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The Impact of Indiscipline on students' Performance in Public Secondary Schools Balaka District, Malawi

By

Elizabeth Piliyesi, PhD
The Catholic University of Eastern Africa
E-Mail: epiliyesi@gmail.com
+ 254 724 407 220

Abstract

Indiscipline is a personal and irresponsible defiance which hinders integral education and harmonization in schools. The study was guided by two objectives: 1: examine the impact of indiscipline on students' performance in secondary schools. and 2: to suggest ways and means to restore and improve discipline in Balaka Secondary Schools in particular and all Malawian schools in general. The researcher carried out an extensive research in Balaka District because indiscipline in Balaka Secondary schools is a subject of concern in Balaka District Southern Malawi, which has been greatly affected in the past five years - South Eastern Division to find out the major causes of indiscipline in three schools and its impacts. The study used a mixed method design whereby qualitative and quantitative data was collected. The researcher selected three secondary schools in Balaka South Eastern Education Division in Malawi. The target population comprised of twenty students, sixty students, ten teachers from each school, total to thirty three head teachers, three deputy head teachers, five religious leaders from different denominations, total to thirty) e.g. Anglican, Roman Catholic, Muslim, Church of Central Africa, Presbytery and Assemblies of God. Twenty-three parents, the District Education Officer and the Deputy District Education Officer, the Divisional Manageress and ten local leaders. Interviews, questionnaires and observations were used for data collection. The findings showed that poor accommodation in some secondary schools and poor relationship between students themselves are the major factors which contribute to indiscipline in schools resulted drop outs in school and lowered the standard of education. The study concluded that there a number of serious factors which contribute to indiscipline in secondary schools in Balaka district, in South Eastern Education Division in Malawi. The study recommended that all secondary schools are expected to have well organized and effective guidance and counselling departments that can help the learners who need help and put them on a process of reform.

Key Words: Malawi, Indiscipline, Principals, Teachers, Students, Public Secondary Schools, Balaka District

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Background to the Problem

In Malawi, basic education is understood to include all levels or types of learning, which prepares for or gives one a survival kit and empowers him or her to contribute to the development of his/her community. It therefore includes pre-school, primary, secondary school out of school youth education literacy, adult education and special needs education. Hauya (1993) states that education in Malawi has passed three phases namely Missionary education with its religious biases, colonial government education known for its political control and postcolonial education-based nationalism through all the phases, primary education has been the key sector of basic education though the ideological focus has changed. From the start, efforts to expand and improve primary education were affected the three negative conditions namely: inadequate local expertise to translate the vision constructed, inadequate financial and material resources for any large-scale reviews and great emphasis on secondary education and therefore competition for available resources.

According to the Secretary General for Education of Malawi (1988) the goals to improve the primary education were to equip adequately with skills the majority of pupils who will be leaving to seek employment. Such knowledge will enable them to achieve permanent literacy in languages and become more useful citizens of independent Malawi. Furthermore, this will cultivate a sense of pride in the children's own cultural heritage as exemplified through local customs and manners, traditions institutions, folklore proverbs and legends. Safuli (1998) has suggested that a well-developed secondary curriculum should enable a child to develop to adulthood with a sound mind and body. It should aim at equipping the students to become independent learners through curiosity, investigation, creativity and discovery in order to promote personal, family community and national development.

Therefore, each school equips children with the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes. This enables them to function as responsible and productive adults in their society after completing and leaving secondary school. Thus, they fulfill the expectations of the parents, the society and the nation. Finally, it should enable the child develop high standard of conduct of moral integrity and sound judgement. Integral and qualitative education of a human person in every country is intrinsically connected with DISCIPLINE. Promotion and fostering discipline, peace and order in schools is the affair of the whole community. It involves students, teachers, head teachers, Ministry of Education Officials, government leaders, local leaders' parents and religious leaders.

Fostering discipline in schools is a serious responsibility, which needs a well-planned strategy to implement it. It is only through permanent cooperation in the fostering of discipline in schools by the stakeholders, that there can be hopes for the achievement of qualitative education and development in Balaka district in particular and Malawi in general. Education for integral meaning, liberation, development and harmony can be achieved only when discipline is

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inculcated in the students. Education is able to attain its aims and objectives when there is profound discipline, which leads to moral integrity loving disposition and effective industriousness in school in schools. Discipline in schools enables the students to engage themselves in the quest for human dignity and prosperity. Therefore, based on the necessity of discipline in society, discipline constitutes a universal right of every student in a school. Yet inculcating discipline in student is a challenging task needing an academic art

The art of discipline is therefore the art of preparing pupils to be disciplined or well behaved and responsible according to the rules and regulations laid down by Education authorities in Malawi. The realization of integral discipline for the benefit of students, teachers and society is both a duty and right, which belongs to all legitimate aspects of education as well as all the subjects of education in the world. Obviously, all people should collaborate with the endeavours of discipline in schools in order to achieve goals and objectives of integral education, academic excellence and ideals of national building.

Statement of the Problem

Indiscipline in Balaka Secondary schools is a subject of concern in Balaka District Southern Malawi, which has been greatly affected in the past five years by this problem of violent and broke class windows, smashed laboratory equipments and stole library books. Three quarters of form four students failed miserably in their examination that year. As a result of indiscipline, the quality and standards of education in these schools have deteriorated. This has been manifested in the results of the Government final examinations. There had been many failures and very few students were selected for the Universities. Our study therefore investigates factors contributing to indiscipline in Secondary Schools in Balaka South Eastern Education Division in Malawi.

The Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives.

- (i) To examine the impact of indiscipline on students' performance in secondary schools.
- (ii) To identify ways and means to restore and improve discipline in Balaka Secondary Schools in particular and all Malawian schools at large.

