AN INVESTIGATION INTO TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OYO STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated teachers' understanding of student discipline in public secondary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria. It examined the public secondary school teachers' knowledge of student discipline in the 21st century. It further determined the appropriateness of strategies adopted by teachers in enforcing discipline in schools and as well examined the challenges facing the enforcement of discipline in public secondary schools.

The study adopted a survey design. The population of the study comprised all the public secondary school teachers in the Oyo central senatorial district of the state. The sample size comprised 200 senior secondary school teachers selected across public schools in the Oyo East Local Government Area of the state using a simple random sampling technique. A questionnaire titled Discipline Knowledge and Strategies Assessment Questionnaire (DKSAQ) was used to collect data for the study. Percentage, mean, standard deviation, and ranking were used to analyse the data.

The results showed that public secondary school teachers had incomplete knowledge about student discipline in the 21st century. The results showed that secondary school teachers adopted both appropriate and non-appropriate discipline strategies. Students' unfriendly home environments, parents' inability to provide basic needs, and fear of reprisal from students or their gangs were some of the identified factors militating against the enforcement of discipline in schools. The study, therefore, concludes that public secondary school teachers' knowledge of school discipline in the 21st century is inadequate and recommends that modalities through which teachers can have access to new knowledge and skills be put in place by their employers.

KEYWORDS: *Teachers, Knowledge, Student Discipline, Punishment, Strategies*

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1. INTRODUCTION

In any society, it is the responsibility of the adult members to properly guide the younger ones to absorb the virtues and other appropriate modes of conduct for adequate adjustment and functioning. The obligation of assisting children to acquire the appropriate behaviours and societal expectations is becoming a more arduous task than what can be left for parents to shoulder all alone in contemporary society. As a result, schools as an agent of socialization have been complementing the efforts of the parents to ensure the children grow up to become responsible adults. Though there seem to be several ways through which schools can affect desirable behaviour in children, discipline has been a significant strategy used by schools to control and modify children's behaviour.

It is however important to stress that while many individuals will acknowledge that discipline is an effective means of shaping children's behaviour, not many fully understand what discipline entails. Discipline as a term is often misused as many usually equate it with punishment (UNESCO, 2015). When it is said that a child needs disciplining, what easily comes to the minds of many people is that the child needs to be flogged or punished. In other words, for too many, discipline implies punishment. Discipline is, however, defined as the practice of teaching or training a person to obey rules or a code of behaviour in both the short and long terms.

Discipline is distinguished from punishment along with the intent. While punishment is meant to control a student's behaviour, discipline is meant to develop learners' behaviour, especially in matters of conduct. Discipline is also meant to help learners to learn what they are capable of learning and also it serves as the basis for guiding them on how to live in harmony among themselves and to get along with other people. The ultimate goal of discipline according to UNESCO (2015) is for students to understand their behaviour, take initiative, be responsible for their choices, and respect themselves and others. In other words, they internalize a positive process of thinking and behaving that can last a lifetime (UNESCO, 2015; Ajayi & Babatunde, 2017).

It is worthy of note that the task of building an effective and efficient society is a duty of all. Nevertheless, parents (homes) and teachers (schools) seem to be at the forefront of any other agents responsible for the socialization process of the individuals into a larger society. One of the professional roles of a teacher is to create a positive learning environment – a prerequisite for efficient learning, to minimize students' disruptive behaviour (Virtudazo & Guhao, 2020) and as well to assist them in inculcating desirable behaviour for effective functioning in the society at large. Also, in the Nigerian educational system, the legal doctrine of the in-loco-parentis bestowed on teachers authorized them to assume parental rights, duties and obligations expected of a parent to the child, and as a result, teachers are in a position to discipline the students as the situation may demand (Nakpodia, 2012). Lewis, Romi, Qui and Katz (2005) found teachers' disciplinary strategies as potent in school-related factors that shape learners' behaviour.

