

The Challenges of Indiscipline among Students of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State

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Abstract

The challenges of indiscipline among students of public senior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State is not a new headline in our diary. Throughout the decades, we have witnessed various phases of public senior schools crises and media reports such as “students expelled following rampage, students’ riot – principals, teachers, seriously injured” etc: Quite often precious researchers and writers had to concentrate solely on the causes of indiscipline in public senior schools. Nowadays, educational administrators are beginning to look for those factors militating against proper implementation and maintenance of discipline in public senior schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area. It is in pursuance of this objective that this work on the challenges of indiscipline among students of public senior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State were examined. In an attempt to make this work to be very authentic and primary, effort was made to carefully select schools in which research has not been carried out in this field. Review of related literature, personal observations were carried out and a questionnaire, which was in one set, was also administered to both staff and students. The statistical tool employed to analyze the raw data was percentage method. It was observed that lack of corporal punishment; moral aspect of religion, and poor remuneration of teachers’ constitute the major challenges to indiscipline among students of public senior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State. In this regard, it was suggested that corporal punishment should be reintroduced, religious studies should be taken more serious and adequate incentive be provided to the teachers.

Keywords: Challenges, Indiscipline, Public Senior Secondary School, Ogba, Egbema, Ndoni, Local Government Area.

Introduction

The promotion or maintenance of discipline is essential if organized group action is to be effective or productive whether the group is a club, society, a union, a company, a business or industrial concern or a nation. The word discipline connotes that the members of a group should reasonably conform to the rules or regulations that is the code of behavior which have been formed for it or by it so that everyone may benefit by them. People’s morale or industrial peace are definitely proper by maintenance of discipline. If the members of a

group do not abide by the rules of the organization, it may collapse. Chaos, confusion, disobedience disloyalty and antisocial or anti-organizational activities develop to the detriment of everyone. In the words of Spiegel (2013) "discipline is the force that prompts an individual or group to observe the rules, regulations or procedure which are seemed to be necessary to the attainment of an objective. It is force or fear which restrains an individual or group from doing certain things which are deemed to be distractive for group objectives. It is also the exercise of restraint or the enforcement of penalties for the violation group "regulations". Thus, discipline can be said as an attitude of mind, a product of culture, and a particular environment which promotes an individual to willingly corporate in the observances of the rules of the organization to which he belongs.

School discipline if often seen as an important ingredient in the process by which children are enabled to function in the society because living in a society entails living in association with certain agreed rules, which govern one's behavior. Thus, keeping order in the school is a multifaceted problem associated with range of interacting factors such as the child himself, home and neighbor-hood influences, changing societal values and expectations, the school and its natural environment, and the individual teacher.

Statement of the Problem

In Rivers State, Secondary Schools like other secondary schools in other states of the federation, and the world over; the problem of indiscipline is the same. In fact, it has almost become part and parcel of the educational process, since from generation to generation there has been the same complaint. Psychological studies have revealed that at this stage the child has become an adolescent and strives to free himself from adult domination, particularly parental authority.

Indiscipline is seen as a fragile machinery which if not well taken care of can render a society ineffective and in a perpetual state of confusion. This is to say that the role of discipline cannot be overemphasized but up till the present date, the issue of the problem of indiscipline in secondary school administration has almost become a part and parcel of academics in Rivers State public senior Secondary schools constitute the focal point of the problem.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this work is purely for academics and administration. It is also to make an investigation into the problems of discipline in public senior Secondary Schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area with a view to: (a) ascertain the factors underlying the problem of maintaining effective discipline in secondary schools, (b) make recommendation on the areas that are deemed necessary.

Related Works

The term discipline and control have always been conflictingly used in the educational system. The international dictionary of education formally defines discipline as a term to

describe teacher class-room control or general restraint of pupils behavior. While control is used synonymously with discipline. Farant (2001) uses the term democratic discipline to describe the appropriate and not as means of successful teaching Lingworth (2013) has made the conceptual point that coercion can never be a method of educating in the sense that where teachers tend to interpret control as threats there by forcing students to learn what he has taught them is far behind the truth. Another interesting aspect of discipline and administrative control is the use of scientific procedures known as behaviour modification based on the learning theory developed by Skinner (2013) who advocates some techniques and positive reinforcement such as using rewards to bring about and maintain desired behavior combined with extinction behavior i.e weakening undesired behavior by ignoring it or by otherwise removing its rewarding consequence.

