



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



## University students' strikes and moral decadence in public Universities in mount Kenya region, Kenya

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### Abstract

University students' strikes reduce the number of lecture hours and interrupt learning instructions. Low performing students are significantly less likely to graduate after a strike. Persistent university students' strikes may lead to low morals in both students and lecturers. Therefore, the study concentrated on relationship between university students' strikes and moral decadence in public university in Mount Kenya region, Kenya. The study adopted correlational research design. The researcher utilized Krejcie and Morgan table of sample determination to determine a sample size of 379 from 30000 target population. The 312 university students and 67 lecturers were selected using simple random technique and purposive sampling technique respectively. The researcher made questionnaires were used to collect data from the 379 respondents. A reliability coefficient of 0.741 was obtained using person's product correlation coefficient. The data collected from respondents was quantitatively and qualitatively analysed. Regression statistical technique was used to test null hypothesis at 0.05 significant level. The findings of the study revealed that there was significant relationship between university students' strikes and moral decadence in public university in Mount Kenya region. Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that students' lecture disruption has significant relationship with moral decadence in public university in Mount Kenya region. Students' demonstrations have significant relationship with moral decadence in public university in Mount Kenya region. Therefore university students' strikes have significant relationship with moral decadence in public university in Mount Kenya region. The researcher recommended that Ministry of education should ensure free strike university atmosphere for quality education and environment conducive for learning in university set up. The researcher further recommended that university managements should be trained to avoid challenges which gradually lead to strikes in universities. Welfare for university students and lecturers should be observed to ensure strike free atmosphere in the university.

**Keywords:** University students; Strikes; Public university; Morals; Moral decadence and education

### 1. Introduction

According to Larigold (2013) the level of moral decadence is disturbing and in whatever form; it distorts plans, programs and processes of moral education. The distortion affects negatively the dignity of the human person manifested in socio economic vices such as kidnapping, rape, incest, armed robbery, cultism, touting and cybercrimes. Others involves moral depravity such as insubordination, laziness, acts of disrespect, idle gossip, dereliction of duty which manifest the decay that seem to defy moral solution. Moral decadence as it affects a new culture of nudity among female students seems to have led to sexual harassment which has been widely reported as menace to academic excellence. Taiz (2008) stated that moral decadence manifests in prostitution and other forms of sexual abuses with their concomitant ailments like human immune virus and acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

A study by Belot (2010) pinpointed that an ideal educational medium needs to help beneficiaries develop ability, attitude and other forms of behaviour which are positive value to the society in which they enjoy fully in live. An ideal

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education helps to develop ones mental capability, widen his horizon and increases his job options, character or moral development. Crawford (2014) explained that an effective learning in higher institutions is achieved by successful and timely coverage of course outline before examination. Crawford's idea is rarely achieved with frequent university strikes action in place. Strikes may breed frustration, disappointed, emotional and psychological trauma, lack of motivation and unpreparedness on part of the students.

According to Hung (2013) lecturers' strikes are an important source of interruptions of learning in universities and colleges. Strike induced in interruptions is consequential and widespread. Strikes have potential to harm students' outcomes. Juanita (2021) disclosed that teacher strikes, like other school disruptions, minimize instruction time, a significant input in learners' human capital production function. Teachers' strikes can affects a students' academic and affects the like hood of graduating, transferring to another secondary school. Johnson (2011) suggested school interruption and its consequences for learners, parents and the economy have long been the subject of investigations in the social sciences. Interruption in schooling can harm the human capital accumulation of learners. Low-performing students are less likely to graduate after a strike.

A study by Wills (2020) on teacher' union and industrial action in South Africa primary indicated that strike has become common issues in University education. The past two decades have witnessed strike frequently, which have made some university students completing one full academic calendar year look unlikely. Strikes have negatively affected the educational systems and make students and their respective families disappointed with high level of stress and frustrations. Owoseje (2013) in his study in Nigeria on university lecturers begin nationwide strike; stated that due to strikes the Universities would not be free to grant their own degrees but would be affiliated with foster parent Universities. Podgrsky (2011), in his study on teacher compensation and collective bargaining; found that public universities systems are inefficient because of strikes. Universities are not able to deliver their services on time due to shortage in staff necessities, funds and physical facilities. Strikes can affect students' learning and information seeking behaviors. Michael (2013) described crisis-based information seeking as an increasingly important but less investigated context in which situational characteristics may present unique circumstances for researchers. Based on the role of the university in providing information resources, students depend on utilizing the library and other relevant information sources available on campus. Students use library as opportunity to study students' information behavior either as human information interaction or as human information behavior.

