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The relationship between school-based practices and students' discipline evidence from secondary schools in Kabarole District

ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to investigate the relationship between school-based practices and students' discipline in secondary schools. The school-based practices that were focused on were: Managing access procedures, managing students' identity and sensitisation of students on rules and regulations. The study adopted a correlational research design in order to establish the relationship between the dependent and independent variables in question. A total of 351 students and 93 teachers were selected using simple random and stratified sampling. A closed ended questionnaire was administered to both respondents and the data obtained were entered and analyzed using the statistical package for social scientists (SPSS). It was found that the sensitization activities and managing students' identity had a positive but low effect on the students' discipline while managing access procedures had a slightly high influence. The study generally showed that, there is a moderate positive relationship (r = 0.559) between the school-based practices and the students' discipline. This was tested to be statistically significant at 0.01 level with p<0.05.

Key words: Practices, discipline, access procedures, students' identity, sensitization.

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INTRODUCTION

Discipline refers to the readiness or ability to respect authority and observe conventional or established laws of the society or any other organization (Amoah et al., 2015). It involves training of the mind and character of a person so as to develop responsible behaviour such as self-control and obedience; it enables a person to make reasonable decisions and co-exist with others (Okumu et al., 2014; Silsil, 2010). Discipline also involves punishment intended to correct or train (Cotton, 1990).

Despite its importance, discipline problems have been a major and continuous administrative problem worldwide (Ngwokabuenui, 2015). For example, cases of school-based armed robbery, vandalism, drug abuse, stealing, insolence to staff, use of offensive language, possession of offensive weapons, rape, riots, sexual harassment, threat and intimidation of teachers and other students, murder, truancy, assault, bullying, late coming, chronic absenteeism

and insubordination have been cited in the United States of America, united Kingdom, India, West Africa, South Africa, Botswana and Kenya (Docking, 2006; Faye, 2002; Gitome et al., 2013; Leigh et al., 2009; Maingi et al., 2017; Matsoga, 2003; Moyo et al., 2014; Ngwokabuenui, 2015; Okumu et al., 2014). Similar cases have also been cited in Uganda (Odongo, 2010).

Like in other schools in the country, students' discipline in Secondary Schools of Kabarole district has been a problem for a long time. Indiscipline cases have been reported both within and outside school. Cases such as vandalism, disrespect to authority, dodging classes, late coming, use of vulgar language, abuse of school uniform, escapism, riots, drug abuse, absenteeism among others have been reported in a number of schools.

Related studies have indicated that different strategies can be employed by schools in the management of students

'discipline. For example, sensitization of students on school rules and regulations and handling of discipline cases, management of students' access points, mentoring of students, guidance and counselling, involvement of stakeholders, communication, co-curricular activities, reduction of class size, positive teacher-student relationship, moral training, monitoring of students' progress, punishments and rewards (Karuri, 2015; Maingi et al., 2017; Ndagire, 2012; Ngwokabuenui, 2015; Okumu et al., 2014).

However, the extent to which each of these strategies regulate students' discipline has not been fully explored to inform school administrators on the specific approach that is effective.

The study was guided by Assertive Discipline Theory by Lee and Marlene Canter (Lyons et al., 2011). According to this theory, schools require the establishment of a "discipline plan" to maintain order and facilitate teaching and learning. In line with this, schools need to disseminate rules and regulations to each student on admission. Canter states that children need clear behavioral limits and adults to control them. An orientation programme for new comers in which rules and regulations are interpreted to the learners need to be drawn. Sensitisation should be continuous involving administrators, teachers and student leaders on fora such as class meetings, assemblies and workshops (Figure 1). Learners need to internalize what is expected of them in terms of their conduct and consequences of breaching these expectations.

Main objective

To examine the influence of School-based practices on students' discipline in Secondary Schools.

Specific objectives

To establish the influence of sensitization of students on their discipline, to determine the extent to which management of students' identity influences students' discipline, and to identify the influence of management of school access procedures on students' discipline.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study used a correlation design with a total sample of 351 students and 93 teachers randomly sampled from the selected schools in Kabarole district. The discipline level of the students was measured using a standard measuring tool consisting of the parameters of discipline. A closed ended questionnaire was administered to each respondent to obtain data on the relationship between students'

discipline and the school-based practices. Thereafter, the data were then entered into excel and then transferred into SPSS where analysis was made. Various statistics were calculated and inferences were taken.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study aimed at finding the influence of school-based practices on the students' discipline in schools of Kabarole District. The school-based practices were conceptualized into sensitization of students on the school rules and regulations, management of students' identity and management school access procedures. The influence of each of these variables on students' discipline was investigated in this study.