However, nowadays, teachers' rights to discipline learners' misbehaviour in the schools' settings are being challenged and becoming less effective in the system. The findings of Virtudazo and Guhao (2020) on lived experiences of public school teachers on student discipline in the classroom showed that teachers as a result of imposing discipline experienced harassment and intimidation, student defiance and disobedience, teachers' risk of litigation, etc. The incidence of parents and other family members hiring thugs to beat teachers at school over issues related to child discipline seems to be a recurring decimal in the Nigerian Secondary schools and reported by the daily newspapers (Oluwagbemi, 2017; Lambo, 2021; Olatunji, 2022). This ugly development tends to pose challenges and limitations to teachers' efforts at appropriately guiding learners. As opined by Ajibola and Ali (2014), many traditional approaches to discipline adopted by secondary school teachers are negative, punitive and reactive with a tendency to breed bad feelings for all parties involved. In other words, when

teachers lack a clear understanding of what discipline entails, there is the possibility of equating it with punishment. According to Ajibola and Ali (2014), a positive approach to discipline is based on the principle that when a student is inculcated with adult's skills to solve problems rather than taken as a child that must be punished, the tendency is high for such a student to respond positively and behave well.

Considering the importance of roles played by teachers in various secondary schools in Nigeria, there is a need for all segments of society to stand up in support of them. The forms of support expected from the entire society are not only to safeguard them against unlawful or unnecessary litigation and harassment from parents and wards but for government to create a conducive learning environment that permits modern-day teaching skills acquisition and professional development. As a legal rule called the 'Nemo dat rule' (One cannot give what one does not have) is still a truism, teachers' application of traditional approaches based on negative, punitive and reactive measures to discipline in contemporary society might create more problems than it solves with little or no positive outcomes in the behavioural change of students.

On empirical studies on teachers' knowledge and adoption of positive discipline, it seems that teachers are beginning to embrace the new development. In a study carried out by Chang, Juan and Chou (2014) where fuzzy measurement (logic) was applied to determine the appropriateness of disciplinary strategies among 400 teachers in Taiwan, the outcomes of the study revealed that in the positive discipline domain and the highly acceptable and effective strategies, teachers identified orally praising of students frequently, integration of life events in classroom management, granting awards, small merits, work incentives, and leading students to actively involved in volunteering activities. However, in the general discipline domain, it was found that teachers recognized notifying parents to associate in solving problems and adjusting students' seating as highly acceptable and effective strategies to deal with issues of students' misbehaviour. Kenely (2015) also reported that teachers mostly adopted

disciplinary measures such as hinting techniques, discussion and effective teaching strategies to promote learning and learner responsibility. It was also reported in the findings that teachers rarely respond aggressively to learners' misbehaviour.

In a similar study conducted to explore the strategies employed by teachers to manage indiscipline in Effutu Municipality in Ghana, Amoah et al. (2015) found that teachers resort to an angry rebuke or reprimand as a disciplinary measure. The finding summarised teachers' disciplinary approaches as ranging from judgmental to subjective behaviours and teachers as well evaluate the disciplinary measures as appropriate or otherwise in managing misbehaviour. It was also found that teachers used verbal appreciation and shying away from their habit of de-motivating students and trying to encourage students not interested in classroom activities instead of punishment.

Despite the new trend of embracing a positive approach to discipline capable of developing learners' behaviour, evidence in the literature still suggests that researchers, teachers and parents alike are yet to fully comprehend what discipline entails. For instance, Ajibola and Ali (2014) were of the view that discipline was not necessarily connoted punishment but acknowledged as one of the disciplinary measures in schools. Omoteso and Semudara (2011) found that the majority (90.5%) of the teachers adopted giving advice as a measure for dealing with students' classroom misbehaviour; nevertheless, 57.6% and 59.6% of the teachers also adopted measures such as assigning of a portion of land for clearing and asking the misbehaved students to stand at the back of the classroom during the lesson as means of managing classroom misbehaviours in school. Olakitan (2014) reported that 84.7% and 83.7% of the parents and teachers respectively acknowledged the use of flogging while 79.4% and 78.9% of the parents and teachers also identified kneeling as corporal punishment measures in secondary schools. It was also found that 79.4% of the teachers perceived corporal punishment as the best measure to deal with students' misbehaviour in schools while the majority of the teachers (73.8%)

and parents (61.9%) exhibited a positive attitude towards the use of corporal punishment as disciplinary measures in schools.

