. These programmes should include stress management, peer support, counselling access, leadership coaching, and referral mechanisms for severe burnout.

Education reforms should include workload impact assessments before implementation. Such assessments would estimate the additional time, documentation, emotional burden, and resource needs placed on principals.

Distributed leadership should be strengthened in schools. Deputy principals, senior teachers, heads of departments, bursars, guidance and counselling teachers, and board committees should be empowered to share reform implementation responsibilities.

Digital systems should be integrated rather than fragmented. Principals should not be required to enter similar data into multiple platforms for different agencies. Integration would reduce repetitive reporting and administrative fatigue.

Policymakers should involve principals in reform design and review. Since principals are the primary implementers of school-level reforms, their practical experience can help identify bottlenecks before reforms are rolled out nationally.

School leadership training should include well-being, emotional labour, conflict management, financial stress management, and crisis leadership. This would prepare principals not only to implement policies but also to sustain themselves professionally.

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

The study contributes empirical evidence that four education-policy reform domains significantly affect principals' burnout in Siaya County. Together, teacher management, school financial management, student discipline management and national examinations management explained 75.0% of burnout variation. Their effects were unequal: student discipline management was strongest, followed by national examinations management, teacher management and financial management. This ranking, supported by qualitative explanations of procedural complexity, high-

stakes vigilance, workload accumulation and resource uncertainty, provides a basis for prioritizing interventions while recognizing that each reform domain makes a significant contribution.

The study extends job-demands and resources scholarship by showing that reforms operate as job demands when implementation increases workload, role conflict, accountability pressure, emotional labour and resource strain. DeMatthews et al. (2021) documented operational demands, Riley et al. (2021) connected burnout with attrition, and Marsh et al. (2023) reported pressure among school leaders. The mixed-method evidence adds that neutral aggregate perceptions in teacher and financial management can coexist with significant burnout effects because exposure varies among schools and several demands accumulate within the same principal's working day.

Moreover, the study provides empirical data to the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) within the Kenyan context. This strengthens the theory. When principals are subjected through continued stress occasioned by policy reforms without proper support, they end up being suffering from burnout. Principal are critical to improving schools, but job-related stress and burnout are factors that can limit their effectiveness.

The study contributes to measurement by demonstrating acceptable reliability across four reform scales and convergence between quantitative and interview evidence. Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.716 to 0.975, while diagnostic tests supported the regression assumptions. Descriptive results distinguished neutral, moderate and high reform-domain experiences, and qualitative accounts explained how those patterns produced depletion. This integrated approach offers researchers a framework for measuring both the magnitude and implementation mechanisms of policy-related principal burnout in Kenyan senior schools.

5.5 Delimitations of the Study

First, the study used a cross-sectional design. This means that data were collected at one point in time, making it difficult to establish causal direction with absolute certainty. Although regression shows statistical effects, longitudinal research would be needed to determine how reform pressure and burnout change over time.

Second, the study relied on self-reported questionnaire data. Respondents may underreport or over report burnout depending on personal interpretation, social desirability, or fear of appearing unable to cope. Future studies should combine questionnaires with interviews, observation, and administrative data.

Third, the study was delimited to Siaya County. Although the results provide important local evidence, they may not fully represent counties with different infrastructure, staffing levels, examination logistics, security conditions, or school categories. Multi-county studies would improve generalizability.

Fourth, each reform scale combined implementation experiences within a composite predictor. Despite acceptable reliability, composite scores may conceal differences among procedures, staffing, conflict, digital systems and resource shortages. Future studies should test subscales to identify mechanisms producing the greatest burnout pressure.

Fifth, the study did not test moderating or mediating variables such as school size, gender, experience, age, school category, infrastructure adequacy, social support, or principal self-efficacy. These factors may change the strength of the relationship between reforms and burnout.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

Future researchers should conduct longitudinal studies to examine how principal burnout changes before, during, and after major reform implementation periods. This would help establish temporal patterns and causal pathways.

Future studies should disaggregate discipline management into procedural discipline, counselling, student councils, parental involvement, unrest management and legal compliance. This would test which mechanisms explain its leading predictive effect and help design precisely targeted support for principals.

Comparative studies should be conducted across counties to determine whether the effect of policy reforms on burnout differs by region, school resources, urban-rural location, or school categoryy.

Researchers should examine the moderating role of social support, principal experience, school size, and resource adequacy. Such studies would identify conditions under which reforms are less likely to produce burnout.

Future studies should also examine outcomes of principal burnout, including teacher morale, school performance, student discipline, examination administration, and principal turnover intentions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter of Introduction

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Samuel Marigat. I am a master's student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, School of Education. I am carrying out a study on policy reforms and the principals' burnout in public senior schools in Siaya County, Kenya.

You have been selected in a random process, and I am kindly requesting you to spare a few minutes of your precious time to respond to these questions. Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and your responses will remain anonymous. Furthermore, the information will not be used for any other purpose other than research.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Samuel Marigat.

email: smarigat@yahoo.com

Appendix B: Questionnaire for Principals

My name is Samuel Marigat. I am a master's student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, School of Education. I am carrying out a study on policy reforms and the principals' burnout in public senior schools in Siaya County, Kenya. You have been selected in a random process, and I am kindly requesting you to spare a few minutes of your precious time to respond to these questions. Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and your responses will remain anonymous. Furthermore, the information will not be used for any other purpose other than research. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

i) Demographics

Please tick (√) the appropriate response.

Respondent's sex: Male ( ) Female ( )

Length of service as a principal: 0-10 yrs ( ) 11-20 yrs ( ) Over 20 yrs ( )

Highest Education level attained: Diploma ( ) Bachelor's ( ) Post Graduate Diploma ( )
Masters ( ) Doctorate ( )

Number of years in the present station: Less than 5 yrs ( ) 6-10 yrs ( ) 11-15 yrs ( )
Above yrs 15 ( )

School's Geographical location: 1. Rarieda ( ) 2. Bondo ( ) 3. Siaya ( )
4. Gem-Yala ( ) 5. Ugenya ( ) 6. Ugunja ( )
7. Gem-Wagai ( )

Principal's age bracket: 31-40 ( ) 41-50 ( ) 51 and above ( )

ii) RECENT EDUCATIONAL POLICY REFORMS

Please tick (√) the box for each statement that comes closest to reflecting your opinion about the current educational reforms.