Managing students' identity and students' discipline

Managing students' identity is a school-based activity that was measured by the school's ability to enforce school uniform, provision of name tags, knowledge of students' peer groups, recording systems, knowledge of students' talents and weaknesses, students' background, conducting schools days with activities that create opportunity to understand the students and their parents.

The existence of each of these practices in the selected schools was measured using agreement type questionnaire that was administered to students, who were required to provide their level of agreement at four levels; strongly agree [1], agree [2], disagree [3], and strongly [4]. The responses of the existence of each of these attributes are shown in Table 1.

School uniform is one of the ways of identifying students from different schools, levels and classes. The results of the present study showed a 76% strong agreement, indicating that school uniform is a must in the selected schools, while 17, 5, and 2% agreement, disagreement and strong disagreement, respectively were registered across the selected schools. This shows that most of the schools emphasize school uniform to allow students identification while at school and outside school. The mean level of agreement was 1.34, the standard deviation was 0.691 and the skewness was 2.204.

The keeping of students' records such as names, home area, parents' details and other details is key for students' identification. The findings of this study showed that 76% of the respondents strongly agreed that students' records are well kept at their schools, while 19% agreed, 3% disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed. This indicates that majority of the schools keep their students records in order to make use of them when need arises.

Students name tags are used for recognizing students at all time by anybody, they are always attached to the

Table1: Level of agreement on management of students' identity in schools.

Management of students' identity	N	1	2	3	4	Mean	SD	Skewness
			Descriptive statistics					
			Frequencies (%)					
Sch uniform is a must	351	76	17	5	2	1.34	0.691	2.204
Students records kept	351	74	19	3	4	1.36	0.710	2.3
Name tag done	351	55	25	7	11	1.77	1.025	1.165
Class days conducted	351	43	32	13	11	1.92	1.002	0.828
Students peers known	349	32	40	18	9	2.04	0.929	0.585
Streaming is by performance	350	48	17	15	19	2.053	1.187	0.597
Students talents known	351	34	33	15	18	2.16	1.085	0.521
Students names known	350	15	40	31	13	2.414	0.900	0.152
Students background known	351	7	14	31	47	3.190	0.932	-0.921
Valid N (listwise)	348							

students' uniform. The responses about the use of name tags in the school indicated 55% strong agreement that name tags are used, 25% agreement, 7% disagreement and 11% strong disagreement. The mean agreement was 1.77, standard deviation 1.025 and skewness 1.165. The positive skewness indicates that majority of the responses lie below the mean.

Class days are functions that involve students and their parents, teachers share with individual students together with individual parents on the welfare of the student. This is an opportunity for teachers to know the background of the students, parents and other characteristics. The results of the study showed that 43% of the respondents were in strong agreement that class days are conducted at their schools, while 32% were in agreement, 13% in disagreement and 11% in strong disagreement. These results indicate that there are some schools that do not conduct class days, while there exists those that conduct class days.

In a school, each student has peers with whom they associate and work together. Students in schools can be identified by peers, also the discipline of the students is greatly shaped by the peers. The study findings reveal 32% strong agreement that the student's peers are known to the school administrators, 40% agreement, 18% disagreement and 9% strong disagreement. It is noted that the mean level of agreement is 2.04, the standard deviation is 0.93 and the skewness is 0.585. The results further indicate that knowledge of students' peers is widely practices in some schools and unpracticed in others.

Schools with big number of students stream them in different streams according to certain characteristics. This act is meant to identify students with given qualities, such as academic performance and subjects offered. Most (48%) of the respondents strongly agreed that students in their schools are streamed according to performance for easy identification of students who need special attention.

However, the results also indicated that some (34%) of the respondents reported a disagreement that streaming is done according to performance at their schools.