In another related study carried out by Nkomo and Mayanchi (2016) to examine the most common measure of discipline employed by private and public teachers in Calabar municipality, the outcomes of the study showed that flogging, exercise or drills, and compelling students to maintain certain painful postures were in use to deal with students' misbehaviour. The outcomes of Odebode's (2020) study showed that teachers' knowledge of the discipline is inadequate as punishment was still regarded as one of the best strategies for dealing with students' misbehaviours in schools. Other strategies identified in the study include the use of reinforcement, modelling from school authorities, high parental supervision and professional referral while Aryati, Mauly and Muhammad (2021) found out that teachers adopted corrective discipline such as corporal punishment and rote learning; assertive discipline measures as well as preventive discipline to deal with students' disciplinary issues.

Statement of Problem

There seems to be a plethora of evidence on teachers' efforts to curb students' misbehaviour not only for effective and meaningful learning to take place in the classrooms but for the students to develop the desirable characters for effective transition into responsible adult life. However, the development in contemporary society about students' development of characters and virtues suggest that teachers' efforts had yielded little or no positive outcomes. This negative trend might be attributed to teachers' lack of clear understanding of what discipline entails as many still equate the term to mean punishment. Schools are regarded as one of the important agents of the children socialization process and teachers as major players play a significant role in the learning and character development of any child. This study, therefore, investigated teachers' understanding of the discipline in public secondary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study:

1. examined the public secondary school teachers' knowledge about discipline in the 21st century,
2. determined the appropriateness of strategies adopted by teachers in enforcing discipline in the public secondary schools, and
3. identified the challenges facing the enforcement of discipline in public secondary schools.

Research Questions

1. What is the public secondary school teachers' knowledge about discipline in the 21st century?
2. How appropriate are strategies adopted by teachers in enforcing discipline in public secondary schools?
3. What are the challenges facing the enforcement of discipline in public secondary schools?

2. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey. A questionnaire titled Discipline Knowledge and Strategies Assessment Questionnaire (DKSAQ) was used to collect data for the study (Appendix 1). Percentage, mean, standard deviation, and ranking were used to analyse the data.

The population of the study comprised all the public secondary school teachers in the Oyo central senatorial district of the State. The total population of secondary school teachers in Oyo State is currently not available. However, the total number of teachers in senior secondary schools as at 2018/2019 was estimated to be 64,611 (Private senior secondary schools inclusive) (Statista, 2023) The sample size comprised 200 public secondary school teachers selected in Oyo East Local Government Area of Oyo State using a simple random sampling technique. The rationale for sample size selection is based on the principle of the Central Limit Theorem that with a sample size of 100 or more, a sampling distribution is assumed to be normal in shape (Healey, Prus, & Lieflander, 2019). The participants comprised 92 (45.5%) males and 106 (53.5%) females in which

Appendix 1: Research Instrument- Questionnaire Used in Methodology

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DISCIPLINE KNOWLEDGE AND STRATEGIES ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (DKSAQ)

Dear Respondent,
This questionnaire is designed to obtain information on your perspective to discipline as well as strategies you adopt in dealing with misbehaviours in the classroom. Your responses shall be treated with the utmost confidentiality and used solely for research purposes. I, therefore, urge you to attend to all the items as objectively as possible.
Thanks
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA
Name of School: …………………………………………………………………………
Gender: Male ( ) Female ( )
Age: Less than 25yrs ( ) 25-34yrs ( ) 35-44yrs ( ) 45years and above ( )
Educational Qualification: NCE ( ) B. Sc. /B. A ( ) B. Sc. Ed/B. A. Ed/ B. Ed ( )
Postgraduate ( ) Others (Please Specify): ……………………..
Years of Teaching Experience: Less than 5yrs ( ) 5-10yrs 11-15yrs ( ) 16yrs and Above ( )

SECTION B: KNOWLEDGE OF DISCIPLINE
Direction: Kindly read the statements in the table below and express your understanding about what discipline connotes as against the misused word known as punishment by ticking (√) the box that correspond to your opinion using: **True** or **False**.

