
APPROACHES TO MANAGEMENT OF DISCIPLINE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

In Kenya, each secondary school has its own unique way of maintaining discipline within the school. However, there are common methods of discipline that most schools use like school rules, punishment, and guidance and counselling. All these methods to some extent have helped the schools to manage discipline problems. For effective management of discipline, the cooperation between the head, staff, students, parents and the community is essential. In view of the causes of student indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya, various stakeholders have made suggestions regarding how this problem can be addressed. The paper discusses the role of the various stakeholders in the management of discipline in schools in Kenya.

KEY WORDS: Discipline, indiscipline, stakeholders, Kenya.

INTRODUCTION

Discipline plays an essential role in the moral development of a child and in creation of a healthy society (Nasibi, 2003, p. 18). Okumbe (1998, p.115) indicates that in order to successfully achieve the objectives of a school, all members of the educational organisation are required to strictly adhere to the various behaviour patterns necessary for maximum performance. He adds that despite the acquisition and application of theoretical skills required of a leader, educational managers will still be faced with cases of teachers, students and non-teaching staff who do not strictly follow the set standards of their educational organisations. Okumbe points out that it is thus imperative that educational managers use appropriate disciplinary action to maintain organisational standards necessary for optimum goal attainment.

In Kenya, each secondary school has its own unique way of maintaining discipline within the school. However, there are common methods of discipline that most schools use like school rules, punishment, and guidance and counselling (Oyaro, 2005, p. 8). All these methods to

some extent have helped the schools to manage discipline problems. For effective management of discipline, the cooperation between the head, staff, students, parents and the community is essential. The next section discusses the role of the various stakeholders in the management of discipline in schools in Kenya.

The Headteacher's Management Skills in Maintenance of Discipline

Discipline in the school is the function of the administration. The general school and classroom discipline is dependent upon the headteacher's administrative, supervisory and leadership styles since they are in charge of all the school matters (Okumbe, 1998, p. 115). Chaplain (2003, p.104) states that the headteacher along with the senior management team are charged with strategic planning, including determining the direction of the school (leadership) as well as organising the day-day running of the school (management). He adds that both dimensions make important contributions to creating and maintaining a well-behaved school. This implies that the headteacher is a leader of a school who must have a clear policy of what he wants for the school.

According to Chaplain (2003, p.104), what forms part of the headteachers leadership component includes being proactive in the development of an effective behaviour policy, ensuring staff have appropriate professional development support, and resources to support the policy at all levels. Chaplain adds that monitoring and maintaining the behaviour policy and classroom activity, being present around the school (in teaching and recreational areas), being sensitive to the concerns and difficulties of staff, and being able to set up "gear" when things are going too well or at critical points in the school's development, are all part of the management function. Thus, the headteacher has a very important role to play in maintaining discipline in the school. The headteachers set the tone and the morale of the school and they have remarkable influence over the teachers and pupils. Even at the classroom level, what the teacher does on matters of discipline is influenced by "the standards and expectations" of the principal (Blandford, 1998, p. 5).

In Chapter Two, various factors relating to the principal were cited as major causes of student disturbances in secondary schools in Kenya. Kubai (2004, p. 4) observes that indiscipline in Kenyan schools is as a result of poor management skills by heads of institutions of learning. This is partly because of lack of experience or exposure and adequate knowledge in

management. Koontz and Wehrich (1998, p. 347) identify five leadership styles commonly used in management of organizations. They include:

- **Autocratic style:** This is where power and authority is in the management. The head is dictatorial and makes all school decisions without consulting anyone. Teachers and students are like machines. They are there to be seen and not heard. The compound of the school is turned into small chiefdoms leading to conflicts between the headteacher, teachers and students culminating in rebellion, riots, violence and destruction.
- **Democratic/participative style:** This is an approach that recognizes democratic principles of governance and involves everyone in the process of decision-making. There is free flow of ideas from the administration to the teachers, administration to students and teachers to students and vice versa. Rights of individuals and their freedom of expression are accepted and respected.
- **Laissez –faire:** The administrator establishes goals and objectives of the school. Everyone in the school strives to achieve the objectives by working on their own at their own pace.
- **Bureaucratic style:** This is where the administrator is concerned with rules and regulations. S/he formulates rules and the institution is run by these rules strictly and records and transactions are kept in great detail.
- **Contingency:** This is a leadership style where the administrator reacts to problems in the institution in different ways according to the situation. S/he addresses an issue as it comes.
- **Consultative:** this is where the head involves the stakeholders in identifying problems in the institution and even in finding solutions to problems. However, s/he makes the final decision.