Significance of the Study

There are gaps in research on indiscipline in schools. It was necessary to undertake this study so as to reveal the factors leading to indiscipline in schools to all those engaged in fostering integral and qualitative education. After proposing some applicable and relevant recommendations of affecting equitable ways of restoring discipline in schools, our study will be helpful in the following: The findings of the research will help the head teachers cooperate with all members of staff and the community who will work towards the discipline of the schools. These will motivate the head teachers to instill consultation and dialogue in schools if there is no harmony. They will assist the administrators to discriminate between good and bad. Furthermore, these recommendations help school administration, teachers and parents to realize one's strengths and weakness and hence see how they have to behave so as to instill discipline in schools. These will then foster mutual respect for one another in school.

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The findings will help students and teachers on how to maintain discipline and order in schools. They will help teachers further in willingness to learn by both teachers and students. In addition to that, they will assist teachers' emphases on developing behaviour and academic requirements that are necessary. The teachers will be helped to infringe upon the dignity of fellow members using sarcasm or nagging abusive. Finally, the findings will help to develop good relationship between teachers and students for enhancement of discipline of the school.

The conclusions of the project will enable students to develop the habit of developing study, plans and sticking to those plans even when lessons become boring and it will help students to know and to keep classroom rules and to know what will be the consequences for not following them. The recommendations will help inspectors of schools improve supervision duties in the division and also help them to improve discipline in secondary schools in Balaka south eastern education divisions of Malawi. The findings will help the local and religious leaders work out socio-religious strategies of promoting discipline in schools. Finally, the limitations in the realization of this project would challenge other efforts in the same line of thought and research to recapture this important value of fostering genuine discipline in the secondary schools of Balaka district in particular as well as Malawi in general.

Literature Review

A lot of research has been done touching on indiscipline in schools. Various researchers, several authors both locally and internationally have established some of the causes of indiscipline in schools. The researcher carried out an extensive research in Balaka District - South Eastern Division to find out the major causes of indiscipline in three schools. The researcher got some insights from other research authors on this topic.

General Factors of Indiscipline

There are many factors leading to indiscipline in schools. Some academic researchers worldwide have explored some of them in various scientific literatures. Makali (1996) conducted a research on the causes of indiscipline in secondary schools in Kabras Division of Kakamega District where three schools were sampled out of eighteen schools in the division. The sample represented seventeen percent of the total number of schools in the division. The schools sampled included one boy mixed day, and girl's boarding school. Ninety students were sampled from the three schools; thirty from each school and were given questionnaires. Fifteen teachers were given questionnaires, five teachers from each school. The three headteachers were given questionnaires. He used simple random method in sampling the students and teachers. The data obtained indicated that most schools in the division did not give the students an opportunity to formulate and discuss school rules. The students experienced problems with the way some teachers handled the subject matter and that performance was generally poor in most of the schools. Students also complained of poor diet, congestion in dormitories - classes. It was further noted that the teachers and headteachers rarely organized meetings with students. The headteacher was not easily accessible to the students and the students complained of harshness of teachers.

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The study suggested that the students be involved in the formulation and implementation of the school rules. Guidance and counselling were also advocated as a supplement to punishment which mainly included suspensions and corporal punishments. Therefore, a certain academic dialogue and reciprocity on school endeavours should be maintained between teachers and students.

Griffin (1994) also approves of granting great measure of trust freedom and responsibility to the students. He argues that constraints should be set sufficiently wide to provide ample room for youngsters to test themselves, make decisions, practice responsibility, exercise trust, learn from their own mistakes and thereby advance towards maturity. He advises heads not to hedge themselves in so that students get permission before talking to them. Every student should be free and have access to his head if he has a serious problem. Prefects should be friendly and offered assistance and advice to the rest of the students. Since changes are inevitable in any society or institution, it is important that heads of institutions intending to initiate some changes to inform the rest of the members before effecting changes. Griffin further stresses the importance of informing students' reasons why one intends to make changes in the rules. It is important to involve the students and let them understand the attempts being made. This creates positive feelings as the students realize that you trust them and rely upon them. Failure to do this results in inevitable misunderstandings and ill will. Lack of communication is the greatest single factor causing strikes.

Brandley (1987) who experienced a strike in his school as a headteacher noted that the crisis seemed to begin with complaints about breakfast, porridge and it seemed to have involved only form three's. Many times, students riot because of poor menus enforced by the administration. In some secondary schools in Malawi, there is no cateresses to look at the quality of meals; therefore, training of cateresses in various boarding secondary schools minimizes strikes.

Kasendo (2000) has reported that Thabwa secondary school in Malawi in Chitukuko area of Malawi had a good football team, nice facilities and students passed very well, often beating many schools in the country with its impressive results. But some of the students who came to the school through force from their parents were often engaged in beer drinking and drugs. One day, some of the naughty students met to discuss what they considered were really badly prepared food, but instead of taking the matter to the head boy, they revolted. Many students joined on the strike. The students shouted: "We are tired of your vegetables and rotten beans." They shouted these words as they went around the school premises.

The students turned violent and broke class windows, smashed laboratory equipments and stole library books. When the police came, the ring leaders were arrested and many were suspended. The matter was reported to the Ministry of Education as the headteacher refused to intervene on the issue obviously afraid he would be beaten by the angry students. "I don't understand why they have resorted to breaking properties instead of discussing the issue the matter in their own hands without consulting the school administrators"; the headteacher bemoaned their unbecoming behaviours.

It was a sad story for the form two and four students because they would miss vital examinations preparation time. What happened after the incident was disastrous, three quarters

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of form four students failed miserably in their examination that year. It was a lesson in disguise “don't vandalize school properties, it leads to indiscipline in schools” Kasendo said.