Choose from: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD)

a) Policy Reforms in Teacher Management and the Principal's Burnout

No		SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	Implementation of performance Contract (PC) and Performance Appraisal (TPAD) has increased my workload					
2.	There is a huge teacher shortage due to 100% transition of learners increasing my pressure to source for funds to employ BOM teachers.					
3.	The CBA and Career Progression Guidelines have led to a huge stagnation in promotion of principals.					
4.	Frequent data requirements by TSC & MoE with short deadlines causes pressure.					
5.	Decentralization of TSC services has really improved service delivery.					

b) Reforms in Financial Management and the Principal's Burnout

No		SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	100% transition has led to congestion in classrooms and dorms straining the principals because of overstretched facilities					
2.	Unpredictable disbursement of Free Day Senior Education (FDSE) funds makes running schools difficult.					
3.	Inadequate funding of co-curricular activities leads to financial strain and student complaints					
4.	There is a rising school debt since parents argue education is free hence poor fee payment.					
5.	Payment of BOM teachers is a big burden to principals					
6.	The new reporting and audit system are challenging to principals and bursars.					

c) Reforms in Student Discipline Management and the Principal's Burnout

No		SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	Managing serious disciplinary cases is a complicated process for principals and the BOM now					
2.	The ban on corporal punishment has left principals with limited effective options of managing student discipline					

No		SA	A	U	D	SD
3.	The student council is a very useful link in managing student discipline and conflicts which can assist ease the principal's burden					
4.	Guidance, counselling & mentoring has not reduced the indiscipline cases in school.					
5.	Creation of half-terms has reduced the number of student unrest cases particularly in second term.					
6.	Some student councils breed chaos in schools instead of solving them.					

d) Reforms in National Examinations (KCSE) Management and the Principal's Burnout

No		SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) portal usually jams during KCSE registration and release causing anxiety to principals.					
2.	Principals picking exams and returning them twice daily for 3 weeks is overwhelming					
3.	Deployment of a many security officers during K.C.S.E is good for the principal					
4.	The multi-sectoral examination monitors sometimes intimidate the principal					

No		SA	A	U	D	SD
5	Principals have erratic sleeping patterns during exam period due to anxiety.					

iii) PRINCIPAL BURNOUT

Please judge how frequently each of the statements comes closest to describing how you feel in your workplace by ticking (√) the response.

Part 1: Personal Burnout

No	Question	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never/ almost never
1	How often do you feel tired?					
2	How often are you physically exhausted?					
3	How often are you emotionally exhausted?					
4	How often do you think, "I can't take it anymore?"					
5	How often do you feel worn out?					
6	How often do you feel weak and susceptible to illness?					

Part 2: Work Burnout

No	Question	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never/almost never
1	How often is your work emotionally exhausting?					

No	Question	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never/almost never
2	How often do you feel burnt out because of your work?					
3	How often does your work frustrate you?					
4	How often do you feel worn out at the end of the working day?					
5	How often are you exhausted in the morning at the thought of another day at work?					
6	How often do you feel that every working hour is tiring?					
7	How often do you have enough energy for family and friends during leisure time?					

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Part 3: Client (Student) Burnout

No	Question	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never/almost never
1	How often do you find it hard to work with students?					
2	How often do you find it frustrating to work with students?					
3	How often does working with students drain your energy?					
4	How often do you feel that you give more than you get back when working with students?					
5	How often are you tired of working with students?					

No	Question	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never/almost never
6	How often do you wonder how long you will be able to continue working with students?					

Thank you for your response.

Appendix C: Interview Guide for TSC Sub-County Directors

My name is Samuel Marigat. I am a master's student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, School of Education. I am carrying out a study on policy reforms and the principals' burnout in public senior schools in Siaya County, Kenya. You have been selected in a random process, and I am kindly requesting you to spare a few minutes of your precious time to respond to these questions. Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and your responses will remain anonymous. Furthermore, the information will not be used for any other purpose other than research. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

i) Demographics

Respondent's sex: Male ( ) Female ( )

Length of service as a Sub County Director 0-10 yrs ( ) 11-20 yrs ( )

Highest Education level attained: Diploma ( ) Bachelor's ( ) Post Graduate Diploma ( )
Masters ( ) Doctorate ( )

Sub county's Geographical location: 1. Rarieda ( ) 2. Bondo ( ) 3. Siaya ( )
4. Gem-Yala ( ) 5. Ugenya ( ) 6. Ugunja ( )
7. Gem-Wagai ( )

Sub County Director's age bracket: 31-40 ( ) 41-50 ( ) 51 and above ( )

ii) <u>RECENT POLICY REFORMS IN KENYA</u>

a) Policy Reforms in Teacher Management and the Principal's Burnout

Question	Response
1. Has the implementation of performance Contract (PC) and Performance Appraisal (TPAD) increased the Principal's workload?	
2. Is there a huge teacher shortage due to 100% transition of learners increasing the Principal's pressure to source for funds to employ BOM teachers?	
3. Has CBA and Career Progression Guidelines led to a huge stagnation in promotion of principals?	
4. Do you think frequent data requirements by TSC & MoE with short deadlines cause pressure on principals?	
5. In your opinion, to what extent has decentralization of TSC services improved service delivery?	

b) Policy Reforms in Financial Management and the Principal's Burnout

Question	Response
1. Has 100% transition led to congestion in classrooms and dorms straining the principals because of overstretched facilities?	
2. Does the unpredictable disbursement of Free Day Senior Education (FDSE) funds make running schools difficult?	
3. In your opinion, does inadequate funding of co-curricular activities lead to financial strain and student complaints?	
4. Is there a rising school debt since parents argue that education is free, hence poor fee payment?	

