

## Effects of Indiscipline on Academic Performance in Kabwohe-Itendero Town Council, Sheema District

John Birihanze

Department of Management Kampala International University, Uganda.

---

### ABSTRACT

Indiscipline however is a relative term but has been taken to mean the state of disorder where people's forms of behaviour are out of step with the established authority. This study was conducted to establish the effects of indiscipline on pupils' academic performance in Kabwohe-Itendero Town Council, Sheema District. It was guided by the following objectives: To identify the forms of indiscipline in primary schools of Kabwohe-Itendero Town Council; To establish the factors that affect pupils' discipline in Primary schools of Kabwohe-Itendero Town Council; To find out how indiscipline affects pupils' academic performance in Primary schools of Kabwohe-Itendero Town Council. There is rampant indiscipline among pupils in the selected primary schools in Kabwohe-Itendero Town Council. It is the influence of peer pressure coupled with the fact that pupils are adolescents that has contributed to indiscipline cases. Teachers have a cardinal role and responsibility to perform in enforcing discipline among pupils in order to boost pupils' academic performance in primary schools. A disciplined community is dependent on the zeal of the teachers to shape pupils as disciplined and responsible pupils and citizens. The most effective strategy to maintain discipline in school is by use of dialogue and creating an understanding among pupils more so their leaders about the need to live in a disciplined society both at school and beyond. Appreciation of this philosophy is a key to discipline maintenance, which goes a long way in improving academic performance.

**Keywords:** Indiscipline, Academic Performance and philosophy

---

### INTRODUCTION

[1] presented three definitions of discipline as applied in schools: (a) a punitive intervention; (b) a means of suppressing or eliminating an inappropriate behaviour by teaching or reinforcing appropriate behaviour, and redirecting potentially inappropriate behaviour towards acceptable ends; and (c) a process of self-control whereby the (potentially) misbehaving pupil applies techniques that interrupt inappropriate behaviour, and that replace with acceptable behaviour.

Discipline means the ability to control one's behaviour or situation or the way one lives. Indiscipline however is a relative term but has been taken to mean the state of disorder where people's forms of behaviour are out of step with the established authority [2]. Indiscipline is the quality of having unacceptable behaviour, especially in society. For effective teaching and

learning, pupils' discipline is of paramount importance. Pupils' discipline implies that the pupils are provided with an opportunity to exercise self-control to solve school problems, learn and promote school welfare and academic performance. Discipline as used here connotes orderliness. Orderliness is essential for good and sympathetic, cooperative, honest, and considerate. In a school setting, pupils are required to follow the school rules and regulations which every pupil must obey and comply to such a set of rules as a manifestation of discipline [3]. These rules and regulations give learners a sense of direction. It is the work of every educationist to fight indiscipline as the two; academic performance and discipline are complementary to each other.

## METHODOLOGY

A detailed description of the area of study, characteristics of the subjects, sample size, sampling strategy, data collection, procedure, and data analysis used in the study are given.

### Research design

A survey design as use; involves the collection of data from a sample population of a group of people associated with the education process and system. The study was explanatory in a bid to get detailed information. This was meant to help the researcher to intensively study the effects of boarding facilities on academic profane of primary school pupils.

### Sample

The study was conducted in primary schools of KITC. The area was chosen because the researcher being a teacher in the same locality had observed rampant indiscipline alongside poor academic performance.

### Subject sample

Two boarding schools and three-day schools were randomly picked using stratified random sampling. This was important to ensure that both day and boarding primary schools were represented for comparison purposes. The five schools represented the 11 established primary schools as of 2006.

### Sampling strategy

From the above sampled schools, by use of simple random sampling, 10 teachers from each school were selected to take part in the study. Head teachers for the respective schools were purposively selected to provide additional information. In total, 55 respondents participated in the study.

Data presentation, analysis and interpretation were done according to the research questionnaire and study variables are presented in form of descriptive statistical tables and percentages. The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of

### Procedure

The Department Head (Education) at Ankore Western Institute of Science and Technology introduced the researcher to the respondents through an introductory letter. The researcher explained the purpose of the study to all the respondents in order to establish a rapport and build confidence among them.