Although the above styles are sometimes used con-currently, the most important leadership style in the maintenance of discipline is the democratic/participative approach. According to Fadhili (2005, p. 10), most students and teachers attribute indiscipline to lack of dialogue between the administrators and the students. Most headteachers adopt master/servant, superior/inferior attitude in dealing with students. They rarely listen to students' grievances because they believe that they have nothing to offer. This creates a lot of tension, stress and misunderstanding. It eventually leads to frustration and violence as manifested in strikes.

Opportunities should be provided where teachers, students, and administrators can sit down and discuss issues affecting their school freely without inhibition, intimidation or victimization. One of the issues identified as a cause of unrest is the lack of communication between the headteachers, teachers, and students. In view of this, headteachers are required to cultivate a democratic and participatory environment in the school and encourage regular fora (*barazas*) where teachers and students are encouraged to express their views (MOEST, 2001, p. 4). This can also be done through the use of suggestion boxes, school assemblies, house meetings, class meetings, guidance and counseling sessions and open days for public and students to encourage collaborative management of the schools (MOEST, 2004, Ref: TN/ED/SCH/33/VOL.I /151, MOEST, 2000/2001, p. 6). Prompt action should be taken on students' grievances/problems. Any major institutional policy change affecting students such as school uniform, diet, school fees, etc. must be done in consultation with the BOG, PTA, and the students;

In view of the central role played by the headteacher in management of the school, the following suggestions and recommendations have also been made by various stakeholders in the quest for solutions to current discipline problems affecting secondary schools in Kenya. They are:

- The Ministry of Education should appoint qualified and competent personnel as administrators and managers of schools (MOEST, 2001/2002, p. 17). The process of identification, appointment, deployment and promotion of headteachers is important hence the Ministry should set clear criteria for these (MOEST, 2001, p. 3). A criteria for the promotion of teachers from one job group to another should also be clearly spelt out, taking into account their experience and performance. This will take care of current disparities (KESI, 2004, p. 7);
- Where a vacancy for headteacher/deputy headteacher occurs, the post should be advertised by the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) and interviews conducted. In addition, an effective evaluation system of headteachers should be put in place whereby non-performing heads will be identified and either retrained or deployed to perform non-administrative duties (MOEST, 2001, p. 4);
- In order to ensure that those appointed as headteachers have the required skills, newly appointed headteachers should be given an induction course on management before they assume office (KESI, 2004, p. 7);

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- The TSC should ensure that headteachers do not stay in one station for more than five years unless under special circumstances (KESI, 2004, p. 7). Where a head has provided exemplary leadership, he/she should be promoted and deployed to a commensurate or a bigger school to replicate the good practices (MOEST, 2001, p. 4);
 - Headteachers should ensure that they are available and accessible to facilitate decision making in schools and be away only when it is inevitable (MOEST, 2000/2001, p.18). The MOEST should take necessary measures to address the issue of localization of headship which, as it was pointed out, is the root cause of their frequent absence from schools (MOEST, 2001, p. 4);
 - In order to ensure effective monitoring and supervision of all school activities, headteachers of boarding schools and their deputies should reside in the schools (MOEST, 2001, p. 5). They should be available and accessible to staff and students (MOEST, 2000/2001, p. 6);
 - Headteachers must uphold the Ministry's policies and interpret the same to the members of the BOGs, PTAs, sponsors and other stakeholders (MOEST, 2001, p. 5). They should also ensure that all Ministry's policies are implemented (KESI, 2004, P. 7);
 - Headteachers should develop the art and practices of accountability and transparency in the handling of school finances as this would minimize indiscipline arising from mismanagement of financial resources (Kubai, 2004, p. 4). They should also adhere to the Ministry of Education's fees guidelines and are expected to notify the parents of the approved fees for the year (MOEST, 2001, p. 5). They should devise ways and means of spending the meager economic resources available to enable them to accomplish the set objectives (MOEST, 2000/2001, p. 18);
 - Headteachers should ensure proper delegation of duties and cultivate team spirit among all the stakeholders in the school (MOEST, 2000/2001, p. 4);
 - Headteachers should induct newly recruited teachers and students on the school traditions, ethos and what the school expects of them (MOEST, 2001, p. 5); and
 - Headteachers should make schools better places in the way they treat staff and students (Kubai, 2004, p. 4). They should be tolerant and accommodating and be ready to lead by example and motivate students to work towards their set goals (MOEST, 2000/2001, p. 6).
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From the above discussion it is evident that participative leadership style creates a democratic environment necessary for effective management of schools. An autocratic approach to issues in a world where democratization, transparency and accountability have become synonymous with management is out of date and has no place in modern schools.