Question	Response
5. Is the Payment of BOM teachers a big burden to principals?	
6. Do you think the new reporting and audit system a challenge to principals and bursars?	

c) Policy Reforms in Student Discipline Management and the Principal's Burnout

Question	Response
1. Is managing serious disciplinary cases a complicated process for principals and the BOM now?	
2. Has the ban on corporal punishment left principals with limited effective options of managing student discipline?	
3. Is the student council a very useful link in managing student discipline and conflicts which can assist ease the principal's burden?	
4. Has Guidance, counselling & mentoring reduced the indiscipline cases in school?	
5. Has creation of half-terms reduced the number of student unrest cases particularly in second term.	
6. Do some student councils breed chaos in schools instead of solving them?	

d) Policy Reforms in National Examinations (KCSE) Management and the Principal's Burnout

Question	Response
1. Does the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) portal jam during KCSE registration and release causing anxiety to principals?	
2. Do you think picking up exams and returning them twice daily for 3 weeks is overwhelming for principals?	
3. Is deployment of many security officers during K.C.S.E good for the principals' wellbeing?	
4. Do the multi-sectoral examination monitors sometimes intimidate the principals?	
5. Do principals experience erratic sleeping patterns during exam period due to anxiety?	
6. Does the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) portal jam during KCSE registration and release causing anxiety to principals?	
7. Do you think picking up exams and returning them twice daily for 3 weeks is overwhelming for principals?	

iii) <u>PRINCIPAL BURNOUT</u>

Part 1: Personal Burnout

Question	Response
a) How often do principals complain of feeling tired?	
b) How often do principals complain of being physically exhausted?	
c) How often do principals complain of being emotionally exhausted?	

Question	Response
d) How often do principals say, "I can't take it anymore?"	
e) How often do principals complain of feeling worn out?	
f) How often do principals complain of feeling weak and susceptible to illness?	

Part 2: Work Burnout

Question	Response
a) How often do principals complain of their work being emotionally exhausting?	
b) How often do principals complain of feeling burnt out because of their work?	
c) How often do principals complain of their work frustrating them?	
d) How often do principals complain of feeling worn out at the end of the working day?	
e) How often do principals complain of feeling exhausted in the morning at the thought of another day at work?	
f) How often do principals complain of feeling that every working hour is tiring?	
g) How often do principals talk of having enough energy for family and friends during leisure time?	

Part 3: Client (Student) Burnout

Question	Response
a) Do principals find ithard to work with students?	
b) Do principals find it frustrating to work with students?	
c) Does working with students drain the principals' energy?	
d) Do principals feel that they give more than they get back when they work with students?	
e) Do principals get tired of working with students?	
f) Do principals sometimes wonder how long they will be able to continue working with students?	

Kindly provide in the space provided below any other information which, in your opinion, is relevant with regards to policy reforms and its effect on principal burnout ----------

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Thank you for your response.

Appendix D: Interview Guide for Heads of Departments

My name is Samuel Marigat. I am a master's student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, School of Education. I am carrying out a study on policy reforms and the principals' burnout in public senior schools in Siaya County, Kenya. You have been selected in a random process, and I am kindly requesting you to spare a few minutes of your precious time to respond to these questions. Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and your responses will remain anonymous. Furthermore, the information will not be used for any other purpose other than research. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

i) Demographics

Respondent's sex: Male ( ) Female ( )

Length of service as a Head of Department 0-10 yrs ( ) 11-20 yrs ( )

Highest Education level attained: Diploma ( ) Bachelor's ( ) Post Graduate Diploma ( )
Masters ( ) Doctorate ( )

Number of years in the present School: Less than 5 yrs ( ) 6-10 yrs ( ) 11-15 yrs ( )
Above yrs 15 ( )

School's Geographical location: 1. Rarieda ( ) 2. Bondo ( ) 3. Siaya ( )
4. Gem-Yala ( ) 5. Ugenya ( ) 6. Ugunja ( )
7. Gem-Wagai ( )

HoD's age bracket: 21-30() 31-40 ( ) 41-50 ( ) 51 and above ( )

ii) RECENT EDUCATIONAL REFORMS IN KENYA

a) Policy Reforms in Teacher Management and the Principal's Burnout

Question	Response
1. Has the implementation of performance Contract (PC) and Performance Appraisal (TPAD) increased the Principal's workload?	
2. Is there a huge teacher shortage due to 100% transition of learners increasing the Principal's pressure to source for funds to employ BOM teachers?	
3. Has CBA and Career Progression Guidelines led to a huge stagnation in promotion of principals?	
4. Do you think frequent data requirements by TSC & MoE with short deadlines cause pressure on principals?	
5. In your opinion, to what extent has decentralization of TSC services improved service delivery?	

b) Policy Reforms in Financial Management and the Principal's Burnout

Question	Response
1. Has 100% transition led to congestion in classrooms and dorms straining the principals because of overstretched facilities?	
2. Does the unpredictable disbursement of Free Day Senior Education (FDSE) funds make running schools difficult?	

