

Evaluation of Involvement of Faith based Clubs in Management of Discipline among Learners. A case of Public Secondary Schools in Kiambu, Murang'a and Kirinyaga Counties, Kenya

Njanja W. Susan, Ndegwa W. Lucy and Njoka N. Johannes

School of education and Social Science, Karatina University

Email: njanjasw@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper evaluates the involvement of faith based clubs in management of discipline among learners in public secondary schools in Kiambu, Murang'a and Kirinyaga Counties, Kenya. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The target population comprised of 351 teachers and 351 principals. The study sampled 10% of the population which comprised 35 teachers and 35 principals using simple random sampling technique. Data was collected by means of a questionnaire administered to the sampled respondents. Piloting of the instruments was conducted in-order to determine both reliability and validity of the research instruments. Alpha coefficient of 0.703 was obtained for the tool. Data analysis revealed that most of the schools had faith based programmes that were relevant to management of student discipline. However, the overall computed mean score ($\bar{x} = 0.19$, $s = .34$) on a scale of 0-4, for involvement of faith based clubs in management of students discipline in schools indicated that the level of involvement of faith based clubs and societies in management of student discipline were very low. The study concluded that in view of the revelation that faith based clubs and societies play a crucial role in the management of students discipline in secondary schools there is need to assert their authority fully as key stakeholders in education. Based on the findings of this paper, it is recommended that there is need to support measures that strengthen faith based clubs and societies in secondary schools for inclusive discipline management practices that take into consideration all education stakeholders.

Keywords: Faith Based Clubs and Societies, Discipline, Spiritual Guidance, Religious Values

INTRODUCTION

Management of student behavioural problems is one of the major contemporary challenges encountered by secondary schools administrations in the face of rapid technological and societal changes across the world. According to Psunder (2005) students behavioural problems in school may lead to disruptions that can negatively affect both teachers and the students in the school environment. On the one hand, students may interrupt lessons or even make it impossible to continue and on the other hand, teachers may feel 'burned out' or forced to leave the profession. De Grauwe (2000) adds that maintenance of discipline among students in school is essential in ensuring that the school's programmes and routine are implemented by teachers and administrators and adhered to by the students, on a daily basis. Liu and Meyer (2005) assert that school administrators have a professional obligation to maintain a safe educational environment in which teachers can teach and students can learn without interference or disruption. The provision of quality

education is not only subject to the fineness of instructional resources and content delivery but also the capacity of teachers to contain problem behaviours among learners (Simkins *et al.*, 2003). The role of discipline in schools is central for the cultivation of a school atmosphere where there are systems in place, strategies are formed and implemented and assistance is available for teachers. De Grauwe (2000) maintains that the capacity of schools to implement instructional programmes is strongly influenced by the quality of student discipline. Due to procedures and paperwork, management of student discipline takes time away from administrators' other duties and teachers' instruction (Osher *et al.*, 2010). Teachers are also likely to suffer professional burnout more quickly if they are perpetually struggling with everyday classroom disturbances caused by student deviant behaviours (Kendziora & Osher, 2009). In addition to time and effort, Balfanz, Byrnes and Fox (2013) assert that student indiscipline impedes learning both for the students having misconduct, as well as other students in the same classroom. Other negative consequences resulting from ineffective, disciplinary measures include poor academic achievement and increased risk of school dropout (Losen & Martinez, 2013).

Bevans *et al.* (2007) observe that schools often rely upon student codes of conduct to outline expected behaviour and the consigned penalties when students fail to abide by the postulated rules and regulations. Such infractions may include classroom misconduct, dress code violations, selling of unauthorized objects, or the willful refusal to follow instructions of an authority. Disrespect, destruction of school or personal property, drug or alcohol related offenses, cheating, tardiness, truancy, endangerment of others, physical assault, theft, harassment, bullying, and insubordination among other infractions constitute indiscipline (Kendziora & Osher, 2009). Fenning *et al.*, (2008) argues that by introducing values early in a student's life, the student can become accustomed to unshakable observance of rules in the future. In this approach values become entrenched in the student's repertoire and thus focus on treating others with respect, acting appropriately, and listening to teachers and administrators. Fuller (2018) points out that faith based clubs and societies in schools serve to empower students to reach their full potential through a process that involves providing clear expectations for students and lovingly correcting them when they misbehave. In most cases they provide mentors not only to guide in addressing discipline issues among the learners but provide general guidance of societal expectations of the student behaviour. However, there are some instances that faith based clubs may invoke the intervention of pastors, reverends or bishops to address cases of student indiscipline. In all faith based interventions, the guiding philosophy is to encourage students to make good choices and to take responsibility of their own behaviour by encouraging adherence to Christian values in the course of interaction with other people whether in or out of school (Fuller, 2018).