The researcher issued questionnaires to teachers for filling in, and collected them as soon the filling in was completed. Interviews were arranged and held between the researcher and the respective head teachers of the selected schools.

### Instruments

**Questionnaires:** Responses from teachers were obtained by use of close and open-ended questionnaires. The questionnaires were used to seek personal judgement on the effect of indiscipline on pupils' academic performance in KITC, Sheema District.

**Interview guide:** Head teachers were engaged in an interview, which reflected all study variables, objectives, and questions. This helped the researcher generate more detailed information from supplements on responses contained in questionnaires.

### Data analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The numeric data was analysed using Excel computer package and summaries were drawn using Microsoft Word processor. This helped to develop tables and charts for easy interpretation and presentation of the final report.

## RESULTS

indiscipline on pupils' academic performance in KITC, Sheema District.

The five headteachers were asked to mention the commonest forms of indiscipline manifested in their respective schools. Their responses are summarised in table 1

**Table1: Common forms of indiscipline in primary schools of KITC**

Form	Frequency	Percentage
Escapism	5	100
Bullying / teasing	5	100
Stealing	3	60
Sexual abuse	2	40
Truancy	2	40
Drug abuse	2	40
Cheating of examinations	5	100

It is clear that teasing /bullying, cheating of examinations as well as escapism were found in every school as revealed by the 100% response from headteachers. Sexual abuse, drug abuse and truancy were the least reported with a 40% turn of responses.

#### **Factors affecting the discipline of primary schools in KITC**

The researcher investigated the prevalence rate of indiscipline in the selected schools, and later established the major causes of indiscipline in the study area. Tables 2, 3, and 4 reveal the findings.

**Table 2: Prevalence of indiscipline in schools**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	36	78
No	10	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 shows that indiscipline was looming high in the selected schools with 36 respondents (78%) accepting have encountered the problem. This revelation was confirmed by head teachers who confessed having had indisciplined characters among their

pupils. Very few schools seem to have encountered noticeable indiscipline as revealed by 10 respondents (22%).

Teachers alone were later requested to mention the major causes of indiscipline in their respective schools. Table 3 summarises the findings below:

**Table 3: Teachers response on the major causes of indiscipline**

Cause	Response	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Lack of parental guidance</b>	Yes	35	70
	No	10	20
	I don't know	05	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Weak school administration</b>	Yes	29	60
	No	15	29
	I don't know	5	11
	<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100</b>

It is evident that lack of parental guidance has led to indiscipline in schools as accepted by 35 teachers representing 70% of the teacher respondents. Very few 20% (n=10) of the respondents were not sure whether lack of parental guidance could lead to indiscipline of children. The majority response was confirmed by the headteachers who also acknowledged that the existence of indiscipline in their schools and attributed it to lack of parental guidance. This form of indiscipline is mainly prominent among

boy children who tend to disrespect their parents as former grow up.

Table 3 also shows that poor school administration was to blame for indiscipline which idea was supported by majority 60% (n=29) of the respondents. Such administration systems that do not apprehend culprits encourage further and more indiscipline. However, minority 29% (n=15) of the respondents thought that since schools had guiding rules, then the administration had done enough.

However, when further probed on the extent school rules and regulations may be loose, teachers pointed accepted that the enforcement was not as serious as would have been desired especially since most primary schools are mixed

sex schools yet boys could behave differently from girls.

Head teachers were asked to identify the factors that have accelerated indiscipline in their schools.

**Table 4 shows the summary of the findings.**

Cause	Frequency	Percentage
Peer group pressure	3	60
Family background	3	60
Pornography	5	100
Permissiveness	5	100
Moral decadence	3	60
Drug abuse	2	50
Harsh school rules	3	60
Bad feeding	4	80

It was unanimously evident that a number of causes come together to cause indiscipline in the selected schools. Table 4 shows pornography and permissiveness rank highest in causing indiscipline. Bad feeding was yet another significant cause as consented by majority 80% (n=4) of the five headteachers. Other causes such as peer pressure, family background and harsh rules could not be underestimated. There was minimum

abuse of drugs as minority 50 (n=2) of the respondents asserted its value despite the schools being located in an urban place.

