Influence of students' attitude on the management of discipline in public secondary schools in Kigumo Sub-County, Muranga County, Kenya

Anne Wanjiku Muiru*

Department of Education School of Business and Education, Kirinyaga University, Kenya
*Coresponding Author: amuiru@kyu.ac.ke

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of students' attitudes on the management of discipline in public secondary schools in Kiguma Sub County, Muranga County. The study was guided by the Social Learning Theory and System Management Theories. The study adopted a concurrent triangulation design with a mixed design methodology where both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed. The study population were all the public secondary schools in Kigumo Sub County, Muranga County including all the students, teachers and deputy principals. A stratified random sampling method was used to pick 379 students. Purposive sampling was used to pick 30 deputy principals and 30 teachers in charge of discipline management. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used in data collection. The study was piloted in 5 schools in the neighbouring Kahuro Sub County. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in data analysis to generate the frequencies, descriptive statistics, cross-tabulation statistics, chi-square tests as well as correlation coefficient statistics that were used to analyze the data and answer the research questions. The study made some important findings that drew it to make some important conclusions. It can be noted that there were significant relationships between school characteristics and issues of indiscipline. In the recommendation, guidance and counselling should be included as part of the secondary school curriculum. Additionally, community centres and rehabilitation centres should set up to take care of students and promote social activities.

INTRODUCTION

The quality of children's pro-social behavior is fast becoming acknowledged as a central objective of schooling that is not being adequately addressed (Ryan & Bonlin, 2011). One expression of this concern is the discussion in various countries of the need for schools to produce more responsible citizens (Kennedy, 2014; Anderson, Avery, Pederson, Smith, & Sullivan, 2009). A number of causes have been cited for what is perceived as an increasing lack of civility of many young people. These include the breakdown of the nuclear family and community norms, young people's increasing access to technology leading them to find school boring, increased retention at schools of students who once would have left to find employment, and reduced resources in schools (Lewis, 2007). The manifestations of antisocial behavior appear to range from increasing student violence (Kaufman & Burbach, 1997) to research which indicates that even students report

that there are too many disruptions in classrooms (Benninga & Wynne, 1998). One focuses on providing children with appropriate morals and values (Narvaez, Bentley, Gleason,& Samuels, 2008) while the other considers the political relevance of the behavior. In Australia, both aspects were considered by Ainley, Batten, Collins, and Withers (1998) who conducted a national study of the objectives of social education. In their report they cite student characteristics such as optimism, self-confidence, respect for others and desire for personal excellence as critical to the outcomes of schooling. Very few studies have systematically evaluated the effectiveness of alternative styles of discipline.

Hallinan (2008) notes that learning is a process that involves cognitive and social psychological dimensions and both processes should be considered if academic achievement and discipline are to be maximized. The relationships that teachers develop with their students have an important role in a student's motivation, academic growth and discipline (Gablinske, 2014). Marzano (2003) studied the practices of effective teachers and determined that an effective teacher-student relationship may be the key that allows the other aspects of learning to work well. The relationships teachers build with their students play an important role in the overall development of students (Gablinske, 2014). Education outcomes are complex and are not necessarily reflected by test scores alone (Rothstein, Jacobsen and Wilder, 2008). The simple quantitative measures are not the overall reflective of the total educational achievements of education, but this encompasses the overall holistic development of the students.

Meyer and Turner (2002) illustrate their findings that positive teacher-student emotional attachments enhance the overall motivation of students to achieve positive educational and social outcomes. They supported further studies to measure the effects of teacher-student interpersonal relationship on overall academic achievements of the students. The quality of the teacher-students' relationships determines the degree of learning in a school setting (Downey et al, 2008). Strong teacher-student relationships may be one of the most important environmental factors in changing a child's educational and behavioural path (Baker, 2006).

Kohn (2016) further states that students are more likely to be respectful when important adults in their lives respect them. They are more likely to care about others if they know they are cared about (Kohn, 2016). (Marzano, 2003) states that students will resist rules and procedures along with the consequent disciplinary actions if the foundation of a good relationship is lacking. And according to Zehm and Kottler (2003), students will never trust teachers or open themselves up to hear what they have to say unless they sense that these teachers value and respect them.