Faith development theories by Parks (2000) suggest that adolescent are in a critical period that individuals re-evaluate their childhood in light of new discoveries, negotiate their dependence on significant others and relationship to authority, and affiliate with communities that help them in their quest for meaning. Parks (2000) proposes that can benefit enormously from supportive mentoring environments as they traverse this crucial transitional phases of development. Faith based clubs and societies are appropriate to the task so long as they employ approaches that are

sensitive to the adolescents concerns, accept obscurity and inspire interfaith discussion. In addition the clubs should also provide, comfort, hope, supply and recognize the giftedness of young adults (Bryant, 2003). Alternatively, students may instead be attracted to communities that impart security and certainty, that essentially offer refuge in a conventional, unexamined faith (Parks, 2000). In schools faith based clubs and societies are instrumental in promoting student compliance with set rules and regulations and emphasis that adherence to discipline procedures is a holy duty which is a valid and obligatory milestone of the maturation process (Bryant, 2003). Through correction and guidance, a student is nurtured to a life of obedience and respect for self and others. A disciplined student receives an empathetic of what it means to be a member of the wider society. According to Fuller (2018) student discipline is not an end in itself, rather it is a means by which students learn to respect authority, demonstrate appropriate social behaviour, develop self-respect and exhibit respect others and social institutions. Student discipline must involve an awareness of the misdemeanor, include a corrective action and move toward reconciliation. Properly conducted, student discipline leads to true repentance, forgiveness, and restoration.

Astin (1993) observe that when students are significantly involved in clubs and societies, they fare better with respect to both emotional and intellectual forms of growth. Student-to-student interactions are particularly beneficial, and faith based organizations provide a forum through which students can meet one another, form bonds, gain valuable insight and character strengths from the relationships they develop. Chickering and Reisser (1993) purport that faith societies enable students to grow more competently, interdependently, purposefully, and congruently. Faith based clubs and societies have been established within the secondary school systems with a view to provide a deeper reflection of religion, belief, spirituality and ethics. Reflection on these important components was occasioned by the need for a holistic approach to education that values and seeks to educate the whole person by instilling discipline and nurturing the latent talents of the students. In addition faith based clubs in schools deal with other key areas such as hygiene, prevention of diseases such as HIV/Aids. Mbiti (1999) observes that faith based clubs have been seen to positively influence behaviour and lead to character development of students in secondary schools. The existence of Christian Union (CU) and Catholic Action (CA) in schools, are a channel through which religious values are integrated in the lives of the students. The early missionary groups among them Church of Scotland Mission (1901), Church Missionary Society (1906), London Missionary Society (1899), African Inland Mission (1895), and Gospel Missionary Society (1899) opened centres with schools and introduced faith based clubs within the schools they established to influence the behaviour of the learners and change the attitude towards some African values which they thought to be retrogressive (Nthamburi, 1982). Therefore, within the schools faith based clubs emerged and played the role that missionary groups played in the society. Schools co-worked closely with the churches that are major religious sponsors to propagate the values of the sponsors (Kenya Episcopal Conference, 2000). Religion throughout the ages has had a great influence on morality, character and personality development. This is because religion provides beliefs and systems that seek to control individuals' behavior using God as a form of social control (Kamaara, 2000). Sin or breaking of God's rule is taught to invite punishment. Using this religious control, individuals strive to conform. Religious teachings are known to

specifically influence pupils' behavior (Ochanda, Wamalwa & Kabugi, 2003). According to Okulu (2003) faith based clubs and societies have played a major role in shaping the learners of schools such as Alliance Boys, Alliance Girls, Bishop Gatimu Ngandu Girls and Kambui Girls to become responsible and dependable.