Teachers and Discipline

Cowley (2001, p. ix) points out that one of the most essential characteristics of a good teacher is the ability to manage students' behaviour so as to facilitate their learning. According to Overall and Sangster (2003, p. 67), discipline is about the ways in which students behave towards each other and to their teachers and the ways that teachers and other adults in school, behave towards students. They point out that establishing a common set of values is not easy because the values held by school staff and which are implemented in the school behavioural policy may sometimes conflict with those held by the parents and the students.

For many years in Kenya, teachers have relied and still rely on corporal punishment to discipline errant students despite being outlawed (Kamau, 2003, p. 9). Teachers claim that they resort to this method because they are responsible for a large number of students per class, and that they have no other way of maintaining control of such a large group of young persons (Human Rights Watch, 2005). According to a research carried out by African network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) cited by Oyaró (2005, p. 9), corporal punishment could actually trigger students' unrest. With the outlawing of corporal punishment, the research identifies common forms of disciplinary methods which teachers in Kenya use as; smacking, pulling ears, scolding, tapping, forcing child to kneel on hard floor, standing in the sun, physical exertion, denying child use of toilet, pulling hair, isolating the child, burning their fingers and washing child's mouth with soap. However, according to Oyaró, some of these methods of discipline have proven counteractive as they traumatize the children. Cowley (2001, p. 84) observes that some teachers (perhaps all teachers) unintentionally do contribute personally to their students, misbehaviour. Cowley refers to these as 'cardinal sins', which teachers must avoid at all costs. They include: winding them up; being rude; being confrontational; being bad tempered; and being negative.

Nasibi (2003, p. 37) outlines the ways in which teachers can contribute to positive discipline of students. They are:

- Creating an atmosphere of trust and teamwork;

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- Respecting students as individuals with rights and a sense of expression;
 - Willingness to accept dissenting opinions from students without being abusive;
 - Being accessible to students;
 - Recognizing whatever accomplishment a child makes because children as humans bloom when they are praised;
 - Cultivating friendship and partnership with students;
 - Being human to students and their representatives;
 - Participating in the formulation of rules and the enforcement of the agreed code of conduct; and
 - They should act as role models to the students by being disciplined and upholding high moral standards. Cases where teachers have love affairs with students should be condemned and disciplinary action taken against such teachers.

Teachers cannot love all students, but they can care genuinely about their behaviour, for the sake of everyone concerned. Teachers should therefore, insist on decent, responsible behaviour from their students. Students need this type of behaviour, parents want it, the community at large expects it, and the educational process is crippled without it (Classroom Discipline, 2005).

Students and Discipline

Cowley (2001, p. 77) points out that there can be a tendency for teachers to think that misbehaviour is planned or premeditated by their students. She adds that whilst it is certainly true in some cases that students make conscious decisions to misbehave, in reality the majority of poor behaviour stems from very different factors. Cowley points out that if teachers understand some of these causes and learn ways to deal with them, they can avoid setting up situations where confrontations occur between them and the students. The success of instilling positive discipline therefore, calls for the establishment of a relationship of trust and respect between the adult and the child (Waithaka, 2005, p. 6). The next sub-sections will discuss in detail student discipline and other related issues.

Rules, Regulations and Student Discipline

As students from various socio-economic backgrounds meet in the school environment, the need to observe rules and regulations becomes imperative so that order, discipline, and

conducive learning environment may be created (Blandford, 1998, p.129). According to Saya (2005, p. 27), rules are very important because they help to set academic excellence and also contribute to all round development of students.

