

**TEACHERS' DISCIPLINING STYLES INFLUENCE ON PUPILS' BEHAVIOUR
MODIFICATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS
IN KIMILILI SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

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Abstract

Discipline lays the foundation for good behaviour in schools. In order to successfully achieve the objectives of a school, all members of the educational organization are required to strictly adhere to the various behaviour patterns. It is imperative that educational managers use appropriate disciplinary actions to maintain organizational standards necessary for optimum goal attainment. The modes of child up-bringing practices have a great impact on the intellectual attitude or abilities of the pupils. This helps the child to grow upright with the expected behaviour in the community as well as her first schooling life. Schools play an important role in the socialization process of the young people from where they learn to regulate their own conduct, respect others, and manage their time responsibly and thus becoming responsible citizens. The different disciplining styles that can be employed by the teachers are corrective, supportive and preventive. However the current situation in Kenyan education system has been hit by a wave of indiscipline among students which is escalating rapidly with notable strikes, bullying, arson cases in schools, absenteeism, vandalism of school property, general refusal to follow school rules and regulations as well as increased alcohol use. An increasing number of both primary and secondary school teachers are reporting a wide range of potentially disruptive behaviors in the classrooms and around the schools. This has therefore created a big concern from teachers and parents about the lack of opportunity for pupils to concentrate on their academic work which may be as a result of ineffective disciplining styles. There has been a lot of research touching on the concept of discipline but this paper realized that the effect of teachers disciplining styles to improve pupils' behaviour remains unknown and thus the need for this study. The study made use of mixed research approach. The research findings revealed that majority of teachers preferred caning pupils as opposed to guiding and counseling them and that most of the disciplinary methods employed had positive impact on the pupils' behaviors.

Key words: Disciplining Styles, Behaviour Modification

1. Introduction

In child development, discipline refers to methods of modeling character and teaching self-control and acceptable behaviour both at home and school. Discipline is about changing behaviour, not

about punishing children (Yang, 2009). Discipline allows children to develop self-discipline, and that affects a child's moral and psychological development. Discipline strategies can be categorized into three main styles; preventive, supportive and corrective.

Preventive aspect of discipline involves establishment of expectations, guidelines and rules for behaviour change during the first schooling days of a pupil. The ultimate goal of preventive disciplining style is to provide proactive interventions to potential disruptive behaviors by clearly explaining to students what good behaviors are. Supportive aspect of discipline provides a student with suggestions and options for correcting behaviour before a consequence is necessary such as verbal warning, suggestions for correcting behaviour, reminders, redirection and nonverbal communication. Corrective aspect of discipline may be the alternative when the student has failed to redirect his/her behaviour after repeated attempts. It refers to the set of consequences delivered to students following an infraction (Wolfgang, 1999).

Besides the commitment of the Kenyan government to provide free primary education and learning resources to improve school conditions, as it is stated in her objectives in primary education (MOE, 2011); education should develop a learner into a self discipline, physically fit and healthy person. Contrary, cases of students' misbehaving continues to be a problem in schools and have hampered the academic improvement (Onsomu, Njoroge, Oulai, Sankale and Mujidi, 2004). According to the (MOEST Task Force Report in 2001), it is believed that students' stray behaviours were attributed to a number of factors including the quality of school administration, inadequate parental involvement, students living conditions and poor academic performance (MOE, 2001). Similarly, (Sperry 2015), observes that in New York schools, the new 'restorative practices' or therapy is not bringing behaviour change in students. Effective disciplinary practices in school are crucial to ensuring academic success together with a safe learning environment (Putnam, Handler & Feinberg, 2005).

Burnwell (2013) points out that the culture of our schools is in dire strains because the standards of discipline are still far below and teachers have few consequences for students who do not toe the line especially after the ban of corporal punishment. To ensure quality education and effective management of primary schools, there is need to analyze in detail the emerging challenges on pupils' discipline (MOE, 2001; Sisungu, 2002) and the disciplining styles adopted by teachers. The study was therefore necessitated by the desire to determine the teachers' disciplining styles and their influence on pupils' behaviours in public primary schools in Kimilili Sub-County.

2. Study objectives

- a) To find out the disciplining styles used by teachers in primary schools in the sub-county.
- b) To establish the influence of teachers' disciplining styles on pupils' behaviour change.