Faith based clubs within schools organize prayers, Sunday services, weekend challenges, rallies, fellowships and Bible Studies. The Government of Kenya (GoK) has underscored the important role of religious sponsors through faith based clubs in the schools and has allowed religious sponsorship of schools and even posted some teachers as school chaplains (GoK, 2013). The teaching of Christian Religious Education, Islamic Religious Education and Hindu Religious Education show the importance attached to the influence of behaviour through imparting of religious values (Escobar, 1997). Within the Kiambu, Muranga and Kirinyaga Counties, schools have been registered under various Religious sponsors. These include; Roman Catholic sponsored schools and Anglican Church of Kenya sponsored schools. The appointment of schools heads is based on the religious sponsorship of the schools. The principal is entrusted with the task of safeguarding the religious values of the sponsor (GoK; 2013). The principal must therefore safeguard, monitor and implement the sponsor's religious interests leading to a strong religious foundation. The giant schools such as Alliance Boys, Alliance Girls, St Francis Girls, Mang'u, Loreto Girls High, Mary Leakey and Kambui Girls have displayed high levels of discipline and good performance as a result of involvement of the sponsors within the schools. Schools like Loreto Girls, Alliance Boys and Alliance Girls have chaplains. The Kenya Student Christian Fellowship (KSCF) in Kiambu, Muranga and Kirinyaga Counties bring together all faith based clubs within the schools for annual and termly religious conventions. Shillington (2005) recognizes that in South Africa faith based clubs were formed to instill religious values, to reach out to the youth in schools and offer spiritual nourishment. A study by Ajaegbu (2012) on the role of religion and national development in Nigeria established that faith based clubs in schools were instrumental in promotion of discipline and religious values among learners in schools. In Kenya faith based clubs and societies in schools are recognized through Basic Education Act (2013). The KSCF, brings together secondary school students and imparts religious values to promote discipline and impart religious values among secondary school students (Kimaita, Owich, & Warambo, 2006). The main function is to develop religious values of the students and recognize the role of faith based clubs in schools (Kombo & Gogo, 2004). Teachers are involved as patrons for the faith based clubs within the schools. A teacher who ascribes and practices religious values influences the students and plays a crucial role in faith based clubs.

There exist indiscipline issues among secondary school students Kiambu, Muranga and Kirinyaga counties emanating from abuse of drugs, poverty and parental neglect. These discipline issues have affected performance in secondary schools in these Counties. Efforts to solve problems arising out of abuse of drugs, poverty and parental neglect have led to involvement of faith based clubs in day to day operation of the schools. There is emphasis on the critical role played by faith based clubs in promoting discipline (Olarin, 2012). The influence of faith based clubs in shaping students discipline within secondary schools in Kiambu, Murang'a and Kirinyaga Counties is not properly documented. To reduce the impact of

negative habits and indiscipline, there was need to find out how faith based clubs impact on students discipline. This study therefore sought to evaluate the involvement of faith based clubs in management of discipline among learners in public secondary schools in Kiambu, Murang'a and Kirinyaga Counties, Kenya.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey design to gather data in three counties, namely Kiambu, Murang'a and Kirinyaga, Kenya. The study population comprised of 351 teachers and 351 principals. The study sampled 10% of the population which comprised 35 teachers and 35 principals using simple random sampling technique (Table 1). According to Orodho (2010) the sample should consist of 10-30% of the population depending on the population size. Data for the study was collected by means of a questionnaire administered to the sampled teachers and principals. The questionnaire consisted of two sections A and B. Section A consisted of six items on a dichotomous, Yes/No scale that sought to gather data on types of interventions used in promotion of learners' discipline. Section B consisted of eight items in a five point likert scale that evaluated the extent of involvement of faith based clubs in management of discipline.

Piloting of the instruments was done in-order to determine both reliability and validity of the research instruments. Alpha coefficient of 0.703 was obtained for the tool. Face validity of the tool was accomplished by giving the questionnaire to two experts in the field of study for review. The quantitative data obtained from the tool was cleaned, coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics; namely; frequencies, percentages, means. The computer software Statistical Package Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 was used to analyze data. The analyzed data was presented in form of charts and frequency distribution tables.