Knowledge of students' name is key to managing students' discipline, teachers need to know their students' names, call them by names so that they recognize that their teachers are concerned about them. This study investigated the knowledge of students' names by teacher; 45% of the respondents were in agreement that teachers in their schools know students by names while 55% were in disagreement that teachers in their schools know the students by names. This indicates that majority of the school teachers do not know their students by names. This act has an effect on the way students conduct themselves in and out of the school.

Relationship between the level of management of students' identity and the level of discipline

Table 2 indicates the relationship between students' identity management and students' level of discipline. The coefficient of correlation between managing identity of students and students' discipline was obtained to be 0.372 that is significant at 0.01. The correlation is moderate and positive, which indicates that the students' identity management of students has a positive prediction power on the students' discipline. This is in line with Dunbar (2004) who said that teachers' level of knowledge of students' identity is key to discipline. It also confirms that peer groups have an influence on students' discipline and need to be identified.

The results are also in agreement with Goliath et al (2007) who said that managing students' identity creates positive relationship between students and teachers. Lyons et al (2011) also emphasizes that students' ability can turn a potential problem into an asset for school discipline.

Table 2: Relationship between level of students' identity management and students' level of discipline.

		Management of student identity	Students discipline
Management of student identity	Pearson Correlation	1	0.372**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	348	345
Students discipline	Pearson Correlation	0.372**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	345	348

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

Table 3: Level of agreement on sensitization of students on school rules and regulation.

Attributes	Frequencies (%)					Statistics		
	N	1	2	3	4	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness
Rules given	351	86.9	10.0	2.3	.9	1.1709	0.48915	3.322
Rules explained	350	68.9	23.1	4.9	3.1	1.4229	0.72889	1.878
Consequences known	351	60.7	24.5	7.4	7.4	1.6154	0.91195	1.428
Purpose known	351	48.1	40.7	8.0	4.6	1.6610	0.75717	1.091
Response v. good	351	39.9	39.6	14.5	6.0	1.8661	0.87620	0.802
Students leaders involved	351	40.7	37.6	12.5	9.7	1.9174	0.95409	0.841
Students views respected	351	38.3	38.2	14.8	8.5	1.9345	0.93426	0.765
Discussions done	351	39.0	31.1	19.9	10.0	2.0085	0.99567	0.594
Rules displayed	349	41.3	26.3	18.8	13.1	2.0372	1.06474	0.586
Valid N (listwise)	348							

Sensitization activities and students' discipline

The study established the manner in which students are sensitized on the school rules and regulations. The attributes investigated were related to giving of rules and regulation to students, explaining and interpreting of the rules, students' knowledge of the rules and their purpose, discussion of rules with students, students response towards the rules, respect of students views about rules, discussions with stake holders about the rules, students leaders' involvement and displaying the rules. An agreement type questionnaire was administered to students, who were required to provide their level of agreement at four levels; strongly agree [1], agree [2], disagree [3], and strongly [4]. The responses of the existence of each of these attributes are presented in Table 3.

Majority (86.9%) of the responded strongly agree that school rules and regulation are given to students, 10% agreed while 2.3% and 0.9% disagree and strongly disagreed. The mean agreement is 3.3 and standard deviation of 0.49. This generally indicate that school rules and regulation are given to students to allow them understand them.

The response on whether rules are explained to the students indicate 68.9% strong agreement, 23.1% agreement, 4.9% disagreement and 3.1% strong disagreement with a mean level of agreement of 1.88 and standard deviation of 0.729. This indicates that most of the students receive explanation about the school rules and regulations that allow them to understand them and be able to comply and share them with peers. The act also provides an opportunity for students to suggest adjustment and reviews to the existing rules and regulation. Similarly, 60.7% of the students strongly agreed that they know the consequences of breaking rules and regulations, 24.5% agreed, 7.4% disagreed and 7.4% strongly disagreed. Students' knowledge of the purpose of their school rules and regulation was also investigated with mean level of agreement of 1.66 and standard deviation of 0.87.

The response indicates that 39.9% of the students strongly agreed that the response to school rules and regulations in their school was good, 39.6% agreed, 14.5 disagreed and 6.0% strongly disagreed. This mean level of agreement is 1.86 with 0.89 standard deviation.