Question	Response
3. In your opinion, does inadequate funding of co-curricular activities lead to financial strain and student complaints?	
4. Is there a rising school debt since parents argue that education is free, hence poor fee payment?	
5. Is the Payment of BOM teachers a big burden to principals?	
6. Do you think the new reporting and audit system a challenge to principals and bursars?	

c) Policy Reforms in Student Discipline Management and the Principal's Burnout

Question	Response
1. Is managing serious disciplinary cases a complicated process for principals and the BOM now?	
2. Has the ban on corporal punishment left principals with limited effective options of managing student discipline?	
3. Is the student council a very useful link in managing student discipline and conflicts which can assist ease the principal's burden?	
4. Has Guidance, counselling & mentoring reduced the indiscipline cases in school?	
5. Has creation of half-terms reduced the number of student unrest cases particularly in second term.	
6. Do some student councils breed chaos in schools instead of solving them?	

d) Policy Reforms in National Examinations (KCSE) Management and the Principal's Burnout

Question	Response
1. Does the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) portal jam during KCSE registration and release causing anxiety to principals?	
2. Do you think picking up exams and returning them twice daily for 3 weeks is overwhelming for principals?	
3. Is deployment of many security officers during K.C.S.E good for the principals' wellbeing?	
4. Do the multi-sectoral examination monitors sometimes intimidate the principals?	
5. Do principals experience erratic sleeping patterns during exam period due to anxiety?	
6. Does the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) portal jam during KCSE registration and release causing anxiety to principals?	
7. Do you think picking up exams and returning them twice daily for 3 weeks is overwhelming for principals?	

iii) <u>PRINCIPAL BURNOUT</u>

Part 1: Personal Burnout

Question	Response
a) How often do principals complain of feeling tired?	
b) How often do principals complain of being physically exhausted?	
c) How often do principals complain of being emotionally exhausted?	

Question	Response
d) How often do principals say, "I can't take it anymore?"	
e) How often do principals complain of feeling worn out?	
f) How often do principals complain of feeling weak and susceptible to illness?	

Part 2: Work Burnout

Question	Response
a) How often do principals complain of their work being emotionally exhausting?	
b) How often do principals complain of feeling burnt out because of their work?	
c) How often do principals complain of their work frustrating them?	
d) How often do principals complain of feeling worn out at the end of the working day?	
e) How often do principals complain of feeling exhausted in the morning at the thought of another day at work?	
f) How often do principals complain of feeling that every working hour is tiring?	
g) How often do principals talk of having enough energy for family and friends during leisure time?	

Part 3: Client (Student) Burnout

Question	Response
a) Do principals find it hard to work with students?	
b) Do principals find it frustrating to work with students?	
c) Does working with students drain the principals' energy?	
d) Do principals feel that they give more than they get back when they work with students?	
e) Do principals get tired of working with students?	
f) Do principals sometimes wonder how long they will be able to continue working with students?	

Kindly provide in the space provided below any other information which, in your opinion, is relevant with regards to policy reforms and its effect on principal burnout ----------

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Thank you for your response.

Appendix E: Interview Guide for KUPPET Officials

My name is Samuel Marigat. I am a master's student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, School of Education. I am carrying out a study on policy reforms and the principals' burnout in public senior schools in Siaya County, Kenya. You have been selected in a random process, and I am kindly requesting you to spare a few minutes of your precious time to respond to these questions. Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and your responses will remain anonymous. Furthermore, the information will not be used for any other purpose other than research. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

i) Demographics

Respondent's sex: Male ( ) Female ( )

Length of service as a KUPPET Official: 0-10 yrs ( ) 11-20 yrs ( )

Highest Education level attained: Diploma ( ) Bachelor's ( ) Post Graduate Diploma ( )
Masters ( ) Doctorate ( )

KUPPET Official's age bracket: 21-30() 31-40 ( ) 41-50 ( ) 51 and above ( )

ii) RECENT EDUCATIONAL REFORMS IN KENYA

a) Policy Reforms in Teacher Management and the Principal's Burnout

Question	Response
1. Has the implementation of performance Contract (PC) and Performance Appraisal (TPAD) increased the Principal's workload?	
2. Is there a huge teacher shortage due to 100% transition of learners increasing the Principal's pressure to source for funds to employ BOM teachers?	
3. Has CBA and Career Progression Guidelines led to a huge stagnation in promotion of principals?	
4. Do you think frequent data requirements by TSC & MoE with short deadlines cause pressure on principals?	
5. In your opinion, to what extent has decentralization of TSC services improved service delivery?	

b) Policy Reforms in Financial Management and the Principal's Burnout

Question	Response
1. Has 100% transition led to congestion in classrooms and dorms straining the principals because of overstretched facilities?	
2. Does the unpredictable disbursement of Free Day Senior Education (FDSE) funds make running schools difficult?	

Question	Response
3. In your opinion, does inadequate funding of co-curricular activities lead to financial strain and student complaints?	
4. Is there a rising school debt since parents argue that education is free, hence poor fee payment?	
5. Is the Payment of BOM teachers a big burden to principals?	
6. Do you think the new reporting and audit system a challenge to principals and bursars?	

c) Policy Reforms in Student Discipline Management and the Principal's Burnout

Question	Response
1. Is managing serious disciplinary cases a complicated process for principals and the BOM now?	
2. Has the ban on corporal punishment left principals with limited effective options of managing student discipline?	
3. Is the student council a very useful link in managing student discipline and conflicts which can assist ease the principal's burden?	
4. Has Guidance, counselling & mentoring reduced the indiscipline cases in school?	
5. Has creation of half-terms reduced the number of student unrest cases particularly in second term.	
6. Do some student councils breed chaos in schools instead of solving them?	

d) Policy Reforms in National Examinations (KCSE) Management and the Principal's Burnout

Question	Response
1. Does the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) portal jam during KCSE registration and release causing anxiety to principals?	
2. Do you think picking up exams and returning them twice daily for 3 weeks is overwhelming for principals?	
3. Is deployment of many security officers during K.C.S.E good for the principals' wellbeing?	
4. Do the multi-sectoral examination monitors sometimes intimidate the principals?	
5. Do principals experience erratic sleeping patterns during exam period due to anxiety?	
6. Does the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) portal jam during KCSE registration and release causing anxiety to principals?	
7. Do you think picking up exams and returning them twice daily for 3 weeks is overwhelming for principals?	

iii) <u>PRINCIPAL BURNOUT</u>

Part 1: Personal Burnout

Question	Response
a) How often do principals complain of feeling tired?	
b) How often do principals complain of being physically exhausted?	
c) How often do principals complain of being emotionally exhausted?	

