

THE ROLE OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS IN ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF CONSTRAINTS TO EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN AWKA, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed to investigate the constraints to the effective discipline of secondary school students in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra state. The survey design was adopted for the study. Five research questions guided the study. The population of the study comprised 1320 teachers. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 150 respondents for the study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Constraints to Effective Discipline of Secondary School Student Questionnaire (CEDSSSQ)." The instrument was face validated by three specialists, two from Educational Management and Policy and one from Educational Measurement and Evaluation, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The questionnaire was trail-tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument and this yielded a reliability coefficient (0.74). Data were analyzed using frequency means to answer the research questions. Based on the findings, it was revealed that discipline problems encountered in secondary schools include: Truancy, stealing, assault on school prefects, absenteeism, fighting, and examination malpractice, among others. It was recommended, among others, that in order to stem indiscipline, specific disciplinary actions should be meted out against undisciplined students to discourage others from being unruly.

Keywords: Education, Effective discipline, Constraints to effective discipline.

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INTRODUCTION

Education has remained as a systematic process through which a child or an adult acquires knowledge, experience, skill and sound attitude. It makes an individual civilized, refined, cultured and educated (Ikegbusi, 2012). According to the author, "for a civilized and socialized society, education is the only means and its goal is to make an individual perfect." In Nigeria, Awka South, to be precise, having realized the effectiveness of education as a powerful instrument for national progress and development, adjusted her educational philosophy and methodology to match the ideals and challenges of changing economic and social structured modern society. The societal aims and objectives of the secondary education system is the preparation of children for useful living within the society and for higher education. All these objectives cannot be effectively achieved when students are not properly disciplined. Discipline is an important component of human behaviour as it directly defines the character of a human being. It is a product of acceptable values in the human society that one subscribes to and quite often, it regulates human conduct and his/her relations with others. Some school's successful growth and development are largely determined by the discipline standards of their administrators. Scheurmann and Hall (2016), discipline is a system of guiding the learners to make reasonable decisions. He further observes that good effective management of discipline saves substantial resources and time for school administrators. However, we cannot discuss student's discipline without emphasis on student indiscipline. Koutselini (2002) defines student indiscipline as any student behaviour that deviates from school expectations. These expectations may vary from school to school and depend on the social perception of ideal behaviour as understood in different cultures. In a school situation, indiscipline can be a serious obstacle to learning, and this has become a major concern of the educators and the public (Okeke, 2012). Alidzulwi (2016) asserts that severe disciplinary problems have been experienced in many secondary schools. The author indicated that some learners carry weapons such as daggers,

matches, axes, guns and other dangerous arms to schools. Incidences have been reported of learners stabbing fellow students and teachers. In the Awka South Local Government Area, personal observations of the researchers from teaching practice reveal serious cases of student violence. These include the disturbance of public peace in the host communities, attacking teachers, truancy, fighting, stealing and other acts with the spate of cultism in secondary schools. Research studies have identified many constraints to the effective discipline of students in secondary school. Some of the constraints include parental influence, the role of teachers, political, social and economic factors, learners with emotional problems, the leadership of the school head, the influence of gender and the curriculum. Otien (2014), opines that constraints to discipline in schools include; administrator's work experience, peer group pressure, school size and teacher's involvement, family factors that affect the teaching and learning process. The researchers, therefore, deemed it necessary to use parental factor, the role of teacher factor, a political, social, and emotional factor which, according to literature could be constraints to the effective discipline of secondary school students. More so, parental influence has been found as one of the constraints to effective discipline in schools. Unorom, Stephen and Nwankwo (2020) opines that parents as of greatest importance in creating a conducive teaching and learning atmosphere. It seems that the lack of parental involvement is the major constraint to effective discipline in schools. Bowman (2014) is of the opinion that parent's failure to teach their children discipline is a major contributing factor to the constraint of effective discipline in schools. In the researcher's opinion, the statement made by several authors indicates the extent to which parents are being blamed for the disciplinary problems in schools. Thus, bad behavior can be seen to have its roots in the quality of parenting, as shown by erratic discipline, parental disharmony, and the approval of bad behavior. Varnham (2015) study found that students have a tendency to behave badly at school because they feel that schooling is something imposed on them rather than a process in which they are valued as significant