School Administration Caused Factors

Good and organized school administration is a very important organ for achieving academic excellence. When this structure has some defects and fails to operate effectively then it becomes a contributing factor to indiscipline in school. Ndunda (1997) asserts that those in authority should be willing to listen and solve the problems where necessary and make students understand where they cannot. Mwika (1996) carried out a research on secondary school student's indiscipline in Kangundo division in Eastern Province of Kenya, where six schools were sampled which included two boarding girls' schools, two boarding boys' schools and two-day mixed schools. The researcher used survey method and documentary content analysis. Schools were purposively selected. The sample consisted of sixty teachers, 6 head teachers, 30 students and six subordinate staff. The researcher used questionnaires, interviews and focus groups etc to collect information. It was observed that from the findings in those five schools, there had been very poor harsh administration coupled with dictatorship and tyranny. One school had never had a strike since its inception. The school thrived under the strong diplomatic and dialogical approaches of leadership. It was established that the main causes of students' unrest in the school were due to poor administration.

A decision was made in which the head teachers should strive to enhance human relations between teachers, students, parents and the related parties. The head teachers should explain to the students the reasons behind any changes that affect the students indirectly or directly and schools should not be conservative on the old measures of enforcing discipline on students. Ozigi (1995) explains that a school principal should possess the basic knowledge of how-to co-ordinate activities within his establishment, how to discern and influence goals, policies and programmes and how to procure and manage available resources so as to achieve the main objectives of the institution. The principal therefore outlines clearly the school rules which normally touch on matters like meals, use of uniform and private clothing, class attendance, absence from school, cases of illness. The principals have to outline rules of behaviour which include issues like consideration for others, courtesy, obedience, respect for elders and seniors, bullying, fighting among others.

Ministry of Education Science and Technology in Malawi circulars (9/1965, 10/1966, 09/1967) mentioned that it is the duty of all the teachers and head teachers to enforce strict discipline in schools. Concern has been expressed at continued acts of discipline and the manner in which certain Heads of Institutions have dealt with these cases. In a number of cases, undue resort has been taken to suspension as a form of punishment of all kinds of offences. Heads of Institutions are hereby directed that suspension must be used only as the last resort after all forms of collective measures have been applied and failed.

Teachers Caused Factors

Teachers are a fundamental phenomenon in education system so their rights and needs should be well recognized and respected. However, teachers too have a responsibility to reorganize and

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respect the rights and needs of their students. If the students' needs and aspirations are neglected, then ground for indiscipline in schools is created. Musyoki (2000) urged teachers to be careful when handling students. Time has changed, there is need to exchange experiences so that we can effectively understand how to handle the youth because it leads to discipline problem. MC Avog (2002) told the BBC that the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT), about 40,000 would go on one day strike because of over cost of living allowances. The KNUT General Secretary - Kenya said that teachers were angry that Prime Minister Tony Blairs Government was not paying them enough to cover the extra cost of living in the capital "We will go on a strike". This leads to indiscipline problems in schools.

Ngutu (2002) says that there are many cases of teachers demonstrating over salary award in Kenya. Ngutu reported that "the Labour Ministry has no influence or control in respect of what was agreed between the affected parties regarding the salary increase package. The procedure which the ministry followed did not ensure compliance with the provisions: terms and conditions of employment as provided for various labour laws and regulations. This angered the teachers and thus strike and chaos resulted. Therefore, the strike and unbecoming behaviour of teachers in this regard affected other players i.e. student in discipline problems in schools.

Katswiri (2000) commenting on the case of head teacher who was beaten because of the lesson plans "an irate temporary teacher at Nansato primary school in Lilongwe-Malawi beat up his headteacher who asked him to prepare lesson plans for the term. An Assistant District Education Officer (ADEO) for Lilongwe Rural East denounced the temporary teacher for failing to deliver as a teacher in spite of several appeals and warnings from the head teacher. The temporary teacher was furious so that he locked up his boss in the office and assaulted him severely. Fortunately, the head teacher's wife was near the administration block, she heard someone screaming inside the headmaster's office. She immediately dashed to the place and found her husband. She rescued him. The matter was reported to the Ministry of Education and the temporary teacher was dismissed for proficient misconduct. The students were not happy with the decision of the Ministry and so they demonstrated angrily against the decision. This results into disciplinary activities in the school.

Kulet (2002) commenting on abusive teachers, he urged all teachers should desist from doing barbaric acts. They should also stop protecting their colleagues who practice such evil acts. The government must review laws which deal with child abuse to make them more stringent. Stiff penalties - such as life imprisonment must be imposed on people found guilty of child abuse. Names of such abusers, their photographs and occupations should be published and displayed in public places in order to control indiscipline in schools.

Parents Caused Factors

There is no doubt that parents have primary responsibility and primordial right in providing suitable education for their children. One of these responsibilities is to help students have a common experience of discipline in schools. However, if the parents abandon this prior right of discipline inculcating in the students, then various forms of indiscipline are experienced in schools. In his research findings, Mortimore (1983) mentioned that parental influence is one of the behaviour problems in schools. He continued to explain that part of the context of students'

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school behaviour must be the home background of the students and the attitudes of parents to their children behaviour.

Parents help shape the child's behaviour by means of their selective encouragement and discouragement of particular behaviours by their discipline and by the amount of freedom which they allow. He cites that friction between parents may lead also to the undoing of discipline and to the division of the family into the hostile camps. This results into injurious effect on the child who may develop a feeling of insecurity. This may lead to an actual suffering and the child may develop an unhealthy attitude towards members of the opposite sex and towards marriage.