#### **Effect of indiscipline of academic performance in primary schools**

The researcher wanted to find out whether there is a significant difference in performance of learners who are disciplined and those that were not. She asked teachers to ascertain this, and the findings are summarised in table 5.

**Table 5: Indiscipline leads to poor academic performance**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	30	68
No	14	32
I do not know	00	00
Total	44	100

Although six teachers decided not to respond to the item, it is evident that indiscipline leads to poor academic performance as put forward by majority 68% (n=30) of the respondents. Pupils in the sampled schools confirmed this when they agreed that the best

performing pupils are rather quiet and less socially pronounced in the school. Teachers were further asked to ascertain the effect of indiscipline on school programmes. Table 6 is a summary of the findings.

**Table 6: Indiscipline disrupts school programmes and pupils' learning**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	35	70
No	10	20
I don't know	5	10
Total	50	100

Table 6 is a manifestation of the fact that indiscipline surely deters academic programmes as supported by 70% (n=35) of the respondents. Only 10% (n=5) of the respondents could not

agree that only indiscipline was to blame for the pupils' poor academic performance. Headteachers also agreed that indiscipline was a primary reason for the declining results at PLE.

When further probed on the extent to which discipline is related to academic performance, head teachers stressed that discipline is a basis of improving pupils' academic performance because a disciplined pupil is easily taught.

In this section, data concerning possible remedies through which pupils' discipline can be controlled is presented, the various respondents gave their own views, which the researcher presents in tables to follow:

**Table 7: The need for concerted efforts between teachers, pupils and administration**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	30	64
No	14	30
I do not know	03	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100</b>

Majority 64% (n=30) of the respondents acknowledged the need for an agreement between pupils, teachers and the administration on issues concerning discipline of the pupils. Only 6% (n=3)

of the respondents did not have the certainty over the same idea. It is there important that discipline be looked at as a compound item rather than a single unit.

**Table 8: Discipline is a collective responsibility**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	25	50
No	20	40
I do not know	5	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

An all-round approach is required in maintaining discipline in schools. This was a stand take by majority 50% (n=25) of the respondents. All the stakeholders, including parents, teachers, pupils, head teachers and the general community in and around the school have a role to play in nurturing a child towards a responsible educated citizen. Head teachers were also asked about the extent of enforcement of the strategies to maintain discipline. Their major response was that there should be a

cordial rapport between all the key players that have a stake in education whether at home, school or national level. The successful enforcement of school rules and regulations, and guidance and counselling are prerequisites to maintaining pupils' discipline. It was cited that indiscipline is easier to manage at a lower stage of its manifestation than when it has exploded to higher levels with higher ages of pupils.

#### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This is based on the results of study as presented and analysed above. It discusses findings reached at while answering research questions and

interview with the head teachers. The chapter then includes conclusion and suggests some recommendations based on research findings.

#### DISCUSSION

##### Forms of indiscipline

According to teachers, pupils and head teachers are the causes of indiscipline in the selected primary schools. Indeed, this indiscipline does exist in the sampled schools; however, this was confirmed by teachers who also acknowledged the existence of indiscipline caused in the sampled schools. Hence, as [4] identified some of the forms of indiscipline in educational

institutions as mass disobedience, deliberate breaches of school rules and regulations, rampant drunkenness at school, truancy, excessive bullying of new pupils by the old ones, among others. The sampled schools fall short of being free from pupils' unrest.