S/N	Items	True	False
1	Discipline simply means punishment		
2	Punishment is an action (penalty) that is imposed on a person for breaking a rule or showing improper conduct		
3	Discipline is an action (penalty) that is imposed on a person for breaking a rule or showing improper conduct		
4	Punishment aims to control behaviour through negative means		
5	Discipline aims to control behaviour through negative means		
6	Discipline is the practice of teaching or training a person to obey rules or a code of behaviour in both the short and long terms		
7	Punishment is the practice of teaching or training a person to obey rules or a code of behaviour in both the short and long terms		
8	While punishment is meant to control a child's behaviour, discipline is meant to develop a child's behaviour, especially in matters of conduct		
9	While discipline is meant to control a child's behaviour, punishment is meant to develop a child's behaviour, especially in matters of conduct		
10	The ultimate goal of discipline is for children to understand their own behaviour, take initiative, be responsible for their choices, and respect themselves and others		
11	The ultimate goal of punishment is for children to understand their own behaviour, take initiative, be responsible for their choices, and respect themselves and others		
12	It is impossible to discipline students without punishing them		

SECTION C: STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING CLASSROOM BEHAVIOUR

Instruction: Kindly indicate how often you use the following techniques for managing your classroom. Tick (√) the option that best applies to you, taking into account that:

R= Rarely **S**= Sometimes **O**= Often **U**= Usually
Rarely: The technique is displayed almost never
Sometimes: The technique is displayed occasionally
Often: The technique is displayed regularly
Usually: The technique is displayed almost always

S/N	Strategies	R	S	O	U
1	I involve students in establishing rules and procedures				
2	I share with students the reasons behind the disciplinary approach(es) I use				
3	I provide positive reinforcement to students for appropriate behavior (e.g. tangible rewards)				
4	I make students aware of consequences for misbehaviour (e.g. loss of break time, extra classroom time)				
5	I use class time to reflect on appropriate behaviour with students as a group				
6	I redirect inappropriate behaviour on the spot, using loud voice				
7	I ignore misbehaviour that is non-disruptive to class				
8	I use short verbal cues to stop misbehaviour (e.g. say student's name aloud, use "shh" sound)				
9	I use nonverbal signals to stop misbehaviour (e.g. make eye contact, approach and touch disruptive students)				
10	I use self-assessment forms for students to evaluate their own behavior (e.g. checklists)				
11	I inform parents about classroom expectations				
12	I send for parents to report inappropriate behaviour.				
13	I send for parents to report good behaviour				
14	I collaborate with parents on a home-school behaviour plan				
15	I teach parents activities to do with students at home to reinforce good behaviour at school				
16	I inform parents about the policies regarding the use of mobile phones at school				
17	I inform parents about social networks and their correct use (e.g. "Facebook", "Twitter", "Instagram")				
18	I refer students to school guidance counsellor				
19	I send students home for aggressive or disruptive behaviour				
20	I send students to the Principal's office for misbehaviour				

SECTION D: CHALLENGES CONFRONTING TEACHERS IN ENFORCING DISCIPLINE

Kindly read the statements in the table below and respond appropriate by ticking (√) the box that correspond to your opinion on what you consider as challenges confronting teachers in enforcing discipline in schools using Strongly Agree (**SA**), Agree (**A**), Disagree (**D**) and Strongly Disagree (**SD**)

S/N	Challenges	SA	A	D	SD
1	Teachers' inadequate knowledge and skills in dealing with classroom misbehaviours				
2	Undue interference and harassment from the parents				
3	Indiscipline among the teachers themselves				
4	Uncooperative attitudes of school management				
5	Parents' inability to provide their wards with basic needs				
6	Students' unfriendly home environment				
7	Fear of reprisal from student or their gangs				
8	Lack of motivation on the part of the teachers.				
	Others(Please Specify):				