Government Caused Factors

Any government has to ensure that all its citizens have access to an adequate education and have prepared the proper exercise of their civil rights and duties. The government has to be vigilant about the ability of the teachers to deliver and the students to maintain discipline. The government as a very important stakeholder in a country's educational systems has to take care of the teachers' system and has to take care of the teacher's welfare. It has to revisit the teacher's benefits, salaries etc so as to enhance them to work hard in schools.

Palian (2000) reporting on the fifty percent bonus which was promised to sixty thousand teachers in the country (Malawi) had not yet received the much-publicized fifty percent bonus. This forced teachers to spend most of the time chasing their perks instead of concentrating in class. The government had failed to live to its promise. This again angered many teachers. Thus, the Deputy Minister of Education, Sports and Culture in Malawi government said that the announcement of the bonus was so sudden and it was very difficult to pay the teachers quickly. The Minister said that the government was aware how important the bonuses are to a teacher since they have to pay rent; school fees meet other important bills.

The teachers unruly vowed to strike until the bonuses were affected. This necessitated cases of indiscipline and violence in schools. Better. Thus, in 2000 Kaliati commenting on "give civil servants conditions" urged that the government of Malawi to hike civil servants pay and give them easy access to loans to motivate them to deliver services effectively. She cited education standards as one area which could improve if teacher's conditions of service got better. She concluded by citing that if teachers' salaries and considerations of service are improved then it will be easier for them to instill discipline in schools.

School Caused Factors

Every school is a basic realization of primary human right. Thus, it is a fundamental concern of the civil society, which includes the family, religious organizations and other social organizations to ensure that the spirit of discipline, hard work and excellence is maintained in schools. If this spirit is lacking, then schools become breeding places for indiscipline, violence, crime, immorality and delinquency. Thus, Mbiti (1974) asserts that "Discipline in the classroom is the basis of control. No lesson can be a success without discipline". He further points out that discipline in secondary schools is caused partly by poor administration and poor communication between the teachers and the school administration or between teachers and the students. He argues that the messages the teachers usually communicate are in the form of instructions,

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warning, ordering or criticizing or judging. This in turn has led to misunderstanding, mistrust and even absenteeism by students. Frequent mistrust and absenteeism by students leads to indiscipline in schools.

Jason (2002) cites that during this time of liberalization of schools, the government should put in place policies which control the opening of private schools. It has to see to it that a school should have the necessary facilities before it is given a license. If the government is lax with this policy, then people will turn beer-halls, private homes or rest houses into schools. Such places are not comfortable to excellent learning. This results into indiscipline and poor performance. Jason was disturbed about lack of control in the education sector.

In the wake of liberalization in the sector, they have witnessed an unprecedented level of commercialization of education at the expense of quality education and discipline in school. The sector has fallen prey to the get-rich-quick. Chimphamba (2002) points out that MSCE National crisis happened because of an open drunkenness and chamba smoking among students as one of the major causes of Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) National crisis. Schools cannot let students do whatever they want. Students have a basic right to freedom but that freedom should be accompanied by responsibility and respect for the right of others in schools.

Finally, Mwanza (2002) has made two observations on 'MSCE' National crisis. He states that this crisis in education sector is the result of erosion of professional pride, hardwork and discipline among teachers who neglect ethics and secondly laxity on the part of government when granting licenses to private schools. He notes that these schools are first and foremost business propositions and only secondarily educational institutions. They are trying to raise up their rate of standard on performance but without improving the performance. These private schools are not frequently supervised. There is no seriousness in education endeavours. As a result there are many cases of indiscipline, immorality and crime reported in these schools. Something constructive to instill discipline in these schools should be done now.

In conclusion, the related literature review shows that there is indeed a serious problem of indiscipline in many schools due to several factors as stipulated in this chapter. However, this literature review does not provide exhaustive actual evidence of the problem of indiscipline. Therefore, it is necessary to do some field research so as to verify the factors which are given in the literature review. Our study wants to find out if what the literature review has given is true and concurs with facts on the ground. This then brings us to the field research which was conducted in three secondary schools in Balaka South Eastern Education in Malawi.

Research Design and Methodology

This chapter deals with research methodology used in carrying out the study. It provides the description of the sample and the sampling procedures applied. It also gives the description of instruments used, data collection procedures and data analysis. The study obtained qualitative and quantitative data which provided clear picture of the factors causing indiscipline in schools and depicts what should be done by stakeholders to inculcate discipline in students for moral integrity and academic excellence.

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Research Design

In the survey research design, there is a self-report study which requires the collection of quantifiable information from the sample that have been chosen. Joeger (1988) describes a survey research as the collection of data from the members of a sample for the purpose of estimating one or more population parameters within the objectives of the research study. The researcher decided to use survey design because she concentrated on part of the population in the research study to make generations about the entire population. The researcher selected three secondary schools in Balaka South Eastern Education Division in Malawi and tried to investigate causes of indiscipline in secondary schools and how discipline in secondary schools and discipline can be maintained.

Description of the Sample

The study was carried out in Balaka secondary school, St. Charles Lwanga community day secondary school, St. Louis community Day secondary school, which are found in Balaka District, South-Eastern Division. The schools are located within Balaka Township. The environment is somehow conducive for students' study even though there is very limited disturbance from the neighbourhood which makes it to perform well in examinations among the three.

Sample

The sample that participated in the study consisted of (20) twenty students, from each school total to sixty (60) students, ten (10) teachers from each school, total to thirty (30) three (3) headteachers, three (3) deputy headteachers, five (5) religious leaders from different denominations, total to thirty (30) e.g. Anglican, Roman Catholic, Muslim, Church of Central Africa, Presbytery and Assemblies of God. The study included Twenty (23) parents, the District Education Officer and the Deputy District Education Officer, the Divisional Manageress and ten (10) local leaders.