3. Research methods

The study employed a mixed approach by adopting both the qualitative and quantitative data. According to Creswell (2012), mixed methods research approach utilizes in-depth contextualized

and natural but time consuming insights of qualitative research coupled with the more efficient but less rich quantitative research. This approach allowed for triangulation of different methods of inquiry, data collection, and data analysis. *Ex post facto* design was used to investigate the disciplinary strategies and counseling practices of the teachers and their impact on pupils' behaviors. The design enabled the researcher to measure changes or differences that have already taken place hence could not be manipulated. The target population for this study comprised of 276 teachers and 3,220 pupils from primary schools within Kimilili Sub-County. From this population, the researcher used random and purposive sampling and adopted 322 standard eight pupils, 18 class teachers and 18 school counselors. The methods of inquiry employed were interviews and questionnaires. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and Bivariate analyses using simple cross-tabulations. The Chi-Square test was also used to establish the level of significance ($P \leq 0.05$) as the standard for rejecting or accepting the null hypothesis. The findings were presented in tables, graph, and narrative form as follows.

4. Results of the Study

The study managed to obtain information from a total of 24 respondents. A previously developed analytical framework based on objectives of the study guided presentation of research findings. The following sections present the research results and the ensuing discussion.

4.1. Bio-data of the respondents

The following table shows the demographic information of the participants of this study.

Table 1: demographic information of the respondents

Zone	No. of schools	Sample schools	No. of pupils	Sampled pupils	No. of teachers	Sampled teachers
C	16	6	1,120	112	96	12
E	19	8	1,330	133	114	16
W	11	4	770	77	66	8
Total	46	18	3,220	322	276	36

Key: C – Kimilili Central; E – Kimilili East and W – Kimilili West

As already mentioned, random sampling technique was then used to select class eight pupils and purposeful sampling technique for class teachers and guidance and counseling teachers. This resulted into a sample of 18 primary schools was selected from 46 primary schools, 18 class teachers and 18 school counselors from a population of 276 teachers, 322 primary school pupils from a population of 3,220 pupils.

4.2. Types of indiscipline cases and the disciplining styles employed by teachers in schools

4.2.1 Types of indiscipline cases

The first research objective posed in this study was to find out the disciplining styles used by teachers in primary schools in the sub-county. To achieve this objective, the following question was raised: What are the disciplining styles used by teachers within Kimilili Sub-county? To answer the question, primary school pupils and teachers were requested to respond to the items in the questionnaires on types of indiscipline they engaged in and the types of disciplining styles employed by teachers to correct them. The following results were obtained:

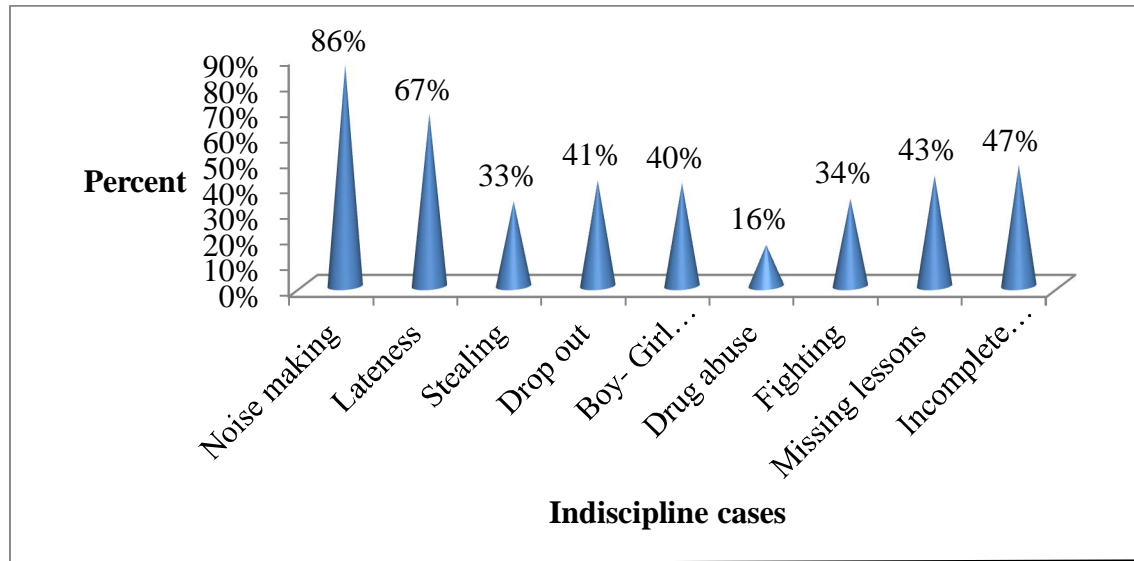


Figure 1: Common indiscipline cases in primary schools

The study findings presented in figure 1 show that noise making was the major type (86%) of indiscipline, followed by lateness in school (67%), incomplete assignment (47%), missing lessons (43%), school dropout (41%), boy-girl relationship (40%), fighting (34%), stealing (33%) and drug abuse (16%). MOEST (2000) identified the various forms which cause unrest and indiscipline in schools as: truancy, chronic absenteeism, rudeness and disrespect, unacceptable verbal expression of dissatisfaction, drug and alcoholic substances abuse, non-compliance to rules and regulations, destruction of property, bullying, boycotts, riots, assaults and indecent behaviour like rape and arson. Gregory, Skiba and Noguera (2010), note that students who smoke cigarettes and other substances mostly miss classes and miss lessons, absent themselves from schools. This hinders their concentration in academics. If the absenteeism is coupled with drug abuse, the situation worsens. Mumu (2004) incidentally observed that a positive correlation existed between discipline and academic performance thus calls for the need to ensure pupils' discipline is maintained. According to the Republic of Kenya report in 1991 and 2001 common indiscipline cases in schools include the following; lateness, chronic absenteeism, truancy, rudeness, insubordination, disrespect, unacceptable verbal expressions of dissatisfaction, abuses, , destruction of property, bullying fellow pupils, indecent behaviors like rape and arson.

Comparatively, a majority of the indiscipline cases in this study were reflected in the report. This is evident that most of the indiscipline cases are still prevailing in primary schools. Hence, it is a sign that either teachers are not aware of the government's concern about discipline or if they are aware they have failed to uphold discipline in schools.

4.2.2. Disciplining styles

Through descriptive statistics, the study sought to establish styles used by teachers to enhance discipline in their respective schools. The disciplining styles are presented in three categories namely; preventive, corrective and supportive. The styles are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Disciplining styles

Forms of Disciplining styles	Mean	Std. Deviation
<u>PREVENTIVE</u>		
Familiar and have a copy of school rules and regulations.	4.05	1.04
Guiding pupils' dressing code.	4.30	0.63
Pupils adhere to the bell	4.48	0.67
Guiding pupils on doing their class work and assignments.	4.35	0.69
Each class has a copy of school rules	3.35	1.14
No pupil is outside class during lesson time	4.13	1.00
Pupils have learning and writing materials	4.41	0.80
Safe keeping of textbooks for pupils	3.92	1.10
Mark pupils' assignments on time	4.13	0.94
Guide pupils on respect for teachers and other people.	4.55	0.60
Consistently talk to pupils about good behaviour.	4.39	0.69
<u>CORRECTIVE</u>		
Prompt when dealing with indiscipline cases.	4.24	0.98
Cane when a pupil makes a mistake	2.88	1.25
Parents are involved to cane	4.01	1.03
Suspend pupils who make repeated mistakes	2.43	1.29
Send noise makers out of the lesson	1.88	0.86
Make pupils to kneel for sometime after repeated mistake	2.37	1.19
Make pupils to miss lunch when they come to school late.	1.54	0.85
Give more assignments to those who fail to do homework	2.77	1.23
Deny noisemakers break	2.23	1.29
Make late comers to pick rubbish	3.94	1.06
Weed flower beds when found stepping on restricted ground	3.92	1.10

SUPPORTIVE

Ensure that pupils are in school during school days	4.42	0.87
Follow-up pupils to analyze performance after every test done.	4.34	0.75
Organize group discussion to help slow pupils	3.94	0.93
Give extra work to fast pupils	4.06	0.85
Give remedial work to slow pupils	3.83	1.02
Award best performers with presents and gifts	4.40	0.78
Provide learning materials to the needy pupils	4.14	0.85
Counsel pupils who are found cheating in exams.	4.01	1.03
Organize group counselling meetings to help in behaviour change	4.13	0.94
Have role models talk to them.	2.77	1.23
Praise those who have improved behaviour.	3.35	1.14

From the findings, a majority of the teachers are seen to employ preventive disciplining style by being firm on pupils' respect for the teachers and other people (mean = 4.55) and ensuring that pupils adhere to the bell (mean = 4.48). The findings also revealed that most teachers ensured that pupils are in school during school days (mean = 4.42) and are also strict on pupils doing their class work and assignments (mean = 4.35). The teachers were also prompt when dealing with indiscipline cases (mean = 4.24), consistently talk to pupils about good behaviors (mean = 4.39) and organize group guidance to help in behaviour change (mean = 4.13). From these findings, the teachers are using preventive, corrective and supportive disciplining styles to ensure that the pupils behave well in school as voiced by Kounin (1970) who assents that teachers should organize and manage school activities.