In Kenya, the Education Act permits the authority structure in any school to make administrative rules pertaining to the discipline of the students and to prescribe appropriate punishment for breach of non-adherence to such rules (Republic of Kenya, 1980, Cap 211, p. 73). The purpose of the school rules is to create a safe and warm environment (Chaplain, 2003, p. 140). All students and teachers are supposed to be familiar with the rules and it is the first thing students are given whenever they join a new school. Not knowing the school rules can be termed as defiance of authority and is punishable in some schools (Classroom discipline plan, 2005). Latham (1998, p. 104), however, notes that a rule-as-discipline approach leads to a paradox. He points out that the rules may encourage passive acceptance instead of critical thinking and reflection in students. The solution, he argues, lies in the thinking of rules, not as being a means to an end, but as having direct implications for student learning. Porteus, Vally and Ruth (2001, p. 30) point out that the development of rules should be directly linked to maintaining high expectations for learners. They add that high expectations should relate to both behaviour as well as academic excellence.

Shannon and McCall (2005) indicate that rules should not be very restrictive because students like adults resent unrealistic restrictions and struggle against them. Human Rights Watch (2005) adds that when the rules are broken specific punishment given should be immediate, appropriate and remedial. Students should be given clearly stated, precise set of rules whose value in obeying they should appreciate (MOEST, 2000/2001, p. 16). According to Doyle and Gottfredson and Gottfredson cited by Cotton (2005) students misbehave because the school rules have not defined clearly the kind of behaviour they are expected to exhibit. In their research on effective disciplinary practices, they found out that one of the ineffective practices include vague and or unenforceable rules. Gottfredson and Gottfredson cited by Cotton (2005) also point out that when teachers are inconsistent in their enforcement of rules, or when they react in inappropriate ways, discipline is generally poor.

Latham (1998, p. 104) suggests that one strategy is to view the rule-making process as a potential learning experience, not as an administrative chore. Latham adds that instead of distributing rules as an edict, the school can encourage teachers, student and families to work together in the rule-making process. Classroom Discipline Plan (2005) also suggests that the

students can be encouraged to come up with rules that could be incorporated in the old school laws. This would give them a feeling of ownership since they will view them as their own creation and thus strive to obey them. Students are far more likely to internalise and respect rules that they helped create than rules that are handed to them (Schimmel, 1997, p.70). Blumenfeld-Jones (1996, p. 6) notes that such involvement must be genuine and should include all students and not limited to just a few students in student government. Such students may be least likely to challenge the rules in the first place.

In using rules to foster discipline, the school has to work with the parents (McLaughlin, 2003, p. 113). The parents have to be aware of the school's code of conduct and ensure that there is no contradiction between what is emphasized at school and home. According to Classroom Discipline Plan (2005), this consistency is important for character formation. The rules should also be reviewed periodically and revised as needed to suit present discipline problems (Classroom Discipline, 2005). MacNaughton & Johns cited in Latham (1998, p.104) point out that discipline systems, like any facet of the curriculum should be seen as work in progress, subject to constant review and revision as the needs of the school community change.

Since school rules serve as important guideline for students in the school, they should be drafted in a way that will help students elicit the expected behaviour by the authority. Students should therefore, be made to understand them and the consequences that entail from breaking them. When they choose to break the rules, they choose consequences. Teachers should without hesitation invoke the consequences that are chosen. According to Rogers (2001, p. 78), a well-run school depends on a few but clearly understood rules which students find easy to follow. Blandford (1998, p. 126) suggests some guidelines that authorities can consider when drafting the school rules:

- The rules should clarify its intentions;
- The rules should specify the persons to benefit from the rules, in this case the teachers as well as the students;
- The school rules should not expect discipline problems to disappear all of a sudden, but should put into consideration students youthful immaturity; and
- School rules should act as a guideline and the teacher should help the student who cannot cope with the rules.

Rights of the Students

According to Human Rights Watch (2005), the purpose of children's education, as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, should be the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and preparation for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, and tolerance. Students have several basic rights which they are entitled and which they should expect, but which unfortunately they often do not enjoy (Classroom Discipline, 2005). However, the penetration of human rights movements into schools in Kenya has created awareness among children about their rights. Various acts of parliament are also in their defense (Eshiwani, 2001, p. 9). Some of the basic rights include:

- The right to a learning environment that is appropriately well ordered, peaceful, safe, non-threatening, and conducive to learning;
 - The right to having a caring, well-prepared teacher who instructs effectively and who limits students' inappropriate self-destructive behaviour; and
 - The right to choose how to behave, with full understanding of the consequences that automatically follow their choices;
- (Classroom Discipline, 2005).