Majority (40.7) of the students strongly agreed that students' leaders are involved in the sensitization exercise, 37.6% agreed, 12.5% disagreed and 9.7% strongly

disagreed. Similarly, students' views are respected with 38.3% strong agreement, 38.2 agreement, 14.8% disagreement and 8.5% strong disagreement.

Discussions between students and teachers about school rules and regulation was investigated and the response showed 39% strong agreement, 31.1% agreement, 19.9% disagreement and 10.0% strong disagreement that the discussions are conducted.

The display of school rules and regulations was also investigated and majority (41.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed that rules and regulations are displayed in their schools, while 26.3% agreed, 18.8% disagreed, and 13.1% strongly disagreed.

Generally, the level of agreement supersedes the level of disagreement in all the aspects discussed above. This indicates that, to a large extent, the selected schools give rules and regulation to the students, explain rules to the students, respect students' views, organizes discussions with students and display rules. This activity provides clear direction to the students as far as school rules and regulations are concerned.

The study found that in few schools, explanation of some rules and regulations is done on every assembly and classes meetings by teachers on duty and class teachers. Also, school rules and regulation are displayed on notice boards and classrooms, sign posts, noticeboards, class rooms, offices, at the gate and in corridors in some schools.

In all the groups, it was reported that students' leaders are involved in sensitizing other students about school rules and regulations. This was reported to take place during assemblies, class meetings, on one-to-one basis and discipline meetings.

It is believed that all these sensitization activities have an influence on students' discipline; this influence is discussed in the subsequent sections.

Relationship between sensitization activities on students' discipline

The relationship between sensitization and students' discipline was obtained using Pearson coefficient of correlation and the results are shown in Table 4.

The coefficient of correlation between sensitization of students and students' discipline was obtained to be 0.448 and is significant at 0.01. This indicates a low positive correlation, which indicates that the sensitization of students such as holding discipline meetings, providing copies of school rules and regulation, involving students' leaders and respecting views of students has a positive but low effect on the students' discipline. This means that there are other factors that influence students discipline other than sensitizing of students on the rules and regulation.

This provides a clear direction to the students on behavioral expectations. The findings support the

argument raised by Temitayo et al. (2013) that "all members of the school community, students inclusive, must know and understand the standards of behavior which students are expected to follow and the consequences if these standards are not met".

This indicates that Students governing bodies like students' councils, should be allowed to participate in the discipline processes and promoting reflection about their own behavior is the key to effective discipline as suggested by Ndagire (2012) and also opportunities for student's participation should extend to wider aspects of school life especially concerning rules and regulations.

Management of school access procedures on students' level of discipline

Managing school access procedures is a school-based activity that was measured by the school's existence of time table that guides activities of the school, permission out for students, in and out of school controls, knowledge of out of bound places, admission controls, secured school fence and gate. The existence of each of these practices in the selected schools was measured using agreement type questionnaire that was administered to students, who were required to provide their level of agreement at four levels; strongly agree [1], agree [2], disagree [3], and strongly [4]. The responses of the existence of each of these attributes are presented in Table 5.

Time tables are tools that are used to guide the activities of the school and controls students' movement from one place to another in the school. The results of the study revealed that 82% of the respondents strongly agreed that activities of the school are guided by the time table while very few (3%) disagreed.

Provision of permission to students is a school practices that controls learner's movement from school before the normal leaving time. Schools' use of this practice was assessed and 75% of the respondent strongly agreed that their students are given permission outs while 19% agreed, 4% disagreed and 2% strongly agreed.

In and out of school controls were reported to be in existence in most of the schools and are done by teachers and prefects. The results showed 69% strong agreement, 23% agreement, 5% disagreement and 3% strong disagreement.

Timekeepers in schools are charged with the responsibility to alert the students and the teachers on what to do and where to be at specific times. This study investigated how best alerts are conducted and 62% of the respondents strongly agreed that timekeepers control time well, 29% agreed, 5% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed. This indicates that most schools have timekeepers who provide time alerts to students and teachers.

The students' locations in a school are controlled by

Table 4: Relationship between sensitization of students and students' discipline.

		Students discipline	Sensitization of students
Students' discipline	Pearson correlation	1	0.448**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	348	345
Sensitization of students	Pearson correlation	0.448**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	345	348

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

Table 5: Level of agreement on managing school access procedures in schools.