Table 1: Sample Size

S.No	Respondents	Population	Sample Size (10%)
1.	Principals	351	35
2.	Teachers	351	35
	Total	11,122	70

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research assessed the involvement of faith based clubs in management of discipline among learners in public secondary schools in Kiambu, Murang'a and Kirinyaga Counties, Kenya.

a) The study sought to find out the types of interventions used by faith based clubs and societies in management of students' discipline. Figure 1 provides a summary of the principals and teachers responses.

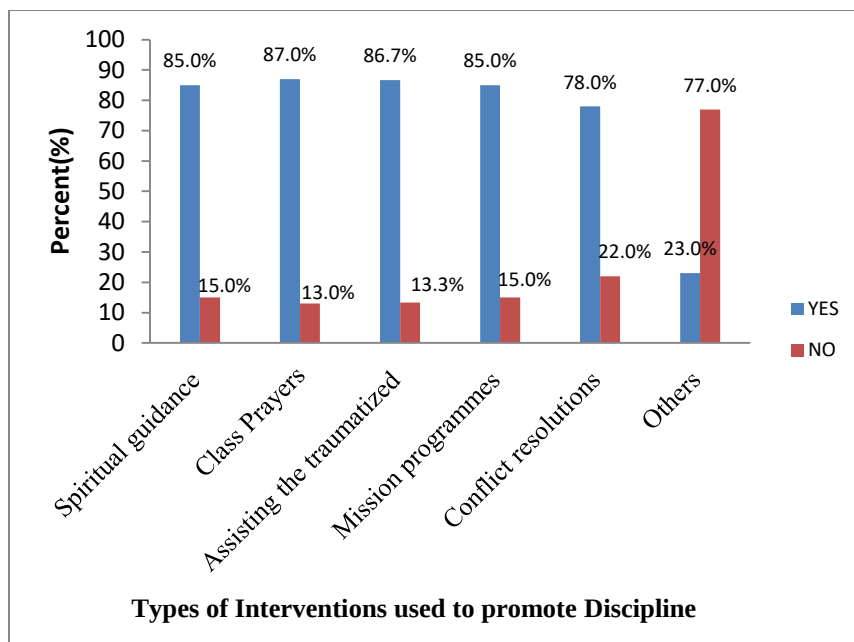


Figure 1: Types of Interventions used in Promotion of Learners' Discipline

Data presented in Figure 1 shows that 170(85.0%) of the respondents indicated that spiritual guidance was used to promote discipline, class prayers 174(87.0%), assisting the traumatized 173(86.7%), mission programmes 170(85.0%), conflict resolution 156(78.0%) and other measures 154 (77.0%). As indicated by the analysis of the responses of the teachers and principals questionnaires, most of the schools had faith based programmes that were relevant to management of student discipline. The findings of this study concur with Okulu (2003) who observed that faith based clubs within schools organize prayers, Sunday services, weekend challenges, rallies, fellowships and Bible Studies. The main function of faith based clubs and societies are to develop religious values in the students and recognize the role of discipline in schools (Kombo & Gogo, 2004). Fenning *et al.*, (2008) argues that by introducing values early in a student's life, the student can become accustomed to unshakable observance of rules in the future. In this approach values become entrenched in the student's repertoire and thus focus on treating others with respect, acting appropriately, and listening to teachers and administrators.

b) The study also sought to assess the involvement of faith based clubs in management of discipline among learners in public secondary schools in Kiambu, Murang'a and Kirinyaga Counties, Kenya. This scale had 8 items in a likert scale. Each item was responded to as Not at all (1), Rarely (2), Not Sure (3), Sometimes, Always (4) and sought assess the extent of faith based clubs and societies in management of students discipline. Scores obtained for each item were used to compute a mean score and standard deviation and used to rate the extent of involvement in management of discipline. The mean scores ranged from 0 to 4 which were divided into high, moderate and low. The maximum mean score was 4 while the minimum was 0. The mean score below 0 – 2.0 were interpreted to

indicate that the attribute being measured rarely occurred, 2.0 – 3.0 indicated the behaviour occasionally occurred and scores of 3.0 and above were considered an indication that the behaviour frequently occurred. The data was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics to give information that were presented in, frequencies, means and standard deviations were of findings.