Nasibi (2003, p. 36) points out that headteachers and teachers must be aware of the rights of the children and protect them. These involve:

- Respecting each student as an individual with rights of freedom of expression, movement, religion, education etc. One's views should be listened to and defense allowed even in unfavourable situations;
- Treating them with respect and understanding. One should never act aggressively towards a student e.g. abusing, caning, or any form of humiliation especially before the whole school. This lowers the child's self-concept and esteem;
- The head should encourage teachers to use child friendly methods of instilling discipline. This will include the students being persuaded to abandon any practices that could impact negatively on their studies and other people's well-being; and
- Both the head and teachers should avoid harsh, extreme and excessive punishments like uprooting remains of trees.

Therefore, for effective management of discipline, both the headteacher and the teachers must be aware of the students' rights. They have a right to a learning environment free from

bullying and intimidation and to feel safe and happy at school. They have a right to be treated fairly and with dignity. Students are also expected to treat each other and school staff with politeness and respect, and to help keep classrooms quiet and orderly. Teachers should therefore, support their right to learn by firmly and fairly implementing discipline rules and regulations.

The Role of prefects in Discipline

Effective discipline requires the headteachers to redefine the role of prefects in schools (Nasibi, 2003, p. 38). According to MOEST (2000/2001, p. 13) there are many problems in Kenyan secondary schools because of the poorly perceived role of prefects among the student's body. This has led to open hostility, violence and even murder. Students view prefects as puppets of the administration, traitors and sell-outs (Oyaro, 2005, p. 9). Oyaro adds that they see them as part of the autocratic system that suppresses them and as such they despise and loathe them. This attitude has prevailed because of the following:

- (i) The way the prefects are chosen;
 - (ii) Special privileges given to prefects but denied other students like eating and sleeping in privileged situations or rooms; being served meals first and therefore getting the best;
 - (iii) Power to discipline, scare and report other students;
 - (iv) In some cases, they have more powers than the teachers.
- (Republic of Kenya, 2001b, p. 35).

According to Nasibi (2003, p. 38), this negative attitude towards prefects can be changed if school administrators do the following:

- Form student councils with representatives elected directly by the students. Such prefects would owe their loyalty to fellow students and not the administration. At the same time, it gives the students a say on who is going to lead them;
- Ensure that the teachers do not abdicate their responsibilities to prefects;
- Be clear on the role/duties of the prefects. These must be in writing;
- Encourage prefects to give peer guidance and counseling to fellow students instead of policing over them;
- Prefects should treat students with respect so that they can earn the same from the students they are serving;

- See prefects as a bridge between the school administration and the student's body and therefore an effective tool for creating understanding between fellow students and the administration.

Prefects therefore, play a very important role in the management of discipline in schools. Their appointment should be democratic and cautiously done so as to ensure that the right cadre of prefects is appointed for effective administration. To ensure that they perform their roles effectively, they must be inducted to orient them into their roles. They should also be supported and encouraged to maturely handle issues by themselves.

Parents, Community and Discipline

According to Nelson (2002, p. 77), parents are the first link in effective school discipline practices. She points out that parents who are involved in their children's daily school lives have a better understanding of what is acceptable, and expected, in the school's environment. Hoy and Miskel (2005, p. 238) also indicate that schools are open systems and depend on exchanges with environmental elements to survive. They add that because school organisations are conceptualized as part of the larger universe or environment, anything that happens in the larger environment may affect the school and vice versa.

However, a study by Kiprop (2004, p. 45) indicated that most Kenyan schools lacked support from parents in the implementation of the alternative approaches to discipline in the post-caning era. Headteachers and teachers claimed that some parents did not assist in guiding and counselling their children with behaviour problems. Worse still, they ignored meetings between them and the teacher counsellors. Since discipline is a cooperative effort between the school staff and the parents, this impacted negatively on the role of the teacher in establishing and maintaining appropriate student behaviour, which is an essential pre-condition for learning. There was also a feeling that MOEST did not sensitize the society adequately on the importance of the alternative approaches to discipline. This therefore, made it difficult for the schools to implement the new approaches to discipline, which required the effort of all the stakeholders (students, school personnel, parents and other community members). In view of this, parents and the community must therefore, help enhance student discipline in the following ways:

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- Parental education should be organized by schools to educate parents on their role in enhancing school discipline (MOEST, 2000/2001, p. 5). Parents should be asked to re-evaluate their role as the people with a responsibility of moulding the character of their children and never abdicate that responsibility to teachers (Kiprop, 2004, p. 45);
 - Parents should be informed that they are better placed to handle the social and psychological development of their children than teachers whose role is supplementary (Nasibi, 2003, p. 37);
 - Parents should not frustrate their children when they don't meet their aspirations because frustrated children are prone to drug abuse and other forms of unacceptable behaviour (Republic of Kenya, 2001b, p. 50);
 - Parents should be informed that the home is a powerful socializing agent of children and they should therefore make it conducive to the children's growth and development. They should be educated on the causes of violence among children, which, in most cases, occur because of undesirable conditions at home. These include quarrels and fights among the parents; alcoholism, drug addiction, immorality, poverty, unemployment, overcrowding, lack of proper sanitation; cruelty of parents or guardians, laxity in discipline or severe punishments, absence of a loving mother; separation and divorce. All these lead to neglect, abandonment and abuse of the children leading to frustrations and violence (Kafu, 2005, p. 36);
 - Parents should be involved in the academic progress and discipline of their children (MOEST, 2000/2001, p. 22);
 - Parents should give their children reasonable amount of pocket money in order to avoid the unnecessary indiscipline which is brought about by excess or little pocket money (MOEST, 2000/2001, p. 22);
 - Parents should be sensitized to take up their roles in fees payment, though the government should increase grants through bursaries to support them (MOEST, 2004, Ref: TN/ED/SCH/33/VOL. I/151);
 - There should be extensive sensitization of different stakeholders on their roles e.g. BOG, PTA, and sponsors (MOEST, 2004, Ref: TN/ED/SCH/33/VOL. I/151). They should not have vested interests in the schools and should strictly adhere to the Code of Management for Governors of Educational Institutions. The role of sponsors as spiritual and religious leaders should be clearly defined and strengthened (MOEST, 2000/2001, p. 17);
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- In order to ensure that members of BOGs have the capacity to manage schools, the ministry should ensure that BOG members are appointed from persons of integrity and who are dedicated, committed, and experienced. They should have a minimum qualification of Form Four level (O- level) of education or it's equivalent (Odaló, 2004, p. 11). On appointment, members should undergo an induction course on code of management for secondary schools (MOEST, 2001, p. 8); and
 - The sponsors should take an active role in the spiritual, financial and infrastructure development in order to maintain sponsor status. They should provide chaplains/imams to schools.

It can be observed that parental involvement is critical in student discipline. It is therefore important that schools do not isolate themselves from the parents and communities. As such schools should be involved in community service and outreach programmes to create social harmony and a sense of ownership of the school by the community (MOEST, 2001, p. 11). With this sense of ownership the community will provide security and help in reducing antisocial activities such as drug peddling and the sale of alcohol around the school.

The Role of Guidance and Counselling in Discipline

Guidance and Counselling as a movement was started in America at the beginning of the 20th century as a reaction to change process in an industrialized society. It was introduced formally in Kenya in 1967 under the Ministry of Education (Nasibi, 2003, p. 42). In Kenya, Guidance and Counselling has been the concern of some of the education commissions. In 1976 for instance, the Gachathi Report recommended that the ministry of education expand its services to include guidance and counseling services. The headteacher of each school was to assign a member of staff to be responsible for providing information on guidance and counseling to all stakeholders', teachers and parents inclusive. It was recommended that each school was to build and use a cumulative record of students' academic performance, home background, aptitudes and interests and special problems to facilitate guidance and counseling. The report also recommended the establishment of courses at the university for training professional workers in guidance and counseling (Republic of Kenya, 1976, p. 152). The Kamunge Report (1988) further recommended that schools should establish guidance and counseling services with senior teachers being responsible for them (Republic of Kenya, 1988, p. 34). This policy still stands as noted below:

“It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that Guidance and Counselling services are offered to pupils. Each school should establish a guidance and counseling committee headed by a teacher appointed by the headteacher” (Republic of Kenya, 1988, p. 34)

The Presidential Committee on Students’ Unrest and Indiscipline in Kenyan Secondary Schools (2001) showed that the above directive has not been implemented in most schools. It attributed the problem of indiscipline in schools to a culture of violence in institutions partly because of poor guidance and counselling services. It found out that:

- The Ministry of education Science and Technology (MOEST) lacked a strong guiding and counselling division;
- The guidance and counselling services were found in more senior and urban schools but many rural schools have never established the services nor acknowledged the programme;
- Guidance and Counselling teachers in schools where the programme existed do not meet the expectations of the institutions due to lack of relevant training of the staff;
- Teacher training at all levels does not provide the teacher with adequate knowledge and skills, in guidance and counselling;and
- The parents had played a great part in the maladjustment of the children because of ignorance of child rearing practices and the fact that they were not involved in counselling services in schools.