28(14.1%) were below the age of 25 years, 47(23.7%) were of age 25-34 years, were 35-44years, 81(40.9%) while 42(21.2%) were of age 45 years and above. In terms of their educational qualification, 20(10.1%) had NCE, 51(25.8%) had B.Sc. /B. A, 83(41.9%) had B.Sc. Ed/ B. A. Ed / B. Ed, 44(22.2%) had post-graduate degree. In addition, 54(2 7.3%) had teaching experience less than 5 years, 24(12.1%) had between 5-110 years of experience, 65(32.8%) had teaching experience between 11-15yeas while 55(27.8%) had above 16 years of teaching experience. A questionnaire titled Discipline Knowledge and Strategies Assessment Questionnaire (DKSAQ) was used to collect data for the study. DKSAQ consists of 40 items of which items 1-12 measured knowledge of the discipline, items 13-32 measured strategies for managing classroom behaviour (Adapted from Classroom Management Questionnaire, Diaz, Gonzalez, Jara-Ramirez, & Munoz-Parra, 2018) with a four-point Likert scale response **R**= Rarely **S**= Sometimes **O**= Often **U**= Usually, while items 33-40 measures how to curb corrupt practices with a four-point Likert scale response format of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Agree. The instrument DKSAQ reported a moderate Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.78 when the instrument was pilot-tested with forty (40) respondents. Frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and ranking were used to analyse the data collected for the study.

3. RESULTS

Research Question 1: What is the public secondary school teachers' knowledge about student discipline in the 21st century?

Table 1: Result table for Research Question 1: Secondary School Teachers' Knowledge about Student Discipline in the 21st Century

Knowledge of Student Discipline	Score Range	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Low	0-4	6	3.0
Incomplete	5-8	153	77.3
Adequate	9-12	39	19.7
Total		198	100.0

In order to answer this research question, teachers' responses to 12 items on facts about a discipline that distinguished it from the most misinterpreted term as punishment were scored. Based on their respective scores, their knowledge is categorised and presented in Table 1.

Results in Table 1 showed that the majority (77.3%) of the teachers have partial knowledge of what discipline entails, 3.0% have low knowledge and 19.7% have adequate knowledge about the discipline. This shows that the knowledge of public secondary school teachers about discipline in the 21st century is partial. It is neither low nor high.

Research Question 2: How appropriate are teachers' adopted strategies in enforcing discipline in public secondary schools?

To answer this research question, teachers' responses to 20 items indicating 20 different strategies used in the school setting to enforce discipline are scored and subjected to a descriptive analysis of frequency and percentage. In addition, based on the mean value of each strategy, the appropriateness of the strategies is determined and the result is presented in Tables 2 and 3.

The result in Table 4 showed the appropriateness of strategies adopted by teachers in enforcing discipline in the public secondary schools in Oyo State. It is shown that three out of the listed appropriate strategies are used by the public secondary school teachers in Oyo State. They are: sharing with students the reasons behind the disciplinary approach(es), provision of positive reinforcement to students for appropriate behaviour, and making students aware of consequences for misbehaviour. These strategies are also often or regularly used. However, though, sometimes used by the teachers, some of the Non-appropriate discipline strategies are using class time to reflect on appropriate behaviour with students as a group; redirecting inappropriate behaviour on the spot, using a loud voice, ignoring misbehaviour that is non-disruptive to class, and sending students home for aggressive or disruptive behaviour.

Research Question 3: What are the challenges facing the enforcement of discipline in public secondary schools?

Table 2: Appropriateness of Teachers' adopted Strategies in Enforcing Student Discipline in the Schools?