Question	Response
d) How often do principals say, "I can't take it anymore?"	
e) How often do principals complain of feeling worn out?	
f) How often do principals complain of feeling weak and susceptible to illness?	

Part 2: Work Burnout

Question	Response
a) How often do principals complain of their work being emotionally exhausting?	
b) How often do principals complain of feeling burnt out because of their work?	
c) How often do principals complain of their work frustrating them?	
d) How often do principals complain of feeling worn out at the end of the working day?	
e) How often do principals complain of feeling exhausted in the morning at the thought of another day at work?	
f) How often do principals complain of feeling that every working hour is tiring?	
g) How often do principals talk of having enough energy for family and friends during leisure time?	

Part 3: Client (Student) Burnout

Question	Response
a) Do principals find it hard to work with students?	
b) Do principals find it frustrating to work with students?	
c) Does working with students drain the principals' energy?	
a) Do principals feel that they give more than they get back when they work with students?	
b) Do principals get tired of working with students?	
c) Do principals sometimes wonder how long they will be able to continue working with students?	

Kindly provide in the space provided below any other information which, in your opinion, is relevant with regards to policy reforms and its effect on principal burnout ----------

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Thank you for your response.

Appendix F: SPSS Output

Missing values

Univariate Statistics

				Missing		No. of Extremes[a]	
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Count	Percent	Low	High
PB	150	2.6196	.78384	0	.0	0	0
RTM	150	2.4267	.98571	0	.0	0	0
RFM	150	2.3978	1.23924	0	.0	0	0
RSDM	150	2.6033	.69075	0	.0	0	0
RNEM	150	2.5373	.85989	0	.0	0	0

a. Number of cases outside the range (Q1 - 1.5*IQR, Q3 + 1.5*IQR).

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Male	92	61.3
Female	58	38.7
Total	**150**	**100.0**

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
0-10 years	57	38.0

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
11-20 years	64	42.7
Over 20 years	29	19.3
Total	**150**	**100.0**

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Diploma	8	5.3
Bachelor's degree	68	45.3
Postgraduate diploma	18	12.0
Master's degree	52	34.7
Doctorate	4	2.7
Total	**150**	**100.0**

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 years	72	48.0
6-10 years	49	32.7
11-15 years	20	13.3
Above 15 years	9	6.0
Total	**150**	**100.0**

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Rarieda	22	14.7
Bondo	25	16.7
Siaya	20	13.3

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gem-Yala	23	15.3
Ugenya	21	14.0
Ugunja	19	12.7
Gem-Wagai	20	13.3
Total	**150**	**100.0**

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
31-40 years	19	12.7
41-50 years	72	48.0
51 years and above	59	39.3
Total	**150**	**100.0**

Descriptive statistics results

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Implementation of performance Contract (PC) and Performance Appraisal (TPAD) has increased my workload	150	1	5	2.38	1.384
There is a huge teacher shortage due to 100% transition of learners increasing my pressure to source for funds to employ BOM teachers.	150	1	5	2.33	1.374

The CBA and Career Progression Guidelines have led to a huge stagnation in promotion of principals.	150	1	5	2.41	1.275
Frequent data requirements by TSC & MoE with short deadlines causes pressure.	150	1	5	2.45	1.309
Decentralization of TSC services has really improved service delivery.	150	1	5	2.55	1.324
RTM	150	1.00	4.20	2.4267	.98571

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
100% transition has led to congestion in classrooms and dorms straining the principals because of overstretched facilities	150	1	5	2.37	1.338
Unpredictable disbursement of Free Day Senior Education (FDSE) funds makes running schools difficult.	150	1	5	2.41	1.327

Inadequate funding of co-curricular activities leads to financial strain and student complaints	150	1	5	2.38	1.309
There is a rising school debt since parents argue education is free hence poor fee payment.	150	1	5	2.41	1.322
Payment of BOM teachers is a big burden to principals	150	1	5	2.40	1.316
The new reporting and audit system are challenging to principals and bursars.	150	1	5	2.42	1.265
RFM	150	1.00	5.00	2.3978	1.23924

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Managing serious disciplinary cases is a complicated process for principals and the BOM now	150	1	5	2.61	1.289

The ban on corporal punishment has left principals with limited effective options of managing student discipline	150	1	5	2.46	1.299
The student council is a very useful link in managing student discipline and conflicts which can assist ease the principal's burden	150	1	5	2.63	1.283
Guidance, counselling & mentoring has not reduced the indiscipline cases in school.	150	1	5	2.74	1.318
Creation of half-terms has reduced the number of student unrest cases particularly in second term.	150	1	5	2.62	1.197
Some student councils breed chaos in schools instead of solving them.	150	1	5	2.56	1.207
RSDM	150	1.00	4.00	2.6033	.69075

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) portal usually jams during KCSE registration and release causing anxiety to principals.	150	1	5	2.36	1.317
Principals picking exams and returning them twice daily for 3 weeks is overwhelming	150	1	5	2.41	1.286
Deployment of a many security officers during K.C.S.E is good for the principal	150	1	5	2.53	1.208
The multi-sectoral examination monitors sometimes intimidate the principal	150	1	5	2.60	1.226
Principals have erratic sleeping patterns during exam period due to anxiety.	150	1	5	2.79	1.246
RNEM	150	1.00	4.20	2.5373	.85989

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
How often do you feel tired?	150	1	4	2.53	.960
How often are you physically exhausted?	150	1	4	2.59	1.024
How often are you emotionally exhausted?	150	1	4	2.53	.939
How often do you think, "I can't take it anymore?"	150	1	4	2.62	.902
How often do you feel worn out?	150	1	4	2.54	.960
How often do you feel weak and susceptible to illness?	150	1	4	2.63	.951
Is your work emotionally exhausting?	150	1	4	2.55	.959
Do you feel burnt out because of your work?	150	1	4	2.60	.948
Does your work frustrate you?	150	1	4	2.67	.973