METHODS

In this study, mixed methodology was adopted which employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. This approach was suitable since this study involved collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study. According to Creswell (2014), in quantitative method, the researcher asked specific questions and collects quantifiable data from a large number of participants. In this case, data was collected using questionnaires. At the same time, qualitative data was collected by relying on the views of participants and collecting data consisting largely of words from the participants. In this case, data was collected using interview guides.

The study used concurrent triangulation design since it was a single-phase design in which the researcher implemented the quantitative and qualitative methods during the same timeframe and with equal weight. This design generally involved the concurrent, but separate, collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data so that the researcher may best understand the research problem (Creswell, 2014). The researcher merged the two data sets through triangulation. This design was suitable for this study since it enabled the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.

It involved collections of quantitative information that was tabulated along a continuum in numerical form. This design enabled gathering of data that described events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts and describes the data collection. It often used visual aids such as graphs and charts to aid the reader in understanding the data distribution. This was also followed by in-depth and narrative descriptions of small numbers of cases.

Kigumo Sub-County comprises of 45 public secondary schools and a population of 15000 students, 400 teachers (County Education Office 2014). The target population of the study will be 45 secondary schools, 45 principals/deputies, 45 Heads of department of Guiding and Counselling, 310 teachers and 15000 students. The total target population will be 15400.

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) a sample size of 10%-30% is a good representative of the target population. Sample size ratio for this study will be 1:10 for students and 1:30 for principals, deputies, teachers respectively. Therefore, the sample size will be;

30% of 15400= 462 respondents

Table 1. Distribution of Population Sample Size

Variable	Target population	(%)	Sample size
Deputy Principals	45	3%	14
Heads of department	45	3%	14
Teachers	310	20%	92
Students	15000	74%	342
Total	15400	100%	462

Sampling is the process or the procedure that will be used by the researcher to gather respondents or things to study (Kombo 2006). Non-probability sampling design will be employed in the study. Deputy Principals, counsellors, and teachers with at least five working experience will be purposively selected. Students will be part of the sample size though they are not eligible for consideration in terms of working experience. The researcher chose this sampling technique because the sample population deals directly with disciplinary cases in schools. The results will then be used to generalize to the larger population.

The research made use of both questionnaires and interview schedules for data collection purposes. The questionnaires were administered to students and teachers involved in management of discipline in each school. The questionnaires were guided by the objectives of the study and the need to get the demographic information of the sampled respondents. The questions were open ended except in the first section that collected the data on demographics. The questionnaires required the respondents to rank their responses in the spaces provided. The questionnaire was considered worthwhile for the study because it was economical in that it administered quickly. It saved the researcher time and it had the benefit of clarity and comprehension. These therefore eased in collection of the necessary data. The questionnaire would give the respondents time to fill it without undue pressure. The questionnaires were also structured to capture quantitative data.

In this study, the researcher used structured interviews with open-ended test items to gather qualitative information from deputy principals. A structured interview was important for this study since, according to Kothari (2005), it enabled the researcher to ask probing and supplementary questions and develop a good rapport with the respondents and a goal-directed attempt by the interviewer to obtain reliable and valid measures in the form of verbal responses from one or more interviewers.

The raw data was collected from the field in the form of filled questionnaires and statements from interview guide. The filled research instruments were then sorted to check for the presence of any incomplete questions. The data was categorized according to response. The responses thereafter coded for purposes of

analysis. Data collected from the questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics to yield descriptive data such as how many respondents agreed with a certain statement. Data analysis employed both qualitative and quantitative procedures. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software, version 23.0 was used to cross-tabulate the data and Spearman's correlation analyses. Qualitative data was analysed through thematic analysis. The data was presented in output tables, explained and analyzed accordingly.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This objective aimed at assessing the influence of students' attitude on management students' discipline in public secondary schools. The findings obtained were presented in the sections that follow.