However, the work of Lauwerys (2012) is discovered to be in contrast with the scientific procedures of behavior modification and psychodynamic work of Piaget. His work on classroom management focuses attention on the teacher's public demonstration that he knows what is going on, his ability to facilitate smooth transaction from one activity to another and handle movement and the type of demand he makes from pupil.

There is bound to be conflict where administration in school is taken to be rigid and regimentation, where students have to fear administration rather than respect them. Fagbula (2006) in his work concludes that teachers who rather than settle their minor matters take them to the school administration create a problem to administrative control of schools. Bad administrative control can hinder effective discipline tone in the school. These can take the form of giving bad and inadequate food to students, ineffective teaching, bad staff behavior, authoritarian methods of administration, harsh schools rules, arrogant attitude of the school prefects, unsatisfactory curricular, poor examination result, poor communication between administrators and school pupils. Morrish (2016) in his write ups disclosed that authoritative behavior of the principal is capable of causing revolt against the authority. He further notes that students work actively when the leader is present, but the rate of work falls immediately the leader is absent. Docking (2010) is of the view that the control concept of discipline rest on assumption that the curriculum cannot always of itself generate sufficient interests to command a class of undivided attention and that therefore indiscipline problems are bound to arise.

Discipline is an aspect of school function which if not well maintained can render the school system ineffective. School discipline as a matter of fact is seen as a vital element in the process by which students are enabled to function in the society. The general idea of underlying this fact is that if the schools will be absorbed into the society, the students must therefore be made to develop rule – following and law – adding habits so that they conform to the general social expectations of the main and culture absorbing its basic attitudes and beliefs (Docking 2010). Sieber and Wilder (2013) points out that "A Society without rules is inconceivable, and rules without attitude of disapproval towards them are inconceivable. In the English Elementary School, obedience was enforced mildly without any military goal in mind and in that discipline was seen essentially as a process of obedient training for society

at large. On the other hand, thinking of discipline in terms of training for society. Docking (2010) says it may encourage a schooling for subordination where teachers use their disciplinary authority to satisfy some unfulfilled needs within themselves so that they are to view children as a means rather than as ends.

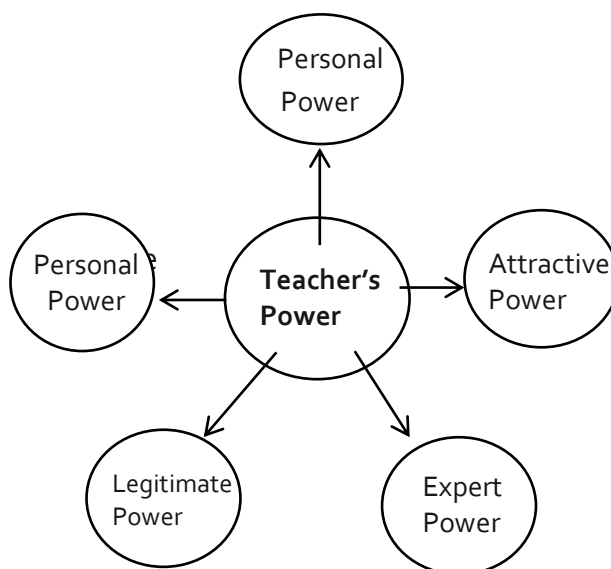
He further observed that discipline in school can be regarded as character building or as training for society in order to reinforce certain values, usually those upheld by the dominant culture in the society. Also, discipline could be seen as "maintenance of an orderly system that creates the condition in which learning may take and that allows the aim and objectives of the school to be achieved. Teacher-student relationships always suffer a breach particularly when the concept of punishment is applied, aimed at preventing the students from repeating an undesired behavior. Teachers create a problem to discipline especially when they do not know probably how to punish students. According to Okon and Anderson (2012) the example of using one young person to care for another is horrible because the unfortunate person may suffer more, as he may be blamed by his peers for being part of the punishment. Docking (2010) maintains that "A disciplined relationship between teacher and class is one in which both parts to the relationship possesses submit to the education order of the task in hand. The discipline is not something which one party to the relationship possesses over or manages to impose upon the other. Unless the person being disciplined, as well as the person doing the discipline can set at least something of the value point of the proposed order than he will not submit its sake, but only for the sake of values external of it.