Do you feel worn out at the end of the working day?	150	1	4	2.55	1.014
Are you exhausted in the morning at the thought of another day at work?	150	1	4	2.73	.940
Do you feel that every working hour is tiring for you?	150	1	4	2.71	1.038
Do you have enough energy for family and friends during leisure time?	150	1	4	2.58	.943
Do you find it hard to work with students?	150	1	4	2.67	1.000
Do you find it frustrating to work with students?	150	1	4	2.77	.986
Does it drain your energy to work with students?	150	1	4	2.57	1.025
Do you feel that you give more than you get back when you work with students?	150	1	4	2.61	1.016

Are you tired of working with students?	150	1	4	2.69	1.036
Do you sometimes wonder how long you will be able to continue working with students?	150	1	4	2.62	.967
PB	150	1.16	3.84	2.6196	.78384
Valid N (listwise)	150				

Reliability test results

Reforms in Teacher Management (RTM)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	150	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	150	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.792	5

Reforms in Financial Management (RFM)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	150	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	150	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.975	6

Reforms in Student Discipline Management (RSDM)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	150	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	150	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.728	6

Reforms in National Examinations (KCSE) Management (RNEM)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	150	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	150	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.716	5

Appendix G: SPSS Output

Variable	Principal Burnout	Reforms in Teacher Management	Reforms in Financial Management	Reforms in Student Discipline Management	Reforms in National Examinations Management
Principal Burnout	1				
Reforms in Teacher Management	.197*	1			
Reforms in Financial Management	.315**	.450**	1		
Reforms in Student Discipline Management	.217**	.591**	.478**	1	
Reforms in National Examinations Management	.264**	.579**	.435**	.554**	1

Pearson correlation analysis was used to examine the direction and strength of association among the dependent variable and the four reform constructs. The results show that principal burnout had a positive and statistically significant relationship with reforms in teacher management ($r = .197$, $p = .015$), reforms in financial management ($r = .315$, $p = .000$), reforms in student discipline management ($r = .217$, $p = .008$), and reforms in national examinations management ($r = .264$, $p = .001$). All four associations were significant at either the 0.05 or 0.01 level. The findings indicate that higher levels of perceived reform pressure were associated with higher levels of burnout as measured in the study.

Principal burnout (PB)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	150	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	150	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.969	19

Validity test results

RTM

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.			.873
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		Approx. Chi-Square	710.899
		Df	10
		Sig.	.000

RFM

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.			.946

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1253.638
	Df	15
	Sig.	.000

RSDM

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.823
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	677.112
	Df	15
	Sig.	.000

RNEM

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.839
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	504.239
	Df	10
	Sig.	.000