Strike has become a regular occurrence in some universities. Katula (2012) observed that universities in Nigeria embarked on nationwide strike to pressure government for a pay increase. Hominh (2014) complained that industrial action is likely to become common on universities. Academic activities in almost all of Nigeria's universities have been disrupted were teachings and semester examinations have been brought to a standstill. With several strikes, students' educations are interrupted. The academic staff union of universities in Nigeria prefers to go on strike during active academic session, with hopes of giving them undue advantage. Hominh (2014) further argued that strike has been used as a weapon to be unleashed at the slightest dispute between university staff and government.

### **1.1. Statement of the Problem**

Statistics from commission of university education has revealed that most public universities have embarked on strike several times to drives home their demand. As in case of all industrial conflicts, university strikes have significant wider social and economic consequences. There is hardly a full academic session that students and lecturers miss uplifts that are associated with loss of studies, economic waste, learners' deaths, rape cases and delayed graduation for students. However, little attention is given to such occasional university strikes in various institutions. The study therefore intended to examine the relationship between university students' strikes on moral decadence in public universities in Mount Kenya region, Kenya.

### **1.2. Objectives of the study**

#### *1.2.1. General objective*

The general objective of the study was to determine relationship between university students' strikes and moral decadence in public universities in Mount Kenya region.

#### *1.2.2. Specific objectives*

To examine relationship between students' lecture disruption and moral decadence in public Universities in Mount Kenya region.

To determine relationship between students’ demonstrations and moral decadence in public Universities in Mount Kenya region.

### 1.3. Study hypotheses

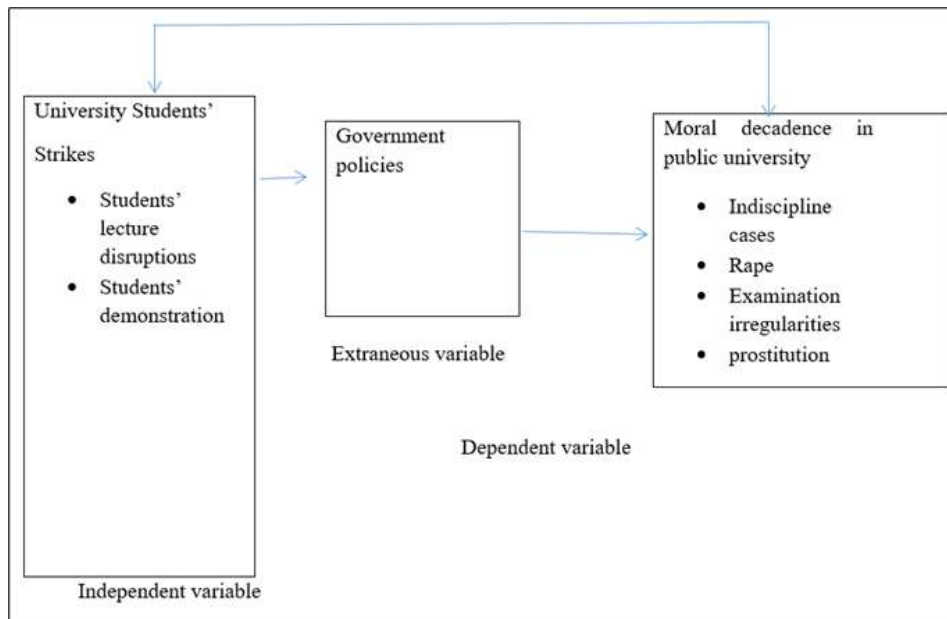
H<sub>0</sub><sup>1</sup> Students’ lecture disruption has no statistical significant relationship with moral decadence in public universities in Mount Kenya region.

H<sub>0</sub><sup>2</sup> Students’ demonstrations have no statistical significant relationship with moral decadence in public universities in Mount Kenya region.