Therefore, it should be a responsibility of parents-teacher, public and authorities concerned. While talking about the indiscipline, Kothari Commission (2011 - 2015) stated that no amount of improvement and reconstruction in education would bear much fruit if the school were undermined by indiscipline. The NPE (2008) felt the state of indiscipline prevailing in the field of education and recommended some measures to check it by considering the urgency and acuteness of the problem.

Discipline includes inhibition and gradual elimination of those forms of conduct or behavior, which will militate those forms of conduct or behaviours, which will militate against the individual's best adjustment to survive for self-progress and social acceptance. Discipline in the school usually means order and system in doing things regularly and obedience to command. The essential purpose of school discipline is the development of pupil's attitude, habits and ideas of conduct through the medium of social frame of the school, organized on a cooperative basis and supplemented by other factors.

Teachers are often highly concerned about the discipline in their classroom. Jones (2007) defines classroom discipline as the business of enforcing classroom standards and building patterns of cooperation in order to minimize disruptions and maximize learning. Hence, discipline is a two-edged sword; on one edge is enforcing standards; on the other is gaining the cooperation of student/s. Jones believes cooperation to be more important of the two. To get cooperation, teachers can use their power. Power in the teachers' ability to get

students to do what they want them to do. There are five forms of power that are used by teacher.



Dorking (2010)

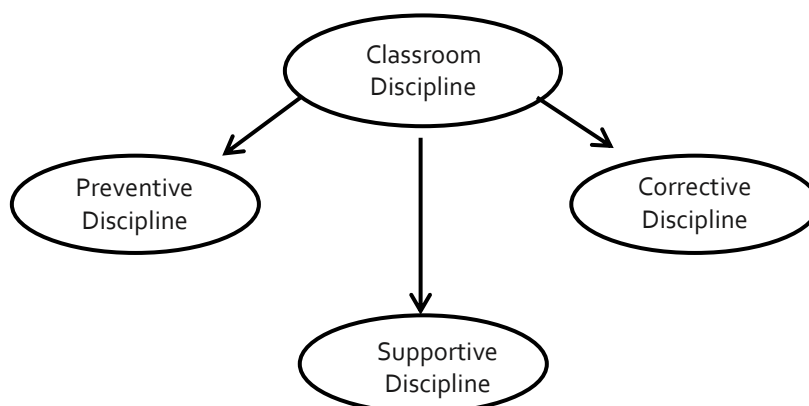
Attractive Power: Students do what the teacher wants because they like the teacher.

Expert Power: Students do what the teacher wants to avoid punishment given by him/her.

Legitimate Power: Students do what the teacher wants because they believe that teacher has the right to decide what to do in the classroom.

Personal Power: Students do what the teacher wants because of her/his body language and his/her personal power.

The teacher can use these powers to avoid misbehavior or indiscipline of students in the classroom.



Discipline has existed along with concept of indiscipline because they are the either side of the same coin. Indiscipline means those acts, which are not socially approved and are illegal.

Charles (2001) defined three faces of classrooms discipline, which provides the framework for teachers to maintain discipline in the classroom.

Preventive Discipline consists of those techniques, which a teacher uses to avoid misbehavior of students.

Supportive Discipline consists of those techniques, which a teacher uses to maintain self-control of the students.

Corrective Discipline consists of the consequences of punishment, which a teacher uses to discipline students, but this should be last opinion.

Schools are the places where teachers produce future decent people but unfortunately sometimes the misbehavior or indiscipline of students frustrate them.