participants. This is the reason a general concern is brought to the fore by several researchers that teachers are no longer committed to their profession. Many students do not want to be forced to study because force encourages students to act in a stubborn manner. Teachers who do not prepare their lessons thoroughly or meaningfully promote negative self-esteem in students who show little or no participation in the classroom. This creates disciplinary problems in schools. The political influence of the environment creates indiscipline among the youths ((Unorom & Ikwu, 2020). He further opines that political and social influences have been a constraint to effective discipline in schools and children's rights are one of the factors confusing principals, teachers and learners in matters relating to disciplining students in schools. Some principals are under pressure to recognize student's rights and are careful to stamp their authority. For instance, many newly appointed principals are careful not to infringe on a student's right for fear of being accused of misconduct. This mandate to protect student's rights causes students to behave beyond boundaries. They try to influence the behaviour of their classmates negatively by exhibiting a lack of discipline. It is because of issues of indiscipline disrupting achievement of goals in school that prompted the researcher to carry out this study on constraint to effective discipline on secondary school students in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra state.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study was to investigate the constraint to effective discipline on secondary school students in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra state. Specifically, the study intends to:

1. Identify the major disciplinary problems in secondary schools.
2. Investigate the extent to which parental factors influence effective discipline on secondary school students.
3. Determine the extent to which the role of the teacher influences effective discipline on secondary school students.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the major disciplinary problems in secondary schools?
2. To what extent do parental factors influence effective discipline on secondary school students?
3. To what extent does the role of the teacher influence effective discipline on secondary school students?

METHODOLOGY

The survey design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 1320 teachers and 18 principals. The sample for the study was 150 respondents (including 132 teachers and 18 principals). Simple random sampling was used to select twelve teachers each from eleven schools out of the eighteen schools in Awka South Local Government Area. 10% of the population of 1320 teachers was used for the study. The instrument for this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed by the researchers and was titled "Constraints to Effective Discipline on Secondary School Students Questionnaire (CEDSSSQ). This questionnaire was constructed based on research scales. The instrument is made up of items organized in five clusters of disciplinary problems, influences of parental factor, role of teacher, political and social factors and emotional factors. The questionnaire was structured on a four-point rating scale of Very Large Extent (VLE), Large Extent (LE), Small Extent (SE), and Very Small Extent (VSE) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively. The instrument faces validity while the reliability of the instrument was determined through a test-retest method. The scores of the first and second administration were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The reliability coefficient was

0.72, 0.69, 0.81, 0.75 and 0.71 for cluster 1, 2, and 3 respectively. The overall reliability value stood at 0.74, which was considered high enough to confirm the instrument was reliable. The number of copies of the instrument was administered and collected on the spot by the researchers so as to ascertain a high percent rate of return.

RESULTS

Research question 1: What are the major disciplinary problems in secondary schools in the Awka South Local Government Area?

Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents on the major disciplinary problems in secondary schools

S. no.	Disciplinary problems in school include	Mean	Decision
1	Truancy constitute a problem in school	2.56	Large extent
2	Stealing constitute a problem in my school	3.0	Large extent
3	Assault on teachers and non-teachers	2.46	Small extent
4	Absenteeism is a serious disciplinary problem in my school	2.7	Large extent
5	Assault on school prefects	3.1	Large extent
6	Fighting	2.61	Large extent
7	Examination malpractice	2.9	Large extent
8	Drug abuse and alcoholism	2.3	Small extent
9	Cultism is a serious disciplinary problem in my school	3.2	Large extent
10	Persistent disruption of activities in class	2.87	Large extent

Table 1 above, presenting the mean rating of respondents on the major disciplinary problems in secondary schools. Almost all items were related to a large extent with mean scores 2.56, 3.0, 3.1, 2.7, 2.65, 2.9, 3.2, 2.87 for items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 respectively. Except items 3 and 8, which indicate respondent's disagreement that to a small extent, assault on teachers and non-teachers, drug abuse and alcoholism are disciplinary problems encountered in secondary schools.

Research question 2: To what extent does a parental factor affect discipline in the Awka South Local Government Area?

Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents on the extent of parental factors affects discipline

S. no.	Parents affect effective discipline in the student through	Mean	Decision
11	Parental over protection of children at home	3.0	Large extent
12	Parental rejection of children	2.41	Small extent
13	Unsatisfactory home conditions in some homes	2.80	Large extent
14	Improper training of children at home	2.67	Large extent
15	The negative influence of television and neighborhood	2.58	Large extent
16	Instability as a result of family dispute	2.90	Large extent
Grand mean (\bar{x})		2.73	Large extent

Table 2 presents the view of respondents on the extent of parental factors as it affects effective discipline. From there,

almost all the items were rated to a large extent with mean scores above 2.50, which shows that the respondents did not differ much among themselves in their responses. It also revealed a grand mean of 2.73, which indicates to a large extent that parental factors affect the discipline of secondary school students.