Teachers and head teachers acknowledged the breach of school rules and regulations characterises most of the selected schools. It was also

pointed out that the enforcement of school rules and regulations was loose, especially in mixed sex primary schools. [5] had earlier argued that there's need for a respectable code of conduct to guide the society and save us of pupils' misconduct which can result into restlessness in schools. Hence, cases of indiscipline are not divorced from the indirect ones, the main gist of the argument is that the latter are a direct result of the former, he cited the following as immediate or direct causes of misconduct / indiscipline in schools: The study revealed that from teachers' and pupils' refusal to go to class, shouting or refusing to go to class are some of the cases of deviant behaviours in schools. Hence, indiscipline cases are exhibited when pupils defy school rules and regulations put in place to maintain orderliness. However, a weak law is the starting point for the failure of pupils to comply. Hence if school rules are weak and the administration generally is poor and ineffective, there is a direct bearing on pupils' discipline and consequently the academic performance of the school. This is in agreement with [6] who adds that the nature of school rules and regulations is to blame for the indiscipline of pupils. This obviously has a direct bearing on the academic performance of learners.

#### **Factors that affect pupils' discipline in primary schools**

According to teachers and head teachers, the age at which children enrol for primary education also determines their behaviour. Adolescence stage tempts the young people into violating school rules and regulations. Majority of the teachers consented that adolescent stage was a trying moment for pupils' discipline wise. The study revealed that delinquent and maladjusted pupils are bound to be found in any situation. Such children with personality defects due to social problems can turn out to be trouble causers. They can be good at influencing others to cause indiscipline cases in school.

It was revealed by teachers that teasing which in extreme cases was bullying was common in primary schools. Other cases of indiscipline including escapism, and stealing. This could be attributed to the nature of

administration. If the administration cannot seal all the loopholes that give way to indiscipline, then upheavals are bound to erupt. This is in agreement with [7] who laments that teachers' unprofessional behaviour which may include excessive drinking of alcohol, immoral love affairs with school children, neglect of duty, corruption, partnering with pupils and consequently revealing confidential administrative matters to them deliberately undermines school authority. This may result into lack of direction on the side of the pupils escalating indiscipline.

It was revealed by teachers and pupils that poor feeding was yet another major source of discipline problems in primary schools. Inadequate academic teaching materials have a direct bearing on the quality of teaching but because of inadequacy of these materials, teaching adversely affected in many schools as parents are usually called upon to make substantial contribution for some of these items. This creates suspicion among parents and their children plus the general public. Hence pupils are likely to attack school authority under cover of demanding for scholastic materials.

The study found from teachers and pupils that delinquent and maladjusted pupils these are found to in any situation such children with personality defects due to social problems can turn out to be trouble causers in schools. They can be good at influencing others to cause indiscipline cases and in organising them into destructive groups. Such could be the explanation behind the increasing fires in schools. If such pupils are confronted with a faulty school administration, there is a direct bearing on school discipline since some head teachers tend to personalise schools in such a way that they use the school property as their personal property.

The nature of school rules may also have a direct bearing on discipline problems in primary schools as revealed by the respondents. Many primary schools are so huge that effective administration is hampered by sheer numbers of pupils. Due to large numbers of pupils, the school head in such schools is viewed as a mere

administrative head. He is divorced from the centre of the stage on the operation. Since the pupils lack individual attention from teachers and the head, they feel isolated and rejected. Those pupils with serious social problems take advantage of these fluid situations to do mischief since they feel they cannot be easily identified in the crowd. This tallies with [8] who said that while exercising punitive control, teachers use aggressive styles of behaviour, unlike those they wish to discourage. Recipients may on later occasions adopt similar aggressive solutions in coping with the problems confronting them. In Uganda, some primary school teachers are not aware that before they exercise any punitive control on pupils, it is necessary that they assess their perceptions of this punitive control. It is upon this background that teachers are called upon to use a balanced approach to discipline as stipulated in their code of conduct.

The study also reveals that teachers, pupils, and head teachers agree that home and community influence the discipline of pupils. The old social and cultural values affect pupils' discipline. Parents today especially the elites impart values that are in conflict with those being enforced by school administrators. Parents in urban areas are lenient about social life of children in respect of dances, drinking, videos, and even sex. Schools' rules strictly prohibit these activities. Hence, pupils are between the two worlds. The situation is carefree at home and there will be a problem for the learners to adjust to the strict school environment, especially in boarding schools.