Brief History of Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area

Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area (ONELGA) is a local government area of Rivers State (old Ahoada LGA) under Rivers West Senatorial District with its headquarters at Omoku with about 250,700 people according to 2006 census, it is bounded by Imo, Delta, Bayelsa and Anambra states and also by Ahoada West, Ahoada East and Emohua Local Government Areas of Rivers State. They are part of Igboid speaking area of Rivers State with three (3) tribes starting with Ogba as the dominant tribe with Twelve (12) Legislative Wards and the Egbema and Ndoni tribes with Two (2) and Three (3) Legislative Wards respectively. It is majorly upland and home to the highest upstream Oil and Gas exploration/exploitation activities in the State since early 1960's with about Twelve (12) mining/producing fields operated by Agip, Total Energies and Shell/NPDC with many other reserve/untapped fields. It is part of the Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni and Ahoada West Federal Constituency in the Nigerian House of Representatives.

The ancient traditional stool of the area is the Oba of Ogbaland, Nze Obi of Egbema kingdom and the Awor of Ndoni, However, recently the Eze Egi of Egi kingdom in Ogba land was also adopted and elevated to first class status joining the formers as reverend traditional institutions in the local government area.

From the local government area, it is easy to journey to the foremost Onitsha World Market through River Niger. The local government has vast arable and fertile land for agricultural and industrial uses. Presently, the local government area is headed by Hon. Vincent Job DSSRS, JP as Executive Chairman while Hon. Dr. Stella Agada is the Deputy Chairman of the local government area.

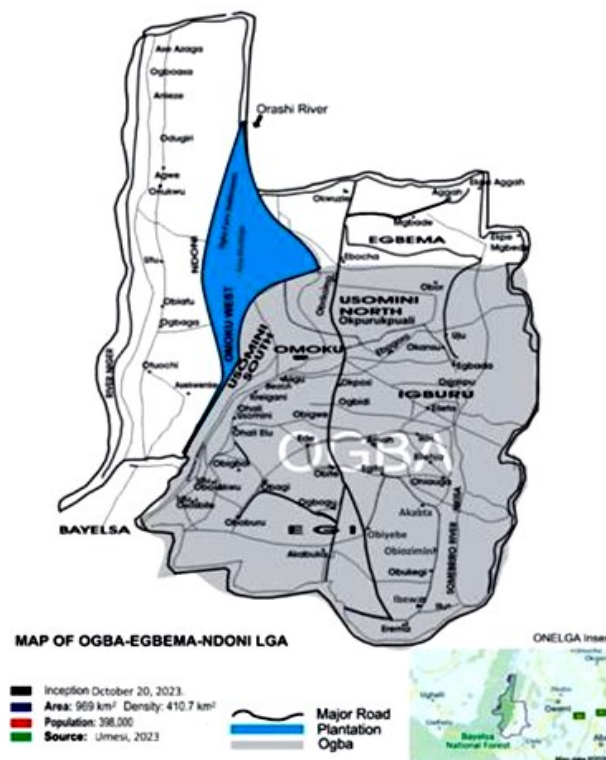


Figure 1: Map of Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area

Method

The study on the challenges of indiscipline in public senior Secondary Schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area is limited to Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area. Students in the public senior secondary sections and academic staff were used as the study subjects. One set of questionnaires was developed and used by the researcher to gather raw information. The researcher also made use of the data collected through personal observation. A total of 140 questionnaires was developed and used by the researcher to gather raw information. The researcher also made use of the data collected through personal observation. The researcher used 80 out of 140 questionnaires were distributed to the students, while 60 questionnaires were collected immediately. Based on the reason that this study is a fact-finding one, the raw data obtained were presented in table forms and analyzed by employing percentage method. Unanswered questions were discarded.

Results

Table 1: Changes in Societal Value Constitute a Major Problem to Discipline in Schools

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	57	69.5
Not agreed	25	30.5
Total	85	100

Source: Survey Questionnaire 2020

The data on the above table 1: Shows that 69.5% of the study subjects agreed that social values constitute a major problem to discipline in schools. While 30% disagreed.