Research question 3: To what extent does the role of teachers affect effective discipline in secondary schools in the Awka South Local Government Area?

Table 3: Mean ratings of respondents on the role of teachers as it affects effective discipline in schools

S. no.	Teachers affect effective discipline in the student through	Mean	Decision
17	Incessant persuasion of students in class activities	3.2	Large extent
18	Teachers lateness and absenteeism	2.65	Large extent
19	Poor teaching methods by some teachers	2.52	Large extent
20	Harsh school rules and regulations	3.1	Large extent
21	Poor leadership exhibition by some class teachers	2.87	Large extent
22	Partially in the use of reward	2.32	Small extent
Grand mean (\bar{x})		2.78	Large extent

Table 3 shows a grand mean of 2.78 and that teacher's roles affect the effective discipline of secondary school students to a large extent. The table shows the respondent rated almost all items with mean scores above 2.50 except item 22 which indicated partially in the use of reward in class to affect discipline to a small extent.

DISCUSSION

The findings in table 1 showed that schools in the area of the study experienced major disciplinary problems. According to the opinion of respondents, these problems include truancy, stealing, assault on school prefect, absenteeism from school, fighting, examination malpractice, cultism and persistent disruption of activities in class. This finding is in line with Unorom and Ikwu (2020), which states that the issue of indiscipline in school has gone for years and a reasonable solution has not been found. He went further to say that indiscipline in school is not peculiar to children and adolescents; indiscipline also haunts our government and industries. The researchers are of the opinion that these illicit acts of indiscipline have become a fashionable pastime, as it affects common phenomena and the perpetrators perform these bad behaviors without qualms. This action has affected the student's moral standing and academic performance in response to research question two on parental factors as it affects effective discipline among secondary school students. It was discovered to a large extent that parental over-protection of children at home, unsatisfactory home conditions in some homes, improper training of children at home, the negative influence of television and neighborhood, and instability as a result of family disputes are factors promoting indiscipline in schools. This finding is in consonance with Alidzulwi (2016), who opines, like most authors, that parents are of great importance in creating a conducive teaching and learning environment. Also, Bowman (2014) asserted that he has never seen a problem child, only problem parents. The above assertion is in line with the words of Ikegbusi (2012), who stated that the root of any law-breaking in the society is linked generally to the way and manner a child grows up in the home. Research question 3 on the role of teachers as it affects effective discipline in schools. It was revealed that to a large extent, incessant persuasion of students in class activities, teacher's lateness and absenteeism, equally poor teaching

methods by some teachers, harsh school rules and regulations and poor leadership exhibition by some class teachers. This finding is in line with Bowman (2014), who asserted that teachers who do not actively involve learners in classroom activities might experience disciplinary problems. However, a research study also found that the involvement of learners in matters pertaining to their education reduces behavioral problems (Stanley, Ezenwagu, & Nwankwo, 2020). Also, Mabeba and Prinsloo (2018) indicated that learners prefer strict teachers who involve them in the management of discipline. Teachers who are always ready to allow them to determine the consequences of their behavior. The researcher's experience shows that some teachers are irresponsible and believe that their task is only to teach and that discipline should be taken out of their hands by the system. That is why the general concern is brought to the fore by several authors that teachers are no longer committed in their professions as before.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that major disciplinary problems encountered in secondary schools include - truancy, stealing, assault on school prefects, fighting, and examination malpractice, among others. Also, the study concluded that, to a large extent, parental factors, the role of teachers, and emotional factors affect the effective discipline of secondary school students in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra state.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher put forward the following recommendations, which, if implemented, could go a long way to raising a reputable educational setting:

1. In order to stem indiscipline, specific disciplinarian actions should be meted out against undisciplined students to discourage others from being unruly.
2. Society should de-emphasise amassing illegal wealth and material gains and encourages good moral and ethical standards.
3. Parents should make education a priority for their children and play an active role in grooming their children. This will make the child behave in an acceptable manner.
4. Moral punishment, rewards, praise and the creation of a conducive environment for reinforcement of positive performance should be encouraged.
5. All staff should cultivate model self-discipline behavior. These serve as role models for their learners, thereby inculcating self-discipline in learners.

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AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

All authors equally contributed to the success of the research work.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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