Descriptive statistics

Quantitative analysis was used on the data obtained. The findings were discussed in the sub sections that follow. Students who have a positive attitude about class attendance are more disciplined than those who have negative attitude to class attendance. The findings obtained were shown in the table 2.

Table 2. Students who have a positive attitude about class attendance are more disciplined than those who have negative attitude to class attendance

| | R02 Students with positive attitude are more disciplined than those without a positive attitude | | | |
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	36	9.8	9.8	9.8
	Disagree	67	18.2	18.2	27.9
	Undecided	87	23.6	23.6	51.5
	Agree	179	48.5	48.5	100.0
	Total	369	100.0	100.0	

From the table 2, 28% of the respondents disagreed that students with positive attitude are more disciplined than those without a positive attitude. 48.5% of the respondents agreed that students with positive attitude are more disciplined than those without a positive attitude. 23.6% of the respondents were undecided on whether students with positive attitude are more disciplined than those without a positive attitude. Majority of the respondents agreed that students with positive attitude are more disciplined than those without a positive attitude. According to (Kennedy & Sullivan, 2014), there is an increasing lack of civility among young people. Increasing access to technology leading them to find school boring have led to the manifestation of antisocial behavior in the class which results to students' violence and indiscipline. The researcher also indicated that student s reported too many disruptions in classrooms especially from those who do not appreciate the value of education. With the changes that are happening in the changing world, adolescents are able to pick up a lot of these changes which they adopt as alternatives of certain actions that they would wish to partake. This results to disinterest in learning activities. It is important for teachers and parents to control their students and ensure they control their engagement to a point where they are of legal age.

Students with positive relationships with their teachers are more disciplined than those who are hostile to their teachers. The findings obtained were shown in the table 3. From the table 3, 23.3% of the respondents disagreed that students with positive relationships with their teachers are more disciplined than those who are hostile to their teachers. 45.8% of the respondents agreed that students with positive relationships with their teachers are more disciplined than those who are hostile to their teachers. 30.9% of the respondents were undecided on whether students with positive relationships with their teachers are more disciplined than those who are hostile to their teachers.

Table 2. Students with positive relationships with their teachers are more disciplined than those who are hostile to their teachers.

R02 Students with positive relationships with their teachers are more disciplined than those who are hostile to their teachers					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	86	23.3	23.3	23.3
	Undecided	114	30.9	30.9	54.2
	Agree	109	29.5	29.5	83.7
	Strongly Agree	60	16.3	16.3	100.0
	Total	369	100.0	100.0	

Majority of the respondents agreed that students with positive relationships with their teachers are more disciplined than those who are hostile to their teachers. According to Gablisnke (2014), the relationships that students develop with their teachers have an important role in a student's motivation, academic growth and discipline. From the findings, it is important for teachers to develop an effective and beneficial attachment with their students to allow other aspects of learning to work well and ensure they play a role in the overall development of students. Students who are very motivated to learn are more disciplined than those who do not care about learning. The findings obtained were shown in the table 4.

Table 4. Students who are very motivated to learn are more disciplined than those who do not care about learning.

R02 Students who are very motivated are more disciplined than those who do not care about learning					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	52	14.1	14.1	14.1
	Disagree	51	13.8	13.8	27.9
	Agree	266	72.1	72.1	100.0
	Total	369	100.0	100.0	

Source: The researcher, 2019

From the table 4, 27.9% of the respondents disagreed that students who are motivated are more disciplined than those who do not care about learning. 72.1% of the respondents agreed that students who are motivated are more disciplined than those who do not care about learning. Majority of the respondents agreed that students who are motivated are more disciplined than those who do not care about learning. Ainley, Batten, Collins and Withers (1998) conducted a national study of the objectives of social education. In their report they cite students' characteristics such as optimism, self-confidence and respect a critical to the outcomes of schooling and the key output is the discipline level of students. The respondents were in tandem with the previous research done on the issue of motivation and its association with discipline. Desire of personal excellence, respect and self-confidence cultivate care and concern within students about their learning and motivation to achieve greater things in life.

Inferential statistics

Further quantitative analysis was conducted on the data obtained. The techniques used were correlation and linear regression.

Correlation

The findings obtained were shown in the table 6.