Sampling procedures

The researcher distributed the questionnaire to the administration and the headteachers, to the teachers and the students. Furthermore, some questionnaires were distributed to the local leaders, parents, education officials and religious leaders.

Description of the instruments

The researcher used the three research instruments for data collection. These were: Interviews, questionnaires and observations.

Questionnaires

First part of the section dealt with the background information such as name, form, school, profession, grade and general instructions. Questionnaires were prepared for headteachers, teachers, parents the local leaders, religious leaders and the Ministry of Education Officials. The

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questions in the questionnaires were in accordance with the objectives of the study and research questions. Both open and closed ended questions were used.

Interviews

The researcher used interview schedules to collect detailed information and also for clarification where required. Data collection enabled the researcher to arrive at the objectives of the study.

Observation Guide

The researcher had also to visit the schools under study to make some observations for example, content of the subject teaching, lesson presentation, knowledge of the subject and many others.

Focus-Group Discussions

The researcher involved group dynamics that enabled participants to respond openly and freely to one another perceptions, generating new ideas and highlighting conflicting views and attitudes that might otherwise be inaccessible to an outsider.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher had to send letters of introduction to the respective schools in advance from the Ministry of Education - Malawi allowing her to do research in schools under study. Secondly, the researcher sent the questionnaires to the schools under study. Students, teachers, headteachers and their deputies were informed that the information they will provide will be treated as confidential. The researcher visited each school on different days in order to administer the questionnaires. The questionnaires were collected by teachers after the respondents had finished filling them and submitted to the headteacher.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The analysis was qualitative and quantitative in nature. Data was analyzed using tables, frequencies and percentages. The tabulated data was strictly interpreted in relation to the research objectives. Finally, conclusions were carefully drawn and recommendations made for concrete implementation and further research.

Data Presentation Interpretation and Discussion

Data were collected through the use of questionnaires, personal observation and interviews and focus group discussion. The questionnaires were distributed to the three secondary schools of Balaka South-Eastern division in Balaka district. Three head teachers and their deputies were issued with questionnaires that contained closed and open-ended questions, four questionnaires for the ministry of education Science and Technology, ten questionnaires for the local leaders, thirty questionnaires for the teachers and sixty questionnaires for the students. The findings were presented according to the research objectives.

Objective 1: To examine the impact of indiscipline on students' performance in secondary schools and objective 2 is to suggestions on how to curb this issues pertaining indiscipline

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The atmosphere of indiscipline deprives students from academic, freedom, human rights and from utilization of their potentialities and future possibilities. Thus, genuine education process entails thorough examination of the impact of indiscipline on students' performance in secondary schools.

Table 1: Students' responses on the impact of indiscipline in schools in Malawi

Statement	f	Percentage
1. Misunderstanding of democracy and human rights	60	100
2. Upper classes have a tendency of teasing the lower classes and the new comers.	60	100
3. Some students drinking beer after classes and smoking hemp before classes.	60	100
4. Poor diet in boarding schools and lack of enough food.	60	100
5. Disobedience of students	60	100
6. Pairing engagement among students.	60	100
7. Poor accommodation in some secondary school	59	98.33
8. Poor relationship between students themselves and their teachers	59	98.33

Source: Field Data by Author, 2019

The data shows that 100% of the students responded that misunderstanding of democracy and human rights, teasing the lower classes and new comers, drinking beer and chamba smoking contribute a lot to indiscipline in schools as a result many students do not do well in class. The students also mentioned that poor diet in boarding schools, disobedience; pairing engagements among students are the most important factors that contribute to indiscipline in schools hence academic performance is poor. The data also shows that 98.33% responds that poor accommodation in some secondary schools and poor relationship between students themselves are the major factors which contribute to indiscipline in schools resulted drop outs in school and lowered the standard of education.

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Table 2: Teachers responses on the impact of indiscipline in schools in Malawi

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
1. Favouritism (Teachers likes few students	29	96.66
2. Incorrect use of teaching methods, strategies by teachers	27	90
3. Number of incentives from employers	27	90
4. Poor preparation for lessons and presentation of lessons by teachers.	25	83.33
5. Lack of enough teachers	24	80
6. Poor preparation for lessons and presentation of lessons by teachers	23	76.66
7. Teachers under rating each other in presence of students or other officials.	21	70
8. Transferring of teachers within the school sessions	20	66.66
9. Some teachers are found leading the students to misbehave	19	63.33
10. Lack of punctuality when coming to school	19	63.33
11. Lack of experience	19	63.33
12. Little involvement of teachers in decision making	17	56.66
13. Teachers being late to go to the class for their periods	15	50
14. Immoral behaviour of teachers	15	50

Source: Field Data by Author, 2019

The above data shows that favouritism by teachers contributes to poor performance in schools as responded by 96.66% of the teachers. The data also shows that teachers are not given incentives and due to the incorrect use of teaching methods strategies make the students to perform poorer in their results as responded by 90%. Some of the impact of indiscipline in schools which contribute to poor performance by students are as follows: poor turn up by teachers for lessons, poor preparation of lessons, and some teachers lead students to misbehave, lack of punctuality and experience and immoral behaviour of teachers. As a result, students do not participate in class which made them fail examinations at the end of the year. Teachers who lead students to misbehave increase the number of students who do not like learning hence poor performance in schools.