Table 2: Less Emphasis on Moral Aspects of Religion Encourage Indiscipline in Schools

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	103	50.9
Not agreed	76	38.7
No Relationship	21	10.4
Total	200	100

Source: Survey Questionnaire 2020

Majority of the respondents (50.9%) supported that less emphasis on moral aspects of religion has a great influence on discipline in schools. Whereas 38.7% did not support the idea and 10.4% observed that they have no relationship.

Table 3: Absence of Corporal Punishment in Schools Encourage Indiscipline

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	47	57
Not Agreed	35	43
Total	82	100

Source: Survey Questionnaire 2020

It can be observed in the above table that 57% of the respondents agreed that absence of corporal punishment in schools encourages indiscipline. While 43% disagreed. This indicates that from teacher's perspective corporal punishment is very important when maintaining discipline in schools.

Table 4: Teachers Involvement in Part Time Engagement Encourages Indiscipline in Schools

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	59	72
Not Agreed	23	28
Total	82	100

Source: Survey Questionnaire 2020

From the above table, it can be seen that 72% of the respondents are of the view that teachers' involvement in other trades encourage indiscipline in schools, 28% disagreed. It could easily be confirmed that the work attitude of teachers is far below expectation and this has a long way to go in affecting disciplinary tone of the schools adversely.

Table 5: Irregular Payment of Teachers' Salaries and Allowances add to Indiscipline Rate in Schools

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	40	48.8
Not Agreed	35	42.7
No relationship	7	8.5
Total	82	100

Source: Survey Questionnaire 2020

The above shows that 48.8% accepted that irregular payment of salaries and allowances to teachers add to indiscipline in schools, while 42.7% are not in support. This shows that teachers' salaries and allowances are very important as far as the school system is concerned, particularly now that emphasis is placed on functional education. It is against this background that the then Military Governor of Rivers State Co. Godwin O. Abbe announced that teachers' salaries should be paid on or before 20th of every month.

Summary of Findings

This investigation on the challenges of indiscipline in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area is aimed at finding all the factors that hamper maintenance of effective discipline in schools. From the result obtained and observations made, some vital conclusions are drawn.

1. Changes in societal values constitute a major problem to discipline in public senior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area.
2. It was observed that less emphasis on moral aspect of religion encourage indiscipline in public senior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area.
3. The study also disclosed that absence of corporal punishment in public senior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area encourage indiscipline.
4. The study also revealed that teachers' involvement in other trades encourage indiscipline in public senior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area.
5. It was also observed that irregular payment of teachers' salaries and allowances add to indiscipline in public senior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area.

Conclusion

The challenges of indiscipline among public senior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area if judged from the student's perspective will be bias and therefore incomplete. It is crystal clear that some of these public senior secondary schools very often create conflicting social attitudes between them and their male counter-parts. Right from the late 1990's we have witnessed the gradual

disintegration of one major source i.e., irregularities in the payment of teachers' salaries and other entitlements. In the colonial days, a teacher's reward was said to be in heaven thus, a teacher did not need to involve himself in any monetary competition with his counterparts in civil service. In fact, every teacher was esteemed in the society and the teacher enjoyed such fringe benefits as free supply of water, firewood, house boys, food stuff etc among others. But since these sources of benefits were eradicated due to profound influence exerted by the authorities, the teacher has become a victim of circumstance and therefore, he has to strive for his survival like his counterparts in the civil service by way of devoting less of his time to teaching and a greater part to either business that will yield him some money just to stay afloat in the society.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been made:

1. The method used for discovering acts of indiscipline among students should be changed from persuasive to subjective. This is to say that corporal punishment should be reintroduced.
2. Religious studies should be taken serious by making it compulsory in schools irrespective of whether students are science oriented or art inclined or whether they are from secular homes or not.
3. The programme of the schools should be far as possible be modified to suit the changes on societal value system.
4. Teachers' salaries and other welfare packages should be paid regularly in order to boost their productivity and also discourage them from paying attention to other trades.
5. Despite the economic situation of the state, the government should force school pupils to go back to the old boarding system.

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