PB

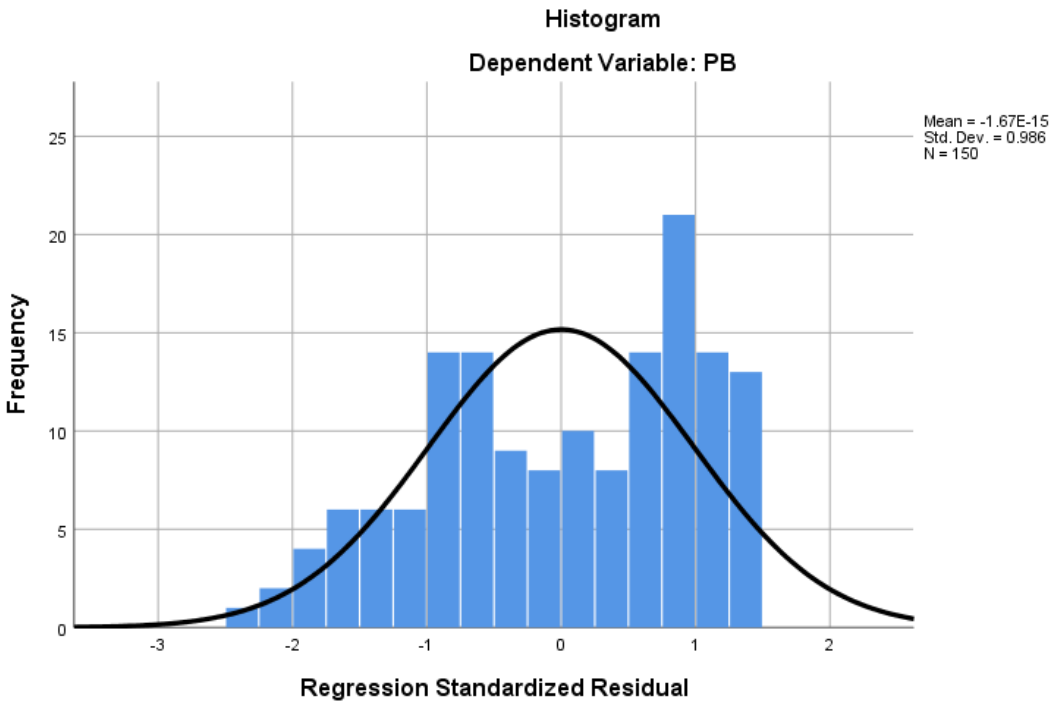
KMO and Bartlett's Test

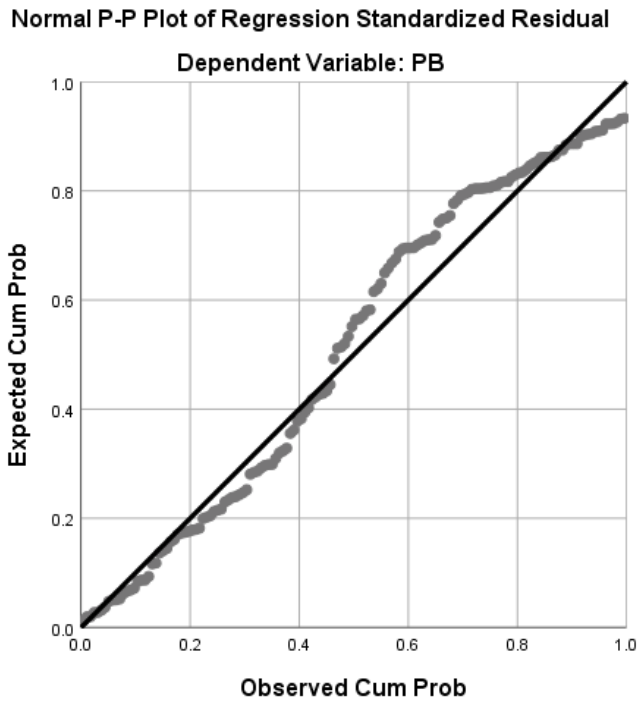
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.970
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3560.371
	Df	171
	Sig.	.000

Diagnostic results

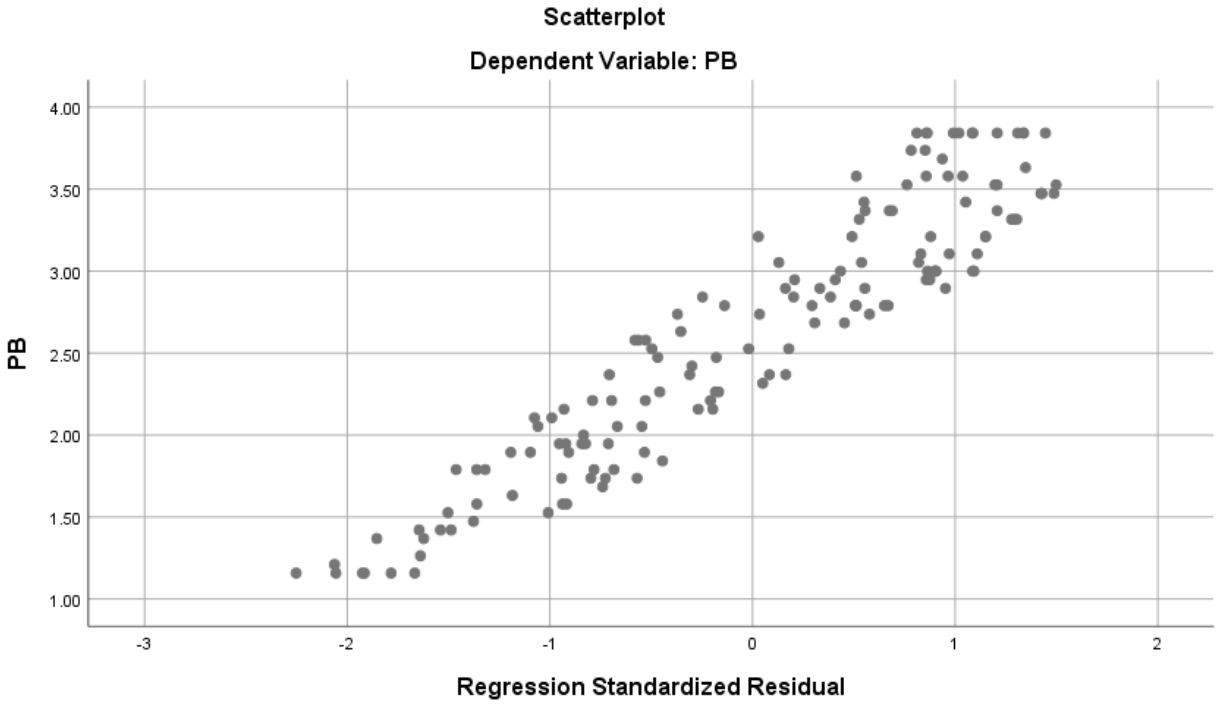
Normality (figure 4.1)

Charts




Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual
Dependent Variable: PB
Expected Cum Prob
Observed Cum Prob
0.0
0.2
0.4
0.6
0.8
1.0

Linearity


Scatterplot
Dependent Variable: PB
PB
Regression Standardized Residual
1.00
1.50
2.00
2.50
3.00
3.50
4.00
-3
-2
-1
0
1
2

Multicollinearity

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
	RTM	.544	1.838
	RFM	.710	1.409
	RSDM	.551	1.816
	RNEM	.581	1.722

Autocorrelation

Durbin-Watson
1.744

Homoscedasticity

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
PB	Based on Mean	1.675	16	133	.059
	Based on Median	.872	16	133	.603
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.872	16	97.486	.603
	Based on trimmed mean	1.611	16	133	.074

Correlation Test Results

Correlations

		PB	RTM	RFM	RSDM	RNEM
PB	Pearson Correlation	1	.197*	.315**	.217**	.264**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.015	.000	.008	.001
	N	150	150	150	150	150
RTM	Pearson Correlation	.197*	1	.450**	.591**	.579**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015		.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150
RFM	Pearson Correlation	.315**	.450**	1	.478**	.435**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150
RSDM	Pearson Correlation	.217**	.591**	.478**	1	.554**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.000	.000		.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150
RNEM	Pearson Correlation	.264**	.579**	.435**	.554**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.000	.000	
	N	150	150	150	150	150

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

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

Regression results

Variables Entered/Removed[a]

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	RNEM, RFM, RTM, RSDM[b]	.	Enter

a. Dependent Variable: PB

b. All requested variables entered.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.838[a]	.702	.694	.43392	1.744

a. Predictors: (Constant), RNEM, RFM, RTM, RSDM

b. Dependent Variable: PB

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.619	.120		13.492	.000
	RTM	.039	.017	.189	2.350	.020
	RFM	.025	.012	.152	2.157	.033
	RSDM	.169	.021	.673	8.109	.000
	RNEM	.234	.051	.257	4.588	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PB

Appendix H: CUEA Research Clearance

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

Faculty of Education

Department of Postgraduate Studies in Education

Our Ref: CUEA/DVC-ACAD/FOE/PGSE/NACOSTI/43/AUGUST 2025

13th August 2025

THE DIRECTOR,
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (NACOSTI)
NAIROBI, KENYA

RE: SAMUEL K. MARIGAT: 1035383

I wish to introduce to you a **Samuel Marigat** a MED student at The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi – Kenya; and request you to assist him accomplish his academic research requirements.