Okumbe (2007) identified two types of discipline namely, preventive and corrective discipline. The study observed that preventive discipline is the administrative action taken by an educational manager to encourage students to follow rules and regulations. It instills self-discipline and prevents infraction of rule. Corrective discipline on the other hand follows infraction of rule with the aim of discouraging infringement of a rule. The administrative action meted out is a disciplinary action. This disciplinary action is referred to as punishment. Indeed, moderate to heavy punishment; if delivered clearly, timely and consistently is effective in eliminating undesirable behaviour, particularly, if it is paired with positive reinforcement of the desired behaviour.

The study established three types of discipline management, namely preventive, corrective and supportive. The respondents agreed with majority modes of preventive management as the means were equal or more than 3.92. The teachers agreed that they were familiar and had a copy of school rules and regulations (mean \leq 4.05), strict on their pupils' dressing code (mean \leq 4.30), ensured that pupils adhered to the bell (mean \leq 4.48), strict on pupils completing their class work and assignments (mean \leq 4.35), no pupil is outside class during lesson time (mean \leq 4.13), pupils have learning and writing materials (mean \leq 4.41), Safe keeping of textbooks for pupils (mean \leq 3.92), mark pupils'

assignments on time (mean \leq 4.13) and firm on pupils' respect for teachers and other people (mean \leq 4.55). Most of the teachers were undecided about each class having a copy of school rules (mean \leq 3.35).

The respondents agreed with all the supportive measures as a way of modeling behaviour. The respondents ensured that pupils were in school during school days (mean \leq 4.42), made follow-up on pupils academic performance after every test (mean \leq 4.34), consistently talked to pupils regularly about good behaviour (mean \leq 4.39), organized group discussions to help slow learners (mean \leq 3.94), gave extra work to fast learners (mean \leq 4.06), gave remedial work to weak learners (mean \leq 3.83), awarded best performers with presents and gifts (mean \leq 4.40), provided learning materials to the needy pupils (mean \leq 4.14), counseled pupils found cheating in exams (4.01) and organized group counseling meetings to help in behaviour change (mean \leq 4.13).

The respondents agreed with some corrective measures which included, being prompt when dealing with indiscipline cases (mean \leq 4.24), sent away pupils to bring parents after repeated mistake (4.01) and punished late comers by picking rubbish (mean \leq 3.94). The respondents were undecided on some aspects of corrective measures; caning pupils when they made mistakes (mean \leq 2.88) and gave more assignments to those who failed to do homework (mean \leq 2.77). The respondents disagreed that they suspended pupils who made repeated mistakes (mean \leq 2.43), sent noise makers out of the lesson (1.88), made pupils to kneel for sometime after repeated mistakes (mean \leq 2.37), made late comers to miss lunch (mean \leq 1.54) and denied noisemakers break (mean \leq 2.23). According to UNESCO (2001), the recommended discipline management strategies which should be used in schools include guidance and counseling, cleaning of dirty classrooms, cleaning school toilets, retaining pupils in class during some important hours like break time, giving extra class work and in extreme cases the pupil can be send to bring a parent.

4.3. Testing of hypothesis on the relationship between teachers' disciplining styles and pupils' behaviour

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between teachers' disciplining styles and pupils' behaviour. This hypothesis was tested using Chi-square and results shown in 2.

Table 2: Relationship between teachers' disciplining styles and pupils' behaviour

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.15	7	0.02

The chi—square test revealed a significant association between the method used in disciplining pupils and its effect on their behaviour, $\chi^2 (7) = 16.15$, $p = 0.02$ which implied that the null hypothesis that states that there is no statistically significant relationship between teachers' disciplining styles and pupils' behaviors was rejected. It is therefore deduced that there is a significant relationship between the disciplining styles employed by teachers and the pupils' behaviour.

4.3.1. Influence of teachers' disciplining styles on pupils' behaviour change

The second research objective posed in this study was to establish the influence of teachers' disciplining styles on pupils' behaviour change. To achieve this objective the following question was raised: To what extent do the teachers' disciplining styles enhance change of behaviour among pupils? Table 3 shows the results obtained:

Table 3: Relationship between teachers' disciplining styles and pupils' behaviour

METHODS EMPLOYED TO INDISCIPLINED PUPILS	EFFECTS OF STYLE OF DISCIPLINING ON BEHAVIOUR CHANGE	
	CHANGED	NOT CHANGED
Preventive		
Warning	12%	88%
Corrective		
Caning	65%	35%
Carrying bricks	1%	99%
Picking rubbish	2%	98%
Supportive		
Guidance and Counselling	17%	83%
Send to bring parent	1%	99%
Advice giving	3%	97%

Table 3 reveals the relationship between teachers' disciplining styles and pupils' behaviour. For instance, caning was effected, however, only 65% changed while 35% did not change in their behavioral patterns as the results indicated. This showed that caning as a corrective means of discipline is a remedy to behavioral change. Glassier (1965) observes that reality therapy stresses on students being responsible for their own behaviors. In addition, the teachers employed other corrective measures that included; Carrying bricks and picking of rubbish which yielded change to small margin of 1% and 2% respectively. These measures did not provide remedy to the pupils as far as behaviour change was concerned.