#### **Effects of indiscipline on pupils' academic performance**

It was agreed by teachers and headteachers that indiscipline leads to poor academic performance. In situations of indiscipline, there is poor pupils' academic performance. This is in conformity with [9] who emphasised the role of discipline in education and put it that there must be discipline in all educational institutions including primary schools if education is to be effective. Alongside examinations, discipline among our education

institutions has been added to reinforce academic achievements. The placement and categorisation of schools based on performance was also correlated highly with the discipline record of the same schools. Discipline affects teaching and learning and consequently has bearing on the academic achievements of the same pupils.

It was found out from teachers, pupils, and head teachers that discipline breeds order in the school setting and all school programmes go on as planned. This is in line with the positive approach as supposed by [10] and [11] who pointed out that discipline is a desirable aspect as a means to an end. There should be faith in the desire and ability among pupils to do the right and socially accepted thing. This is the reason why pupils should be the origin of discipline. Schools as a socialising agent must be founded on good discipline to build the capacity and personality of the pupils towards better citizens.

Effective teaching and learning can be a dream that will never come true unless the pupils are disciplined. Chaos, confusion and violence prevail and sometimes strikes are the result of this. Some affected pupils will repeat classes, others lose interest and could drop out of schools following a series of poor performance due to reduced attention accorded to academics. [12] agrees that pupils' need to fulfil their desires leads to indiscipline. Such culprits neglect studying and take it on simply to conform with the expectations of their parents. The result is poor academic performance at examinations.

[13] believes that sexual indiscipline in the form of fornication may result into unwanted pregnancies among other disturbances that have swayed the performance of the girl child in schools. Girls spend a lot of time worrying about such problems and they do not concentrate on their studies, their poor academic performance is not a surprise. Discipline sincerely ensures a good teaching and learning environment, hence enhancing academic success. Discipline could best be implemented as a concerted effort between teachers, pupils and administrators. This revelation was no secret to all of the

respondent categories. It is important that all the stake holders be involved in maintaining discipline in school. [5] considers immaturity of some young teachers to have a serious negative impact on the pupils' discipline and consequently their academic performance. The fact that some teachers seek cheap popularity of their clients-the pupils, leads to reduced respect and consequent indiscipline as the learners feel no much gap between them and the teachers. Some teachers' methods of teaching and general management of discipline are loose enough to allow pupils lots of freedom and liberty to do whatever they want which in most cases are not in line with school rule and regulations.

Teachers as custodians of day-to-day school administration have to be conscious of pupils' behaviour or else cases of indiscipline will remain high as revealed by the respondents. This is in line with [9] who maintains that before teachers inflict punishment onto pupils,

the former should think of what punishment could do to their relationship between the pupils and teacher, and the emotional scars left behind on pupils. The study respondents asserted that school rules and regulations should be effectively implemented by the entire school led by the administration. There is also need to have good public relations to enhance the participation of the neighbouring communities in maintaining the pupils' discipline. An all-round approach would create a complete pupil and translate him/her into a desirable self-sustaining citizen of the future generations. All stake holders need to combine efforts because pupils belong not only to parents and teachers but to the entire community. Their indiscipline will impact not only on the schools, but also the entire community in form of theft, murder and general misconduct in society.

#### CONCLUSION

There is rampant indiscipline of pupils in the selected primary schools in KITC. It is the influence of peer pressure, family background, pornography, permissiveness, moral decadence, drug abuse, harsh school rules and the fact that pupils are adolescents that has contributed to indiscipline in primary schools.

Teachers, and head teachers have a cardinal role and responsibility to perform in enforcing discipline among pupils in order to boost pupils' academic performance. A disciplined

community is dependent on the zeal of the teachers to shape the pupils as disciplined and responsible citizens.