### 1.4. Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by psychoanalytic theory of personality development by Sigmund Freud who proposed that most of what makes up personality is unconscious or beyond awareness and heavily influenced by emotion. The theory is relevant to the study in that students’ moral decadence during university strikes may be influenced by students’ emotions.

### 1.5. Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1** Relationship between university students' strikes and moral decadence in public universities in mount Kenya region

## 2. Research Methodology

### 2.1. Research Design

The study utilized correlation research design. Correlation research design provides insight into complex real world of relationship; by helping researcher to develop theories and makes predictions on causal relationship.

### 2.2. Target population

The study population was 30000 comprising 23558 university students and 6442 lecturers.

### 2.3. Sampling Technique and Sample Size

#### 2.3.1. Sampling Technique

The researcher utilized Krejcie and Morgan sample determination table to determine 379 respondents from 30000 target population. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample determination table, 379 respondents under study

are adequate to represent the total of 30000 individuals. The researcher sampled 312 university students using simple random sampling technique. The researcher also sampled 67 lecturers using purposive sampling technique.

2.3.2. *Sample Size*

The sample size was 379 respondents, involving 312 university students and 67 lecturers.

**2.4. Research Instruments**

2.4.1. *Questionnaires*

The researcher employed questionnaires to both university students and lecturers. Researcher made questionnaire was most efficient since it is a standardized measuring tool where questions are phrased exactly the same way for all respondents.

**2.5. Data Collection Procedure**

First researcher conducted pilot study in western region of Kenya. Then, researcher employed research assistants. The researcher conducted actual study in Mount Kenya region; by collecting data starting with university students and finally university lecturers; using researcher made questionnaires.

**2.6. Validity and Reliability of the Study**

Researcher ascertained research tools validity by getting relevant information on specific tools from experts and professionals in ministry of education. The respondents were given questions with similar characteristics; basing on specific objectives of the study. The reliability of tools was determined by cronbach alpha co-efficient; which computed to 0.741.

**2.7. Ethical Considerations of Study**

The researcher maintained ethical issues by adhering to assured confidentiality, non-discrimination, anonymity to maintain privacy of participation in the study.

**2.8. Data Analysis**

The researcher quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed data. Regression technique was used to estimate relationship between variables. Qualitative data was analyzed in frequencies and percentages. Data processing adopted statistical package for social sciences software version 26.

**3. Results and discussion**

The researcher presented the study findings in tables 1, 2, 3 and 4.

**Table 1** Responses on University Students’ lecture disruptions and Moral Decadence in Public University in Mount Kenya Region, Kenya

Statement	SA		A		N		D		SD	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Students’ lecture disruption leads to indiscipline cases in a university.	66	20.8	106	33.4	12	3.8	96	30.3	37	11.7
Less instruction time may arise from students’ lecture disruption.	95	30.0	75	23.7	41	12.9	57	18.0	49	15.5
Students’ lecture disruption lead to examination irregularities among University										
Rape issues may rise as result of students’ lecture disruption.	53	16.7	62	19.6	108	34.1	48	15.1	33	10.4
Theft cases may arise from students										

lectures' disruption.	59	18.6	113	35.6	69	21.8	34	10.7	42	13.2
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Several respondents (33.4%) agreed that students' lecture disruption led to discipline cases in a university. Majority of respondents (30.0%) strongly agreed that less instruction time may arise from students' lecture disruption. The findings were in line with findings of Juanita (2021) who disclosed that teacher strikes, like other school disruptions, minimize instruction time, a significant input in learners' human capital production function. Teachers' strikes can affect a students' academic and affects the likelihood of graduating, transferring to another secondary school. A good number of respondents (34.1%) remained neutral on the issue that students' lecture disruptions lead to examination irregularities among University. Majority of respondents (35.3%) strongly agreed that rape issues may arise as result of students' lecture disruption. A good number of respondents (35.6%) agreed that theft cases may arise from students' lectures disruption. Following study findings, the researcher established that university students' lecture disruption was related with moral decadence in public universities in Mount Kenya region, Kenya. The findings correlated with the view of Crawford (2014) who explained that Strikes may breed disappointed, frustration, emotional and psychological trauma, lack of motivation and unpreparedness on part of the university students.