Table 2: Involvement of Faith Based Clubs in Management of Students' Discipline

	n	0	1	2	3	4	$\bar{x}$	s
1. Faith based clubs are involved in peer counseling programmes in the school	70	25	13	0	14	18	1.81	.36
2. Student leaders of faith based clubs address indiscipline in school prayer days.	70	22	12	2	15	19	1.96	.31
3. Faith based clubs address discipline issues in school assemblies	70	29	15	9	9	8	1.31	.22
4. Faith based clubs are involved in guidance and counseling of students with disciplined problems	70	46	12	1	4	7	0.77	.32
5. Chairpersons of Christian faith based clubs are co-opted in student discipline committees.	70	22	38	0	8	2	1.00	.30
6. principals seek the opinion of faith based clubs in choice of prefect in the school	70	32	16	1	13	8	1.27	.22
7. Faith based clubs hold mission programmes to improve discipline among the students	70	44	7	6	9	4	0.89	.37
8. School faith based clubs hold prayer devotion in reducing discipline	70	38	21	1	4	6	0.84	.41
$\bar{x} = 0.19, s = 0.34$								

Analyzed data presented in Table 2 indicates that the mean scores of the response by principals and teachers. It was established that involvement of faith based clubs and societies in peer counseling programmes in school rarely occurred as indicated by a mean score of 1.81 and a standard deviation of .36. The study also found out that address of indiscipline by leaders of faith based clubs in school prayer days was rare ($\bar{x} = 1.96, s = .31$). It was established that faith based clubs and societies rarely addressed address discipline issues in school assemblies ($\bar{x} = 1.31, s = .22$). The study also revealed that faith based clubs and societies were rarely involved in guidance and counseling of students with disciplined problems ($\bar{x} = .77, s = .32$). The study also revealed that schools rarely co-opted chairpersons of Christian faith based clubs in student discipline committees ($\bar{x} = 1.00, s = .30$). Again, the study found out that principals rarely sought the opinion of faith based clubs in choice of prefects in the school ($\bar{x} = 1.27, s = .22$). Faith based clubs rarely held mission programmes to improve discipline among the

students ($\bar{x} = 0.89, s = .37$). Lastly, faith based clubs and societies rarely held prayer devotion in reducing discipline ($\bar{x} = 0.84, s = .41$). The overall computed mean score for involvement of faith based clubs in management of students discipline in schools was $\bar{x} = 0.19$ and a standard deviation of 0.34. These findings indicate that the level of involvement of faith based clubs and societies in management of student discipline were low. Fuller (2018) points out that faith based clubs and societies in schools serve to empower students to reach their full potential through a process that involves providing clear expectations for students and lovingly correcting them when they misbehave. In most cases they provide mentors not only to guide in addressing discipline issues among the learners but provide general guidance of societal expectations of the student behaviour. However, there are some instances that faith based clubs may invoke the intervention of pastors, reverends or bishops to address cases of student indiscipline. In all faith based interventions, the guiding philosophy is to encourage students to make good choices and to take responsibility of their own behaviour by encouraging adherence to Christian values in the course of interaction with other people whether in or out of school (Fuller, 2018).

The Government of Kenya has under scored the role of religious organizations in spiritual sponsorship of schools and even posted some teachers as school chaplains through faith based clubs in the schools (GoK, 2013). .

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that, most of the schools had faith based programmes that were relevant to management of student discipline. However, majority of schools in the study locale did not involve faith based clubs in matters students discipline despite their having very coherent programmes that can impact on students' deviant behaviours. As a result the level of involvement of faith based clubs and societies in management of student discipline were low. This state of affairs could be responsible for the escalation of deviant behaviours and moral debauchery among students in secondary schools in the study locale.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this paper, it is recommended that there is need to support measures that strengthen faith based clubs and societies in secondary schools as a way of enhancing discipline management practices that encompass all stakeholders in education. Additionally, nurturing faith based clubs and societies should be a rigorous effort undertaken by all stakeholders in education, regardless of whether they are involved in management of student discipline or not. This suggests the inclusivity of implementation of discipline management strategies in secondary schools in order to instill capacities for good academic achievement, rational career choices, functional citizenship, conflict resolution abilities, unemployment, harmonious co-existence and gender inequality among adolescents in Kenya.