The most effective strategy to maintain discipline in school is by dialogue and creating an understanding among pupils in order to enable them live in a disciplined society both at school and elsewhere. The pupils' discipline should be a responsibility of everyone and many stakeholders, not only teachers or parents alone. It is likely that best academic performers are also the most well-behaved pupils in school.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

##### **To the policy makers:**

- There should be single sex schools to isolate boys from girls and reduce the problems associated with sexual indiscipline of adolescents.
- School administrators should be given refresher trainings on how to modify their teaching and administrative approaches in the changing world of technology.
- The Ministry of Education should come up strongly on the boys or men who pregnant school girls. Punitive measures should be devised so that culprits would

serve as good examples to scare others from the act.

##### **To the school administrators:**

- Schools should have counsellors to who social problems of pupils could be reported to avoid direct conflict with the administration.
- The enforcement of school rules and regulation should be a responsibility of everyone at school. Different other stake holders such as parents should actively get involved through parent days, and class days among others.



- The school should feed the pupils appropriately and try as much as possible to minimise upheavals resulting from bad feeding.
- The school should have suggestion boxes and the ideas from pupils should be respected and if possible, acted upon before it gets too late.
- The teachers would be well facilitated with teaching materials and motivated to teach and keep around school to ensure that pupils do not become redundant.

#### **Teaching staff:**

- All teachers should respect the professional code of conduct. If possible, it should be pinned on the staff notice board for regular access.
- Teachers should be exemplary in their behaviour and be parental as they administer punishment to avoid souring their relationship with pupils.

#### **School neighbours:**

- The school neighbours should be able and free to report any signs of indiscipline sighted among pupils in time.
- Some resources such as water points could be shared. There is need to carefully teach the pupils the best practices in managing these resources than punishing or scaring them away.

#### **Parents and guardians:**

- Parents should ensure regular attendance of school activities such as meetings and visiting days to help emphasised the discipline of their children.
- While at home with their children, parents should create a free environment for children to tell them their problems and express their desires.
- "Like father like son". Parents ought to be good examples for their children to emulate. Drinking and fighting are prohibitable before children.

#### REFERENCES

1. Adelman, H. S. and Taylor, L. (1999). *Learning Problems and Learning Disabilities: Moving Forward*. London. Macmillan Publishers.
2. Catsle, A. (1966). *Growing up in East Africa*. London Oxford University Press.
3. Clifford, M. (1981). *Practicing Psychology*. London. Houghton Mifflin Company.
4. Coombs, P. (1985). *The World Crisis in Education*. New York. Oxford University press.
5. Cotton, K. (2001). *Schoolwide and Classroom Discipline*. Online Resource Accessed on June, 8<sup>th</sup> 2012 at: <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/5.cu9.html>.
6. Gumisiriza, E. L. (1989). *Maintaining Discipline in Primary Schools in Uganda*. Kampala. Kyambogo University.
7. Johnson, W, F. (1964). *Guidance Counselling and Pupil personnel in education*. London. Mc graw Hill series in Education.
8. Mbiti, D. (1978). *Foundations of Educational Administration and Curriculum Development*. London. Oxford University Press.
9. Oceromoch, H, O. (1999). *Teacher perceptions in enforcing Discipline*. Kampala. Makerere University.
10. Onyango, B. (1961). *A study of Discipline and Punishment in the Schools of Uganda and England with reference to character training*. London. London Institute of Education.
11. Rychman, R. M. (1985). *The Theories of personality*. New York. Cole Publishing Company. Pacific Grave. California.
12. Constantine Abenawe(2022). Quality Education in Selected Secondary Schools in Ibanda District Uganda. IAA Journal of Social Sciences 8(1):197-215, 2022
13. Birihanze Augustine Bago (2022). Effect of Single Parenthood in Students' Academic Performance; A Case

[www.iaajournals.org](http://www.iaajournals.org)

of Selected Secondary Schools in Bitereko  
Sub County Mitooma District. IAA Journal of  
Social Sciences 8(1):216-226.

Birihanze