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Table 3: Head teachers' responses on the impact of indiscipline in schools in Malawi

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
1. Poor administration	7	100
2. Lack of good mechanism of identifying students' problems	7	100
3. Delay in solving students' problems	7	100
4. Changing more frequently the subjects allocated to teachers	6	85.71
5. Large class in size (overcrowding)	6	85.71
6. Entertainment problems	6	85.71
7. Delays in providing necessities to students which may lead to poor performance	6	85.71
8. Excluding of the students without proper reason.	6	85.71
9. Lack of teaching and learning materials	6	85.71

Source: Field Data by Author, 2019

Table 3 shows that 100% responded that poor administration, lack of good mechanism of identifying students' problems and delaying solving students' problems contribute a lot to the performance of the students hence leads to indiscipline in schools. It also show that some factors which contribute to the poor performance due to indiscipline in schools include changing frequently teachers subjects which make a teacher not to teach them effectively; lack of entertainment in boarding schools; incites students to make strike; lack of teaching and learning materials as all the above mentioned factors were responded by 85.71% of the head teachers.

Table 4. Parents responses on the impact of indiscipline in schools-Malawi

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
1. Video watching not suitable to their age	17	100
2. Giving too much freedom and money to students	17	100
3. Lack of parental discipline to their children	16	94.12
4. Parents defend their children when they misbehave	16	94.12
5. Cultural differences	15	88.23
6. Home background	15	88.23
7. Involvement of the youth in politics.	14	82.35
8. Lack of guidance and counselling	14	82.35
9. No sharing of responsibilities on advising the youth	12	70.58
10. Friendship between students and teachers causes students to look down on their teachers	10	58.82
11. Stealing due to poverty	10	52.94

Source: Field Data by Author, 2019

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Table 4 shows that 100% responded that video watching which are not suitable to their age and giving too much freedom and a lot of money to the students contribute to indiscipline which results to poor performance because concentration in studies is no longer there. The above table also shows that 94.12% responded that lack of parental care and parents defend their children when they misbehave which lowers the performance of the students not concentrating in education and not following parents advises.

Table 5: Religious Leaders responses on the impact of indiscipline in schools-Malawi

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
1. Poor community -students relationship with the community	27	100
2. Educational visits/trips - troublesome students causes indiscipline	27	100
3. Prostitution of female students	27	100
4. Shortage of specialized teachers	27	100
5. No encouragement career counselling.	27	100
6. Cultural beliefs and customs	26	96.29
7. Segregation between richer and poor students	26	96.29

Source: Field Data by Author, 2019

Table 5 shows that 100% responded that poor relationship between the community and the students, educational visits / trips which make troublesome students to misbehave, prostitution of female students, shortage of specialized teachers in schools and lack of encouragement on career counseling are the major discipline factors which leads to poor performance by the students because they think that they are more important than the elders.

Some of the indiscipline factors are cultural belief and customs as responded by 96.29% and segregation between richer and poor students which make the students to ignore studies and lack of interest in school activities.

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Table 6: Ministry of education Science and Technology responses on the impact of indiscipline in schools in Malawi

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
1. The education system has given over limited freedom to students in the name of democracy.	4	100
2. The appropriators are no longer interested in their old institution's welfare.	4	100
3. Teachers running their businesses during official week days.	4	100
4. Most of young people today have lost sense of true values for their life.	4	100
5. Mismanagement of time by some teachers	3	75
6. Poor attitude of students towards schooling	3	75
7. Lack of commitment towards work by teachers	3	75
8. Over enrolment	3	75
9. Dissatisfaction by students of teaching by some teachers.	3	75

Source: Field Data by Author, 2019

The table shows that 100% of the ministry of Education science and technology responded that the appropriators does not show interest in their old institutions welfare, teachers runs business during official weekdays, the young people have lost the sense of vision and the education system has given over limited freedom to students due to democracy. The above-mentioned factors are the major factors that contribute to indiscipline results to poor performance in many schools. There are some teachers who mismanage their time as responded by 75% .as the result students does not do well in their academic results hence leads to indiscipline.

Table 7: Local leaders' responses on the impact of indiscipline in schools-Malawi

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
1. Poor relationship between local leaders, administrators, teachers and students.	9	100
2. Lack of guidance and counselling by local leaders in schools	9	100
3. Lack of involvement of parents during school meetings	8	88.88
4. Authoritarian leaders - administration	7	77.78
5. Copying of foreign cultures	7	77.78

Source: Field Data by Author, 2019

The performance in schools is lowered due to some indiscipline factors such as poor relationship between local leaders' administrators' teachers and students, lack of guidance and counselling by local leaders in schools as responded by 100%. There are many factors but some of them are as follows - lack of involvement of parents during meetings (schools) as responded by 88.88%.

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Authoritarian leaders and copying of foreign cultures as responded by 77.78% contribute to poor performance in schools.

Suggestions for improvement and restoring discipline in secondary schools in Balaka District-Malawi

Objective 2: To suggest ways and means of improving and restoring discipline in secondary schools in Balaka District in particular and Malawi in general.

Education for integral meaning, liberation, development and personal harmony cannot be attained without inculcating in students discipline moral integrity. It needs loving disposition and effective industriousness which enable them to engage themselves in the quest and struggle for self transformation and exigency of human dignity. Thus, in order to attain the functional goals and objectives of integral education and academic excellence, there is need to envisage practical suggestions and modalities on how to restore and improve discipline in secondary schools in Balaka district in particular and Malawi in General.

Table 8: Ways and means of improving and restoring discipline in secondary schools in Balaka and Malawi in general by students.

Statement	Frequency	percentage
1. Students should not be oppressed	60	100
2. Students must participate in school clubs for example drug abuse club etc.	59	98.33
3. Students must take note of that secondary school level is not the end of education	58	96.66
4. Avoiding drinking beer, smoking Indian hemp.	57	95
5. Avoiding small marriages among students	56	93.33

Source: Field Data by Author, 2019

The data shows that students who are oppressed always lead others to indiscipline in schools therefore there is a need to make sure that students are not oppressed as responded by 100% of the students from the sample study. Participation in school activities such as clubs makes the students busy and relaxes properly and so they learn more apart from the academic issues. This will help the students to pass their time well and avoid small group discussion planning for strike as responded by 98.33% of the students from the sample study. In many schools there are small marriages among students, therefore, administration, teachers, parents and the community should help the student the importance of education and the negative results of having those small marriages as responded by 93.33% of the students from the sample schools.