**Table 2:** Responses on University Students' Demonstrations and Moral Decadence in Public Universities in Mount Kenya Region, Kenya

Statement	SA		A		N		D		SD	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Students demonstrations lead to examination irregularities.	101	34.4	59	18.6	39	12.3	23	7.3	87	27.4
Prostitution among students may arise from students demonstration.	61	19.2	107	33.8	43	13.6	71	22.4	35	11.0
Students demonstration lead to Indiscipline cases in a university.	82	25.9	98	30.9	59	18.6	47	14.8	31	9.8
Students demonstration may lead to Rape cases in a university.										
Students demonstration may lead to theft cases in a university.	53	16.7	73	23.0	106	33.4	40	12.6	45	14.2

Majority of university students and lecturers (34.4%) strongly agreed that Students' demonstrations lead to examination irregularities. The findings were in line with ideas of Crawford, (2014) who argued that an effective learning in higher institutions is achieved by successful and timely coverage of course outline before examination. A good number of respondents (33.8%) agreed that prostitution among students may arise from students' demonstration. Majority of respondents (30.9%) strongly agreed that students' demonstration lead to indiscipline cases in a university. Several respondents (35.3%) strongly agreed that students' demonstration lead to rape cases in universities. A good number of respondents (33.4%) remained neutral on issues regarding emergence of theft cases in universities. Following the responses from university students and lecturers, the researcher established that university students' demonstrations was related with moral decadence in public universities in Mount Kenya region, Kenya. The findings correlated with idea of Taiz (2008) who argued that moral decadence manifests in prostitution and other forms of sexual abuses with their concomitant ailments like human immune virus and acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

**Table 3:** Summary of Regression on Relationship between Students' Lecture- Disruptions and Moral Decadence in Public Universities in Mount Kenya Region, Kenya

R	R-square	Adjusted R square	R-square change	F change	df1	df2	sig. F change
.113a	.013	0.15	.013	3.981	1	378	0.39

F (1,378) = 3.981, P<0.05 (Hypothesis rejected); a predictors: (Constant) Students' Lecture- Disruptions

From table 3, since p-value (0.39) is less than critical value (0.05), researcher rejected the null hypothesis and retained alternative hypothesis. Therefore the researcher established that there was significant relationship between students' lecture disruptions and moral decadence in public universities in Mount Kenya region, Kenya. The findings were in line with view of Larigold (2013) who claimed that the level of moral decadence is disturbing and in whatever form, it

distorts plans, programs and processes of moral education. The distortion affects negatively the dignity of the human person made manifest in socio economic vices such as kidnapping, rape, incest, armed robbery, cultism, touting and cybercrimes.

Table 4: Summary of Regression on Relationship between Students' demonstrations and Moral Decadence in Public Universities in Mount Kenya Region, Kenya

R	R-square	Adjusted R square	R-square change	F change	df1	df2	sig. F change
.112a	.012	0.11	.012	4.071	1	378	0.45

F (1,378) = 4.071, P<0.05 (Hypothesis rejected); a predictors: (Constant) Students' demonstrations

From table 4, since p-value (0.45) is less than critical value (0.05), researcher rejected the null hypothesis and retained alternative hypothesis. Therefore the researcher established that there was significant relationship between students' demonstrations and moral decadence in public universities in Mount Kenya region, Kenya. The findings correlated with ideas of Taiz (2008) who claimed that moral decadence manifests in prostitution and other forms of sexual abuses with their concomitant ailments like human immune virus and acquired immune deficiency syndrome. It is imperative to explore into the causes, examples and effects of moral decadence on moral education.

#### 4. Conclusion

The researcher concluded that there was significant relationship between university students' lecture disruptions and moral decadence in public universities in Mount Kenya region, Kenya.

- There was significant relationship between university students' demonstrations and moral decadence in public universities in Mount Kenya region, Kenya.
- Therefore there was significant relationship between university students' strikes and moral decadence in public universities in Mount Kenya region, Kenya.

#### *Recommendation*

Following the study findings, the researcher recommended that:

- Ministry of education should ensure free strike university atmosphere for quality education and environment conducive for learning in university set up.
- University managements should be trained to avoid challenges which gradually lead to strikes in universities. Welfare for both university students and lecturers should be observed to ensure strike free university environment.

#### Compliance with ethical standards

##### *Statement of ethical approval*

The present study was ethically approved by National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation-Kenya.

##### *Statement of informed consent*

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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