S/N	Teachers' Student Discipline Strategies	Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Usually		$\overline{X}$	SD
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
1	I involve students in establishing rules and procedures	60	30.3	54	27.3	28	14.1	56	28.3	2.4	1.2
2	I share with students the reasons behind the disciplinary approach(es) I use	22	11.1	69	34.8	40	20.2	67	33.8	2.8	1.0
3	I provide positive reinforcement to students for appropriate behavior (e.g. tangible rewards)	40	20.2	26	13.1	70	35.4	62	31.3	2.8	1.1
4	I make students aware of consequences for misbehaviour (e.g. loss of break time, extra classroom time)	36	18.2	46	23.2	39	19.7	77	38.9	2.8	1.1
5	I use class time to reflect on appropriate behaviour with students as a group	56	28.3	52	26.3	50	25.3	40	20.2	2.4	1.1
6	I redirect inappropriate behaviour on the spot, using loud voice	49	24.7	81	40.9	52	26.3	16	8.1	2.2	0.9
7	I ignore misbehaviour that is non-disruptive to class	99	50.0	50	25.3	23	11.6	26	13.1	1.9	1.1
8	I use short verbal cues to stop misbehaviour (e.g. say student's name aloud, use "shh" sound)	28	14.1	71	35.9	68	34.3	31	15.7	2.5	0.9
9	I use nonverbal signals to stop misbehaviour (e.g. make eye contact, approach and touch disruptive students)	40	20.2	64	32.3	51	25.8	43	21.7	2.5	1.0
10	I use self-assessment forms for students to evaluate their own behavior (e.g. checklists)	64	32.3	64	32.3	34	17.2	36	18.2	2.2	1.1
11	I inform parents about classroom expectations	53	26.8	92	46.5	24	12.1	29	14.6	2.1	1.0
12	I send for parents to report inappropriate behaviour.	50	25.3	96	48.5	34	17.2	18	9.1	2.1	0.9
13	I send for parents to report good behaviour	76	38.4	64	32.3	35	17.7	23	11.6	2.0	1.0
14	I collaborate with parents on a home-school behaviour plan	65	32.8	67	33.8	41	20.7	25	12.6	2.1	1.0
15	I teach parents activities to do with students at home to reinforce good behaviour at school	54	27.3	59	29.8	42	21.2	43	21.7	2.4	1.1
16	I inform parents about the policies regarding the use of mobile phones at school	50	25.3	57	28.8	44	22.2	47	23.7	2.4	1.1
17	I inform parents about social networks and their correct use (e.g. "Facebook", "Twitter", "Instagram")	65	32.8	63	31.8	37	18.7	33	16.7	2.2	1.1
18	I refer students to school guidance counsellor	33	16.7	103	52.0	41	20.7	21	10.6	2.3	0.9
19	I send students home for aggressive or disruptive behaviour	80	40.4	60	30.3	23	11.6	35	17.7	2.1	1.1
20	I send students to the Principal's office for misbehaviour	46	23.2	97	49.0	38	19.2	17	8.6	2.1	0.9

Table 3: Appropriateness of Teachers' adopted Strategies in Enforcing Student Discipline in the Schools?

S/N	Teachers' Student Discipline Strategies	$\overline{X}$	SD	Frequency of Use	Appropriateness Status
1	I involve students in establishing rules and procedures	2.4	1.2	S	A
2	I share with students the reasons behind the disciplinary approach(es) I use	2.8	1.0	O	A
3	I provide positive reinforcement to students for appropriate behavior (e.g. tangible rewards)	2.8	1.1	O	A
4	I make students aware of consequences for misbehaviour (e.g. loss of break time, extra classroom time)	2.8	1.1	O	A
5	I use class time to reflect on appropriate behaviour with students as a group	2.4	1.1	S	NA
6	I redirect inappropriate behaviour on the spot, using loud voice	2.2	0.9	S	NA
7	I ignore misbehaviour that is non-disruptive to class	1.9	1.1	S	NA
8	I use short verbal cues to stop misbehaviour (e.g. say student's name aloud, use "shh" sound)	2.5	0.9	S	A
9	I use nonverbal signals to stop misbehaviour (e.g. make eye contact, approach and touch disruptive students)	2.5	1.0	S	A
10	I use self-assessment forms for students to evaluate their own behavior (e.g. checklists)	2.2	1.1	S	A
11	I inform parents about classroom expectations	2.1	1.0	S	A
12	I send for parents to report inappropriate behaviour.	2.1	0.9	S	A
13	I send for parents to report good behaviour	2.0	1.0	S	A
14	I collaborate with parents on a home-school behaviour plan	2.1	1.0	S	A
15	I teach parents activities to do with students at home to reinforce good behaviour at school	2.4	1.1	S	A
16	I inform parents about the policies regarding the use of mobile phones at school	2.4	1.1	S	A
17	I inform parents about social networks and their correct use (e.g. "Facebook", "Twitter", "Instagram")	2.2	1.1	S	A
18	I refer students to school guidance counsellor	2.3	0.9	S	A
19	I send students home for aggressive or disruptive behaviour	2.1	1.1	S	NA
20	I send students to the Principal's office for misbehaviour	2.1	0.9	S	A