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Table 9: Ways and means of improving and restoring discipline in secondary schools in Balaka and Malawi in General by teachers

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
1. Teachers should cooperate in all school activities	30	100
2. Teachers should assist the head in running the school.	30	100
3. Teachers should be congratulated on the good output once produced good results in an examination (i.e. by education department through head of state, education minister and other officials.)	30	100
4. Assigning responsibilities to various teachers	29	96.66
5. Timetable should be followed by teachers	29	96.66
6. Teachers to be well trained - no primary school teachers in secondary schools.	28	93.33
7. No use of ironic language to insult naughty students.	28	93.33
8. Teachers at community day secondary schools should have orientation courses.	28	93.33

Source: Field Data by Author, 2019

The data shows that teachers who cooperate in all activities done in schools and teachers who assist headteachers in running the school controls indiscipline in schools as responded by 100% of the teachers from the study sample. Assigning various responsibilities to the teachers minimizes indiscipline in schools since teachers work hand in hand with the administration as responded by 96.66% of the teachers from the sample schools. Giving orientation to the community day secondary schools encourages teachers to teach effectively with different skills as responded by 93.33% of the teachers from the study schools.

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Table.10. Ways of improving and restoring discipline in secondary schools in Balaka and Malawi by the headteachers.

Statement	Frequency	percentage
1. Headteachers should avoid unnecessary transferring of their teachers	7	100
2. Headteachers should supervise teachers once in a while	7	100
3. Fencing the school premises		
4. Introducing outings times during weekends (boarding schools)	7	100
5. More teaching and learning resources are required	7	100
6. Introducing Parents Teachers Association.	7	100
7. Improving the administration working force	7	100
8. Afternoon classes should be supervised	7	100
9. Headteachers should undergo management courses.	7	100
10. Heads should coordinate, plan implement school programmes	7	100
11. Enforce the use of English in teaching	6	85.71
12. Headteachers should check schemes and records of work for all the teachers every fortnight for effective teaching and learning	6	85.71
13. Introducing guidance and counseling in schools	6	85.71
14. Schools to organise in-service training at departmental level	6	85.71
15. Organizing class competition in all subject tests and giving tests for competition every fortnight.	5	71.43
16. Daily checking on punctuality		

Source: Field Data by Author, 2019

The data shows that 100% of the headteachers responded that unnecessary transfers should be avoided. Headteachers should supervise their teachers once a while. Schools (boarding) should have fence to avoid bouncing and maintain discipline. Availability of teaching and learning resources is very important to the learners. Headteachers should undergo management courses and administration working force should be improved.

Table 10 also shows that 85.71% of the headteachers responded that coordinating planning and implementing school programmes is one of the most important ways of maintaining discipline. The use of English in teaching is essential to the learners therefore it should be enforced. Schemes and records of work plays a great importance on teaching therefore, headteachers should check them frequently. Guidance and counseling both teachers and students is more important so that both are aware of what to do and not to do. This will help the administration to run the school thoroughly. In-service training at departmental level helps

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the teachers to organise, plan well and administer issues at their department so that problems arises are solved and maintained well.

The table also shows that 71.43% of headteachers responded that organizing class competition in all subjects help to maintain discipline checking daily on punctuality will enable the learners and teachers to come in time and avail themselves in class at break time. Improvement of food (diet) in boarding schools will help the school to avoid strike, riots etc. Criticizing teachers' weakness in front of students or teachers should be avoided in order to maintain discipline.

Table.11. Ways of improving and restoring discipline in Secondary Schools in Balaka and Malawi in general by Ministry of Education Science and Technology at National Level

Statement	Frequency	percentage
1. Teachers should be oriented to new syllabuses	4	100
2. Teachers training colleges should be re-opened.	4	100
3. Teachers and parents should be involved in education policies	4	100
4. Teachers and students must be consulted when introducing new policies	4	100
5. Teachers must be respected and be given incentives.	4	100
6. Teachers should be dedicated to their duties	4	100
7. The government should introduce a subject dealing with discipline cases	4	100
8. There should be enough room for extracurricular activities in schools.	3	75

Source: Field Data by Author, 2019

Table.11 shows that 100% of the ministry of education science and technology officials responded that orientation for the new syllabus to the teacher could be one way of maintaining discipline in schools. Reopening of teachers training colleges for the two-year programme would be essential to the new qualified teachers so that they gain more skills that enable them to use in the field. Involvement of teachers and parents in education policies is one way of maintaining discipline. Another way could be consultation of teachers and students in different issues, and giving incentives to the teachers and giving them the required respectfulness will help the school to restore discipline.

The data also shows that 75% of the ministry officials responded that having enough room for extracurricular activities in schools making school rules be known to all parents and guardians, in cooperating cultural values. In curriculum consulting teachers on curriculum development at grassroot, removing multiple choices in education examination would be some of the means of maintaining discipline in schools. The government should be the one's selecting the junior certificate results and also should change the examinations system; this will help the school to maintain discipline.