Table 6. Correlation for students' attitude

		R02 Students with positive attitude are more disciplined than those without a positive attitude	R02 Students with positive relationships with their teachers are more disciplined than those who are hostile to their teachers	R02 Students who are very motivated are more than those who do not care about learning
R02 Students with positive attitude are more disciplined than those without a positive attitude	Pearson Correlation	1	-.027	-.060
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.599	.252
	N	369	369	369
R02 Students with positive relationships with their teachers are more disciplined than those who are hostile to their teachers	Pearson Correlation	-.027	1	.347**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.599		.000
	N	369	369	369
R02 Students who are very motivated are more than those who do not care about learning	Pearson Correlation	-.060	.347**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.252	.000	
	N	369	369	369
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

From the table 6, there was one key correlation whose concurrent implementation of the variables would have positively impacted students' dynamics in the management of discipline of Kigumo sub-county. Focusing on the motivation of students and ensuring they develop positive relationships with their teachers had a positive correlation .347**.

Linear regression

The findings obtained were shown in the table 7.

Table 7. Linear regression for Students attitude

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.490	.209		11.933	.000
	R02 Students with positive attitude are more disciplined than those without a positive attitude	-.068	.040	-.088	-1.692	.002
	R02 Students with positive relationships with their teachers are more disciplined than those who are hostile to their teachers	.056	.043	.072	1.307	.192
	R02 Students who are very motivated are more than those who do not care about learning	-.047	.038	-.069	-1.240	.216
a. Dependent Variable: Student Dynamics						

From the table 7, students who have a positive attitude are more disciplined than those without positive attitude was the significant predictor of improving the discipline of students within public secondary schools in Kigumo sub-county. it had a significance level of less than .005 which meant that there was at least a 95% confidence level of improving students' dynamics in the management of discipline.

Qualitative responses from interviews

One of the respondents stated the following:

"*Positive relationships, motivation and the desire for excellence are the key variables that determine the attitude adopted by a student. It is essential for students and teachers to develop a positive relationship with students because apart from discipline, this relationship will have an overall effect in managing students' performance. Motivating students through guidance and counselling will have an effect in creating interest in learning activities and impact something that students can care about.*"

Mixing and interpretation of data

With the changes that are happening in the changing world, adolescents are able to pick up a lot of these changes which they adopt as alternatives of certain actions that they would wish to partake. This results to disinterest in learning activities. It is important for teachers and parents to control their students and ensure they control their engagement to a point where they are of legal age. From the findings, it is important for teachers to develop an effective and beneficial attachment with their students to allow other aspects of learning to work well and ensure they play a role in the overall development of students. The respondents were in tandem with the previous research done on the issue of motivation and its association with discipline. Desire of personal excellence, respect and self-confidence cultivate care and concern within students about their learning and motivation to achieve greater things in life.

CONCLUSION

With the changes that are happening in the changing world, adolescents are able to pick up a lot of these changes which they adopt as alternatives of certain actions that they would wish to partake. This results to disinterest in learning activities. It is important for teachers and parents to control their students and ensure they control their engagement to a point where they are of legal age. From the findings, it is important for teachers to develop an effective and beneficial attachment with their students to allow other aspects of learning to work well and ensure they play a role in the overall development of students. The respondents were in tandem with the previous research done on the issue of motivation and its association with discipline. Desire of personal excellence, respect and self-confidence cultivate care and concern within students about their learning and motivation to achieve greater things in life.

REFERENCES

Achola, G. (2011). Teachers' Perception on Motivation Strategies used by Principals in Public Secondary Schools in Rachuonyo South District, Homa Bay county Kenya.Unpublished MED Thesis.Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA)press.

Akers, R. & Silverman. (2004). Towards social learning model of violence and terrorism: Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing.