Frequency of Use: Mean of 1.00-1.50=Rarely (R=Almost Never),1.60-2.50=Sometimes (S=Occasionally use), 2.60-3.50= Often (O=Regularly), and 3.60-4.00=Usually (U=Almost Always).
Appropriateness Status: A= Appropriate, NA= Not Appropriate

Table 4: Result Table for Research Question 3:
Challenges Confronting the Enforcement of Student Discipline in the Public Schools

S/N	Challenges	$\overline{X}$	SD	Rank
1	Teachers' inadequate knowledge and skills in dealing with classroom misbehaviours	2.4	1.0	8th
2	Undue interference and harassment from the parents	3.0	0.9	3rd
3	Indiscipline among the teachers themselves	2.6	0.8	6th
4	Uncooperative attitudes of school management	2.6	0.9	6th
5	Parents' inability to provide their wards with basic needs	3.1	0.9	1st
6	Students' unfriendly home environment	3.1	0.8	1st
7	Fear of reprisal from student or their gangs	3.0	0.8	3rd
8	Lack of motivation on the part of the teachers.	2.7	0.9	5th

Mean of < 2.5= No A Serious Challenge; 2.5 and above= A serious challenge

Result in Table 5 showed the challenges facing the enforcement of discipline in the public secondary schools in Oyo State from the perspective of classroom teachers. The result showed that teachers identified 'Students' unfriendly home environment', and 'Parents' inability to provide their wards with basic needs' as the foremost challenges with a mean of 3.1 each and a SD of 0.8 and 0.9 respectively. Also, ranked next are 'Fear of reprisal from students or their gangs' and 'Undue interference and harassment from the parents' with a mean of 3.0, a SD of 0.8 and 0.9. Fifth in rank is 'Lack of motivation on the part of the teachers' with a mean and a SD of 2.7 and 0.9 while Indiscipline among the teachers themselves and Uncooperative attitudes of school management occupied the sixth rank with a mean of 2.6 each and a SD of 0.8 and 0.9 respectively. Ranked the least among other challenges is 'Teachers' inadequate knowledge and skills in dealing with classroom misbehaviours' with a mean of 2.4 and a SD of 1.0. Therefore, teachers in public secondary schools in Oyo State identified students' unfriendly home environment, parents' inability to provide their wards with basic needs, fear of reprisal from student or their gangs, undue interference and harassment from the parents, lack of motivation on the part of the teachers, indiscipline among the teachers themselves, and uncooperative attitudes of school management as serious challenges confronting the enforcement of discipline in the public secondary schools in the state. (see Appendix 4).

4. DISCUSSIONS

The finding of the study showed that public secondary school teachers have partial knowledge about discipline in the 21st century. This is evident as the majority of the teachers exhibited a partial knowledge of what discipline entails in the 21st century. Many teachers tend to equate discipline to punishment and this lack of clear understanding of what discipline actually may hamper its effectiveness as a measure to develop students' capacity to embrace worthwhile behaviour. A lack of a clear understanding of the principles of discipline that distinguish them from punishment tends to result in mixing the use of punishment with some elements of discipline. This situation tends to result in

counterproductive outcomes in teachers' aims and efforts towards developing and nurturing the desirable behaviour in students. The finding of the study corroborates the findings of Odebode (2020) and Aryati, et al. (2021) that suggest that teachers adopted some elements of punishment alongside discipline principles that primarily focus on developing students' behaviour rather than controlling such behaviour.