Descriptive Statistics								
Frequencies (%)								
Managing access procedures	N	1	2	3	4	Mean	SD	Skewness
Time table guides activities	351	82	16	2	1	1.23	0.53	2.74
Permission out given	351	75	19	4	2	1.33	0.66	2.23
In out of school controlled	351	69	23	5	3	1.42	0.71	1.83
Timekeeper controls time well	351	62	29	5	3	1.49	0.72	1.59
Students location controlled	351	51	38	7	3	1.65	0.79	1.20
Out of bounds places known	351	52	33	9	6	1.70	0.88	1.20
Admission controlled	351	44	29	15	11	1.94	1.02	0.76
Secured fence exists	350	38	19	17	23	2.27	1.20	0.29
Fence is impassable	351	34	23	20	23	2.31	1.16	0.25
Valid N (listwise)	350							

showing out of bounds places in the school. Also, students should be able to be in the right place at all times. This controls idleness and doing wrong things in secrete places. The findings of this study showed a 51% strong agreement, 38% strong agreement, 7% disagreement and 3% strong disagreement on the existence good students' location control and knowledge of out of bounds places to students and other stake holders.

Students admission is a core activity in a school, admission procures are key to control students' discipline. The finding of the study showed a 44% strong agreement, 29% agreement, 15% disagreement and 11% strong disagreement. This indicates that most schools have control of admission of students that ensures that well-disciplined students are admitted.

Existence of secure fence, gate and security office in schools was also investigated and the results showed that few schools have secure fences, school gate and security officers. For example, 38% strongly agreed that their schools have safe fences that controls students from escaping while 40%.

The results also indicated that gate and fence but some fences are short and are not strong enough to avoid students from escaping. It was also reported that prefects control students' entry in mornings, security guards exists but some are inefficient, teachers give permission, one of the schools have CCTV cameras, and all schools have time tables that guide the school activities and control students from accessing different places in the school anyhow.

Influence of management of school access procedures on students' level of discipline

The relationship between the level of management of school access procedures and the general discipline is shown in Table 6. The general relationship between students' level of discipline and level of school access management activities is 0.559. This indicates that schools that emphasize access control activities such as strictness on admission, existence of a strong fence, effective security personnel, existence of time table and time alerts are likely to have students with good discipline.

These findings are in agreement with Anon (2003) who said that regulating access points allows school personnel to monitor the entry and exit of individuals during school hours. The fence issue was also emphasized by Kanatta (2017) who said that the absence of a strong fence fuels

Table 6: Correlation between level of management of access procedures and students' level of discipline.

		Students discipline	Managing access procedure
Students discipline	Pearson Correlation	1	0.559**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	348	347
Managing access procedure	Pearson Correlation	0.559**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	347	350

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

Table 7: Correlation between level of school-based practices and students' level of communication and appearance.

		Practices	Students discipline
Practices	Pearson Correlation	1	0.559**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	344	341
Students discipline	Pearson Correlation	0.559**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	341	348

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

indiscipline and makes school control difficult which hampers enforcement of school rules and regulations.

Relationship between school-based practices and students' level of discipline

The overall relationship between the three independent variables on the dependent variable is shown in Table 7. The relationship between school-based practices and students discipline in general indicates a moderate positive correlation of 0.559. This indicates that the school-based practices predict the level of students discipline in secondary schools. The rate of influence is noted to be high for access control procures, followed by sensitizing students on school rules and regulation and lastly management of students' identity.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the present study, it can be concluded that the school-based practices, such as managing students' identity, managing access procedures and sensitisation activities, have a positive relationship with the students' discipline. The effect is higher for managing access procedures followed by sensitisation

activities and lastly managing students' identities.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SOLVE THE EXISTING PROBLEMS

School managers should emphasize the use of strong control on students and other people accessing the school. The admission of students should be strict, strong fences should be constructed and entry and exist should be well controlled.

Platforms for sharing and interpreting school rules and regulation should be created and students' leaders should be involved in issues of discipline.

Students' identification methods should be established in schools to ensure proper notice of students at all time. Information on students' peers, class, abilities, names, home area and parents' identity should be readily available and known to the educators.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research should be conduct on the following areas: The Students background and discipline, school location and discipline of students, school management style and students' discipline.

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