Alidzulwi, T. (2000).The role of parents in values education with special references to the situation in Venda (Northern Province).Unpublished Med dissertation. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch, Accessed from http://scholar.sun.ac.za

Alio A, Salihu H. 2005, Maternal determinants of pediatric preventive care utilization among blacks & whites. J Natl Med Association, University of Rochester,

Anderson L. &Tylor M. 2015 Tennyson & the Geologists Part 1: The Early Years and Charles Peach. The Tenyson Research Bulletin Vol. 10 NO. 4, 2015, Accessed from http://repository.nms.ac.uk

Ansary, N.& Luthar S (2009).Distress & Academic Achievement among Adolescents of affluence: A study of externalizing & internalizing problem behaviors & schoolperformance. Dev Psychopathol 2009

Baker, J. A. (2006). Teacher-student interaction in urban at-risk classrooms: Differential behavior, relationship quality, and student satisfaction with school. *The elementary school journal*, *100*(1), 57-70.

Birch, S. H., & Ladd, G. W. (2000). Children's interpersonal behaviors and the teacher–child relationship. *Developmental psychology*, *34*(5), 934.

Creswell, J.& Plano Clark, V. (2007) *Designing & conducting mixed methods research*. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Denga, M. (2009). *Peer group influence, alcohol consumption & secondary school students' attitudes towards school*; M.A Thesis Makerere University Kampala

Donga, S. (2007). *Effects of parenting on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Naivasha District*. An Unpublished M.Ed Project; University of Nairobi.

Downey, L. A., Mountstephen, J., Lloyd, J., Hansen, K., & Stough, C. (2008). Emotional intelligence and scholastic achievement in Australian adolescents. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, *60*(1), 10-17.

Esther, T. & Cheng, Y. (2005). *Discipline problems in schools as perceived by teachers*. Singapore: Institute of Education

Eccles, J., & Wigfield, A. (2002). *Motivational Beliefs, Values, & Goals*. Annual Review Psychology.

Geiger G. (2000) *Developmental Dyslexia: a Different Perceptual Strategy & How to Learn a New Strategy for Reading, Child Development & Disabilities*. Saggi C D & D volume XXVI-1/2000

Kinyua, W.(2011). *A study about critical success in factors that influence students' academic performance, in Public Secondary Schools in Gatundu District*. Unpublished MED Thesis, Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA).

Larson, J., Smith, D. & Furlong, M. (2002). Best practices in school violence prevention. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology IV*. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Lee, M. D. (2008). Three case studies in the Bayesian analysis of cognitive models. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, *15*(1), 1-15.

Lochan D. (2010). *Students' perceptions of indiscipline at three primary schools in one educational district in central Trinidad*. A Thesis submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of education, of The University of the West indies.

Moloi, O. (2003). *Student discipline strategies*. State University of New York Press, Albany USA

Oyieyo, D. (2012). *Influence of Guidance and Counselling on Students' Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Kabondo Division, Kenya*. A Research Project Report Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Masters of Education in Educational Administration, University of Nairobi

Rice, P. (2001). *The Adolescent: Development Relationships and Culture*. Allyn & Bacon Inc. Boston, London

Reyes A. (2006). *Discipline, Achievement, & Race: Is zero tolerance the answer?*. Rowman and Littlefield Education, London, UK.

Scult, J. (2009). *Positive Behavioural Supports for the Classroom*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, USA Pearson Prentice Hall

Sheldon, S. B., & Epstein, J. L. (2002). Improving student behavior and school discipline with family and community involvement. *Education and urban society*, *35*(1), 4-26.

Skinner, E. A., & Belmont, M. J. (1993). Motivation in the classroom: Reciprocal effects of teacher behavior and student engagement across the school year. *Journal of educational psychology*, *85*(4), 571.

Thomson R. (2008). *Reassessing Emotion Regulation, Child Development Perspective*. Department of Psychology, University of California, Accessed from http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com

Wanja, E. (2010). *Challenges principals face in enhancing students discipline in secondary school in Tigania District, Kenya*. Unpublished MED Thesis. Chuka University

Weeks, F. (2000). *Behaviour Problems in the Classroom: A Model for Teachers to Assist Learners with Unmet Emotional Needs*. Unpublished D. Ed Thesis, UNISA

Were, M. (2003). *Discipline & counseling in school: Practical guide for teacher counsellors & parents*. Nairobi: Strong wall Africa.