The findings of the study also revealed that both appropriate and inappropriate disciplinary strategies are used by the teachers that participated in the study. Out of the appropriate disciplinary measures considered in the study, only three are often or regularly used by the teachers while others are occasionally used. These include sharing with students the reasons behind the disciplinary approach(es) used; provision of positive reinforcement to students for appropriate behaviour, and making students aware of consequences for misbehaviour. Also, four disciplinary measures are considered inappropriate in the study and they are sometimes or occasionally used by the teachers. Among these inappropriate measures are teachers' use of class time to reflect on appropriate behaviour with students as a group; redirecting inappropriate behaviour on the spot, using a loud voice, ignoring misbehaviour that is non-disruptive to class, and sending students home for aggressive or disruptive behaviour. The findings of the study corroborate findings of Chang, et al. (2014) that reported some positive disciplinary measures as adopted by teachers in dealing with students' misbehaviours; Kenely (2015) found that teachers adopted measures such as hinting techniques, discussion and effective teaching strategies to promote learning and learner responsibility, and Odebode (2020) found that the use of reinforcement, modelling from school authorities, high parental supervision and professional referral as commonly used by teachers to deal with students' misbehaviour.

The findings of the study further revealed students' unfriendly home environment, parents' inability to provide their wards with basic needs, fear of reprisal from the student or their gangs, undue interference

and harassment from the parents, lack of motivation on the part of the teachers, indiscipline among the teachers themselves, and uncooperative attitudes of school management as serious challenges confronting the enforcement of discipline in the public secondary schools in the state. The outcome is consistent with the findings of Virtudazo and Guhao (2020) that as a result of imposing discipline, teachers experienced harassment and intimidation, student defiance and disobedience, teachers' risk of litigation. Also, the finding is consistent with reports of Oluwagbemi (2017), Lambo (2021) and Olatunji (2022) that teachers do experience harassment and assaults from students' parents or family members as a result of their attempt to curb students' misbehaviour using punitive measures in schools.

5. CONCLUSION

The study investigated teachers' understanding of the discipline in public secondary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria. From the outcomes of the findings, the study concludes that public secondary school teachers in Oyo State, Nigeria demonstrated a partial knowledge of school discipline in the 21st century. Many of the teachers still adopted both appropriate and non-appropriate strategies in enforcing discipline in the schools.

Implication for school counselling psychologists

The incidence of students' misbehaviour both within and outside the school settings is becoming a recurring issue with its attendant adverse effect both on learning and character development. When this ugly development is not nipped in the bud as early as possible, there is a possibility of the teachers and school administrators losing grip in their efforts to turn out learners with the requisite knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required for adult life in later life. As a result, there is a need for concerted efforts of all helping professionals within the educational settings to work hand in hand to assist the classroom teachers. There is a need for professionals like school counsellors and school psychologists to deploy their professional skills in developing the needed interventions either directly to assist in overcoming

behavioural issues in schools or indirectly train the classroom teachers on positive disciplinary measures that work.

Classroom teachers already have many tasks to handle and as a result, they need the help of other helping professionals within the system. The schools' administrators should provide the needed logistics for the office of professionals like school counsellors and psychologists to be functioning. These professionals are expected to periodically engage the classrooms teachers and discuss the challenges related to students' misbehaviour and other personal mental health issues that can hinder their effectiveness in the school setting.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the outcome of the findings, the following recommendations were made:

There is a need for employers of teachers (government) to put in place modalities through which teachers can have access to new knowledge and skills. This can be done through organizing seminars, workshops and other in-service training, skills acquisition and development. It is expected that teachers will have access to the best practices of handling students' behavioural challenges and as well to update their skills and knowledge about what positive disciplinary measures entail.

There is also a need for teacher training institutions to rejig and update the contents of their curriculum to meet the prevailing circumstances in society. These institutions should deliberately include in the course requirements for trainees, skills training programmes capable of equipping the trainees, with positive, effective and efficient classroom management and control strategies.

The school authorities need to put in place measures that can promote effective school-home partnerships. This partnership tends to promote cooperation and collaboration between the schools, parents and communities. Through such partnership, issues related to students' misbehaviour and other vital

issues will be discussed and deliberated upon for mutual understanding and benefits.

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