Samuel's area of specialization is **Administration and Planning**. Every student in the programme is required to conduct research, write a report/dissertation and submit it for examination in the final years of study. Accordingly, **Samuel's** research proposal has been approved and he will conduct research on the following topic:

"***Policy Reforms and The Principals' Burnout in Public Secondary Schools in Siaya County, Kenya.***"

Thanking you in advance for according **Samuel** the assistance he may require to conduct his research successfully.

Sincerely,

SR. PROF. ELIZBETH NDUKU
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT - POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN EDUCATION

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA (CUEA) P.O. BOX 62157 00200 Nairobi – KENYA
Tel: 020-2525811-5, 8890023-4, Fax: 8891084, Email: pgse@cuea.edu, Website: www.cuea.edu
Founded in 1984 by AMECEA (Association of the Member Episcopal Conference in Eastern Africa)

ISO 9001:2015 Certified by the Kenya Bureau of Standards

Appendix I: NACOSTI License

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **892011**

Date of Issue: **11/September/2025**

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Mr.. Samuel Kipkoech Marigat of Catholic University of Eastern Africa, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Siaya on the topic: POLICY REFORMS AND THE PRINCIPALS' BURNOUT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SIAYA COUNTY, KENYA. for the period ending : 11/September/2026.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/25/4178668**

892011

Applicant Identification Number

Ag. Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

See overleaf for conditions

THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013 (Rev. 2014)
Legal Notice No. 108: The Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014

The National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, hereafter referred to as the Commission, was the established under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act 2013 (Revised 2014) herein after referred to as the Act. The objective of the Commission shall be to regulate and assure quality in the science, technology and innovation sector and advise the Government in matters related thereto.

CONDITIONS OF THE RESEARCH LICENSE

1. The License is granted subject to provisions of the Constitution of Kenya, the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, and other relevant laws, policies and regulations. Accordingly, the licensee shall adhere to such procedures, standards, code of ethics and guidelines as may be prescribed by regulations made under the Act, or prescribed by provisions of International treaties of which Kenya is a signatory to.
2. The research and its related activities as well as outcomes shall be beneficial to the country and shall not in any way;
    i. Endanger national security
    ii. Adversely affect the lives of Kenyans
    iii. Be in contravention of Kenya's international obligations including Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN).
    iv. Result in exploitation of intellectual property rights of communities in Kenya
    v. Adversely affect the environment
    vi. Adversely affect the rights of communities
    vii. Endanger public safety and national cohesion
    viii. Plagiarize someone else's work
3. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
4. Neither the license nor any rights thereunder are transferable.
5. The Commission reserves the right to cancel the research at any time during the research period if in the opinion of the Commission the research is not implemented in conformity with the provisions of the Act or any other written law.
6. The Licensee shall inform the relevant County Director of Education, County Commissioner and County Governor before commencement of the research.
7. Excavation, filming, movement, and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
8. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
9. The Commission may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project for the purpose of assessing and evaluating compliance with the conditions of the License.
10. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy, and upload a soft copy of their final report (thesis) onto a platform designated by the Commission within one year of completion of the research.
11. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.
12. Research, findings and information regarding research systems shall be stored or disseminated, utilized or applied in such a manner as may be prescribed by the Commission from time to time.
13. The Licensee shall disclose to the Commission, the relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee, and the relevant national agencies any inventions and discoveries that are of National strategic importance.
14. The Commission shall have powers to acquire from any person the right in, or to, any scientific innovation, invention or patent of strategic importance to the country.
15. Relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee shall monitor and evaluate the research periodically, and make a report of its findings to the Commission for necessary action.

National Commission for Science, Technology and
Innovation(NACOSTI),
Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,
P. O. Box 30623 - 00100 Nairobi, KENYA
Telephone: 020 4007000, 0713788787, 0735404245
E-mail: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke

Appendix J: Research Letter from Siaya County TSC

TEACHERS SERVICE COMMISSION

Email: cdirsiaya@tsc.go.ke
Web: www.tsc.go.ke

TSC COUNTY DIRECTOR
SIAYA COUNTY,
P.O BOX 622 - 40600,
SIAYA

When replying please quote our

Ref. Nº: TSC/SYA/RSCH/26

Date:22/9/2025

Samuel Marigat
Catholic University of Eastern Africa Student
Reg No. 1035383

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Permission is hereby granted for you to conduct research entitled: *"Policy Reforms and The Principals' Burnout in Public Senior Schools in Siaya County, Kenya."*

You are permitted to conduct the research among the principals, TSC Sub County Directors, KUPPET officials and Heads of Departments following the laid down principles of academic research.

I wish you success in your endevour.

Solomon B. Wafubwa
TSC COUNTY DIRECTOR
SIAYA COUNTY

Appendix K: Turnitin Report

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA
INFORMATION SYSTEMS LIBRARIAN
TURNITIN ORIGINALITY REPORT

REF: PGS/FOE/1545/DEFENSE/LANGATA,



I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT **SAMUEL MARIGAT** REG NO: **1035383**, SUBMITTED A CHECK OF ANTIPLAGIARISM ON EVALUATION OF **POLICY REFORMS AND THE PRINCIPALS' BURNOUT IN PUBLIC SENIOR SCHOOLS IN SIAYA COUNTY, KENYA A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN EDUCATION IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARD OF MASTER'S DEGREE IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA, KENYA.**

Verification by Systems Librarian:

Name: HARON MAINA ..... Signature: ..... Date: 26/8/2026

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa
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