The findings established that supportive disciplining style was also used by teachers. This included guidance and counseling, sending home pupils to bring parents and advice giving. It showed that 17% of pupils who had undergone through this method had changed for the better while 83% did not change according to the data collected. On the contrary, Kiprop (2004) says that teachers were not willing to subject learners to guidance and counseling sessions because of its demand in terms of time and workload. Pupils being sent to bring parents had 1% who accepted that it changed their

behaviors while those advised by their teachers had 3% whose behaviors changed. Their change is attributed to what Glasser (1965) notes that the teacher communicates concern to students, along with warmth and understanding focusing on behaviour change but not how one has been offended by the pupil. Nasibi (2003) also points out that, one's views should be listened to and defense allowed even in unfavorable situations. She also stresses treating pupils with respect and understanding.

Lastly, the study also established that preventive style of discipline was used, where warning was a common method. The findings revealed that 12% of pupils warned did change their behaviors' while 88% did not change. The study therefore reveals that warning is an ineffective tool of disciplining.

5. Summary of the findings

The findings were analyzed as per their objectives. For instance, objective one sought to find out the disciplining styles used by teachers in primary schools in the sub-county. The findings on this item was that the three disciplining styles namely corrective, preventive and supportive are used to manage discipline in the sampled schools. The second objective sought to establish the influence of teachers' disciplining styles on pupils' behavior modification whose findings revealed that the styles have a positive influence on pupils' behavior.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following conclusions emerged; That although the government through the ministry of education abolished corporal punishment in schools in Kenya, it has put in place little in the way of implementation plans, monitoring arrangements, publicity as well as solutions to possible alternatives of discipline management likely to face schools and those affected by it. This has resulted in majority of the teachers embarking on caning and other forms of corporal punishments for instilling discipline in the sampled schools because they have no otherwise. The findings concur with Godfredson and Godfredson as cited by Cotton (2005) when they stated that, teachers are inconsistent in their enforcement of rule or when they react in inappropriate ways, discipline is generally poor.

Findings in this study showed that most schools have formulated and have copies of school rules and regulations that play an important role in guiding pupils and helping them maintain school discipline. The rules and regulations outlined the expected behaviors' and possible outcomes if a pupil contravened them. The study established that alternative methods of discipline like guidance and counseling, rewards, formulation and clarification of school rules play a great role in managing discipline. Corrective means of discipline like caning resulted to positive behaviour change despite being banned by the government. There is need to understand its usefulness in bringing about change of behaviour because pupils believed it was the fastest way of punishment that would not keep them away from the classrooms.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings, this study made the following recommendations:-

- Opening up of communication channels between pupils, staff administration, and parents to enhance effective discipline management in schools as most of the issues that provoke pupils to behave negatively can be easily resolved. The best method of disciplining could be easily arrived at in consultation between pupils, teachers and parents.
- Teachers should explore alternative methods of discipline like guidance and counseling, giving of rewards, involving the school sponsors, which play a great role in managing discipline. Corrective means of disciplining like caning that resulted to positive behaviour change should be reconsidered in future despite being banned by the government.
- A school system for early identification of pupils' behavioural problems should be set in place which is based on effective integration of policy and provision for school discipline, pastoral care and special needs for the pupils.
- Appropriate staff development, and effective links with the relevant external support agencies in promoting discipline among pupils is highly encouraged. This can be achieved through inviting of external speakers to have forums with pupils to share matters related to discipline and academics.
- The Kenyan government should also implement a review of curriculum in teacher training colleges to incorporate alternative discipline methods for children including training with regard to dealing effectively with children's and youth's behaviour, the normal stages of children development of primary school children.
- The government should develop and distribute information for public awareness on creation of alternative discipline methods for teachers to foster discipline in schools, homes and in the society. They should also provide information about the effects of physical punishment.
- Periodic appraisal of state of discipline should be carried out to identify challenges that limit its management in schools. Through this initiative it will create an overview of the major types of indiscipline cases common in schools and the effective action and management towards the same.

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