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Table 12. Ways and means of improving and restoring discipline in secondary schools in Balaka and Malawi in general by parents, local leaders and religious leaders

Statement	Frequency	percentage
1. Parents, local and religious leaders must take part in teaching students on discipline issues	17	100
2. Imposition of severe punishment to the wrong doers	17	100
3. Community church programmes to be encouraged	16	94.11
4. Behaviour of teachers must not be below standard	16	94.11
5. The society must show to the children that they are in that way because of schooling	16	94.11
6. Government should introduce inspectors from the Ministry of Education Headquarters who should be making surprise visits to the schools rather than the PEAs (Primary Education Advisory) who are always living with the teachers and are therefore used to one another.	15	88.23
	15	88.23
	14	82.35
	14	82.35
7. Churches to include observance of discipline in their ceremonies	14	82.35

Source: Field Data by Author, 2019

The data shows that 100% of the parents local and religious leaders responded that taking part in teaching students on discipline issues by the parents, local and religious leaders will help the school to be able to maintain discipline. Imposition of severe punishment to the wrong doers could be one of the ways of maintaining discipline in schools according to the way the students has been misbehaved. All churches should make sure that community church programmes are updated, in order to encourage the student's participation hence maintain discipline.

The data also shows that 94.11% of the parents, local and religious leaders responded that behaviour of teachers must not be below their standard of knowledge hence they will be able to maintain discipline in schools. The society showing to the students that they are in that way because of school will encourage the students to put more effort in education hence discipline is maintained. Induction of inspectors from the government who could pay a surprise visits to schools from the Ministry of Education Science and Technology could be one way of maintaining discipline in schools because teachers and students would work hard in order to achieve their goals and to be awarded because of maintaining discipline as individual or the school as a whole.

The table also shows that 88.23% of the parents, local leaders and religious leaders responded that during different ceremonies in communities' churches should observe discipline issues in order to maintain it. Involvement of students' various committees at their churches and schools will help the students to grow spiritually, morally and academically hence they will be able to differentiate bad and good things which will also enable them to control themselves on discipline issues.

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The data also shows that 82.35% of the parents, local and religious leaders responded that both parents, local and religious leaders should show good examples that will help students to behave well as the result discipline is maintained in communities' churches and in schools. Seeking assistance from charitable organization will help the government to have more funds for buying teaching and learning resources and also would help to improve the standard of diet that the boarding secondary schools have.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary

The study has shown that indiscipline is a serious problem in secondary schools. Thus, the study sets out to investigate the factors that contribute to indiscipline in secondary schools in South Eastern Education Division in Balaka-Malawi. The study was guided by the following three objectives:

1. To determine the factors which lead to indiscipline in the south Eastern Education in Balaka-Malawi;
2. To examine the impact of indiscipline of students' performance in secondary schools-Malawi and
3. To provide ways and means of improving and restoring discipline in secondary schools in Balaka District in particular and in Malawi in general.

Conclusion

The researcher has found a number of serious factors which contribute to indiscipline in secondary schools in Balaka district, in South Eastern Education Division in Malawi. The factors include: student caused factors; teachers cause factors; headteacher caused factors; parents caused factors; local leaders caused factors; religious leaders caused factors; and the Ministry of Education Science and Technology caused factors. These factors have a serious impact of indiscipline on the student's performance in secondary schools. The situation of indiscipline leads to disobedience, immorality, juvenile delinquency and destructive anarchy in the education system.

Secondly, the researcher found out beyond reasonable doubts that there is poor relationship among the schools' stakeholders. There is bad and defective relationship between parents, teachers, headteachers and Ministry of Education officers which leads to a chain of other related causes mainly, unfair promotions which lead to poor and unprofessional school administrators.

Practical application and implications to the schools

The situation of poor and defective relationship should be corrected by building good, healthy and effective relationships beginning with teachers and education officers. Furthermore, parents should be educated by the education officers on how to build proper favourable and working relationships with schools.

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In addition, inspectors of schools should conduct their duties regularly, and build confidence on teachers so as to facilitate proper learning to take place and provide strategies to improve on discipline. This should be done in the convenient and comfortable atmosphere of trust, openness and professionalism. On their part, politicians should join hands with parents in providing good and quality facilities for learning. They should help in building cordial relationship between teachers and parents in their public meetings through creating awareness of importance of discipline in schools for quality education. This exercise of sensitization should be done especially among the illiterate parents.

The school ownership (governmental and non-governmental schools) should continuously participate in the moral upbringing of the children and provide strong traditions of discipline in their schools, which could lead to indiscipline in schools. Ministry of education should step in to control frequent transfers of teachers, avoiding giving teachers' subjects which makes them uncomfortable, presentations and ensure that proper learning is conducted in all schools. Furthermore, they should also monitor the discipline of the schools and provide guidance towards better ways of learning at school.

Malawi National Examinations Board (MANEB) should consider teaching/learning facilities in all schools to avoid indiscipline which may arise because of inadequate facilities and results to National Crisis in results.

Both the headteacher and the teachers should be aware of parents who constantly pressurize their children to excel beyond the limits of their capabilities. Help such parents to understand and appreciate their child's abilities so that discipline is maintained.

Parents who cover up for their children are sources of discipline problems. Help to reduce parental anger at poor class progress reports by grading students in terms of their individual growth (not in comparison to others in class) and by stressing the value of learning for self-betterment (not forgetting a higher-grade score). This will eliminate discipline problems resulting from parents' concept of school success.

Recommendations

All secondary schools are expected to have well organized and effective guidance and counselling departments that can detect the learners who need help and put them on a process of reform. Apart from this the teachers, counsellors should be encouraged to undertake in-service training in guidance and counselling. Above all, teachers must work closely with the counsellor so that needy cases can be detected and forwarded to the counselling department for further assistance. Expecting students to be responsible for their own learning and behaviors: They should be expected to help create a well managed classroom, free of discipline problems. They should be expected to try hard and apply themselves in every assignment.

Recommendations for Further Research

The researcher found out that there are some areas which need further research. They include the following: the need to find out why most indiscipline occurs outside classroom; to investigate the role of the school and administration in students discipline in other parts of the country, and finally, to investigate the role of students in decision making.

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