REFERENCES

- Ajaegbu, O. (2012). Religion and national development in Nigeria. *American Academic & Scholarly Journal*, 4(4), 1-6.
- Escobar, J. S. (1997). *Religion and social change at grassroots*. Thousand Oak: sage publishers.
- Fagan, F.P (1992). *Why religious matters, the impact of religious practice on social stability*. New York: Press NY.
- GOK (2013). *The basic education act, Kenya*. Nairobi: Government Printers.
- Kamaara, E. (2000). The role of the Christian church in socio-economic and political development of Kenya. *Journal of third world studies*. Kenya Nairobi 17(1)
- Kenya Episcopal Conference (2000). *Policy document for Catholics in Kenya*. Kenya Nairobi: Oxford University Press.
- Kimaita, J., Owich, G, Warambo, K. (2006). *Foundation Christian religious education*. Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation.
- Mbiti, J..S. (1999). *African Religion and philosophy*. Johannes burg: Heinemann publishers
- Nthamburi, Z. J. (1982). *A history of Methodist church in Kenya*. Nairobi: Uzima press.
- Ochanda, R.M, (Were), Wamalwa, F. & Kabugi, J. (2003). *National Catholic Youth needs assessment*. Nairobi: Pigeon printers.
- Okullu, H. (2003) *Church in nation building and human development*. Nairobi: Uzima press.
- Olarin, M. (2012). Faith based organizations and development: Prospect and constraints. *An international Journal of Holistic Mission studies* 29(1). 1-14.
- Shillington, K. (2005). *History of Africa* (revised 2nd edition). New York City: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bevans, K., Bradshaw, C., Miech, R., & Leaf, P. (2007). Staff- and school –level predictors of school organizational health: A multilevel analysis. *Journal of School Health*, 77(6), 294- 302.
- De Grauwe, A. (2000). Improving school management: A promise and a challenge International Institute for Educational Planning Newsletter, 18(4), 1–3.
- Simkins, T., Sisum, C., & Memon, M. (2003). School leadership in Pakistan: Exploring the head-teachers role. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 14, 275-291.
- Balfanz, R., Byrnes, V., & Fox, J. (2013). *Sent home and put off-track: The antecedents, disproportionalities, and consequences of being suspended in the ninth grade*. In *Closing the School Discipline Gap*. Washington, DC: Research to Practice conference.
- Kendziora, K., & Osher, D. (2009). *Starting to turn schools around: The academic outcomes of the Safe Schools, Successful Students initiative*. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.
- Osher, D., Sprague, J., Weissberg, R. P., Axelrod, J., Keenan, S., Kendziora, K., & Zins, J. E. (2008). A comprehensive approach to promoting social, emotional, and academic growth in contemporary schools. *Best Practices in School Psychology*, 4, 1263-1278.
- Fuller, J. (2018). *Discipline Rules and Procedures: Kids' Club New Braunfels Christian Ministries*. <http://nbkidsclub.org/discipline-rules-procedures/>
- Psunder, M. (2005). Identification of discipline violations and its role in planning corrective and preventive discipline in school. *Educational Studies*, 31(3), 335-345.
- Liu, X.S., & Meyer, J.P. (2005). Teachers' perceptions of their jobs: A multilevel analysis of the teacher follow-up survey for 1994-95. *Teacher College Record*, 107(5), 985-1003.
- Penning, P., Golomb, S., Gordon, V., Kelly, M., Scheinfeld, R., Morello, T., et al. (2008). Written discipline policies used by administrators: Do we have sufficient tools of the trade? *Journal of School Violence*, 7, 123–146.
- Losen, D. J., & Martinez, T. E. (2013). *Out of School & Off Track: The Overuse of Suspensions in American Middle and High Schools: The Center for Civil Rights Remedies*. The Civil Rights Project (UCLA).
- Kombo, J. & Gogo, J. G. O (2004). *The role of the church in the provision of early childhood education in Nairobi Province, Kenya*. Working Paper Series Number DU/2012/004. Daystar University Centre for Research, Publications and Consultancy Working Paper Series.