(Republic of Kenya, 2001b, p. 50).

The importance of Guidance and Counselling in Kenya was yet again emphasized by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology when it came up with alternatives to corporal punishment, after its ban, through a circular Ref: G9/1/Vol.VIII/28 (MOEST, 2001). It stated that students/pupils should be disciplined with care and love without necessarily using the cane or harming them in the process. It suggested two main strategies that would suitably replace corporal punishment. These are:

- Initiating programmes that would educate parents, teachers, pupils and society at large on the harmful effects of corporal punishment and availability of effective alternatives; and
- Strengthening of guidance and counselling services in all educational institutions/schools.

The circular further suggested some preventive alternatives to corporal punishment and an outline of ways and means of strengthening guidance and counselling services in schools.

These are:

- Headteachers should provide for effective management of curriculum and time. This would ensure that pupils are fully occupied and not idle;
- Dissemination of information to teachers on the rights of children. This is possible at the teacher training and in-service levels;
- Information should be availed to the youth on consequences of their behaviour to enable them make informed decisions and choices;
- Positive reinforcement should be given for good behaviour in order to encourage them and provoke other to do the same;
- Teachers should provide good role models since the youth learn to respect that which is good and are good at copying what the adults do. If for instance the adults exhibit a culture of violence, then they will learn to be violent;
- Teachers should find out if the youth may be showing a change in behaviour and seek ways of curtailing the same. In that way they would forestall bad behaviour before it becomes a disciplinary issue or gets out of hand;
- Teachers should also talk to parents anytime they notice behaviour that is not usual (unfamiliar behaviour) with a particular pupil; and be able to take appropriate action; and
- The school administration should create a child friendly environment to enable pupils enjoy learning.

However, a study by Kiprop (2004 p. 45) on the *challenges faced by teachers and headteachers in maintaining student discipline in the post-caning era in Kenya* revealed that teachers and headteachers experienced problems in the implementation of these alternative approaches to discipline. The study by Kiprop (2004, p. 45) established that teachers lacked the necessary skills to implement guidance and counselling programmes. Teachers felt that the Ministry's emphasis on guidance and counselling failed to take into account the fact that many schools were staffed by ill-prepared teachers and also lacked necessary resources like books and office. It was also found out that guidance and counselling as a method of disciplining learners is not comprehensive. The reason given was that teachers were not willing to subject students to guidance and counselling because of its demand in terms of time and besides this, it does not produce instant results since it requires patience.

In addressing the above issues, the task force of The Presidential Committee on Students' Unrest and Indiscipline in Kenyan Secondary Schools (2001) recommended the following:

- That guidance and counselling services need to be strengthened by equipping teacher counsellors with skills and knowledge in the area of counselling;
- There was a dire need of training of guiding and counselling teachers and this should be given priority under a crash programme by both public and private sectors;
- It was resolved that teachers with professional qualifications in guidance and counselling be identified and be deployed by the Teachers' Service Commission immediately in schools;
- The number of teaching lessons given to guidance and counselling teachers be reduced to give them enough time to effectively carry out guidance and counselling activities;
- It was also recommended that guidance and counselling teachers be given three salary increments above their present grade as an incentive;
- It was further recommended that knowledge and skills in guidance and counselling should be imparted to all teacher trainees at all levels of training;
- The heads of the guidance and counselling departments were required to have post graduate qualifications and experience in guidance and counselling;
- Guidance and counselling was to be strengthened at peer level with the setting up of peer counselling groups in every school and the peer counsellors being given necessary skills and knowledge;
- It was agreed that children with disruptive behaviour should be offered professional services within the school; and
- Most of all, parents were to be more involved in counselling services in schools.

(Republic of Kenya, 2001b, p. 75).

Given the volatile situation in Kenyan secondary schools today as manifested in the spirit of violence, there is need for the MOEST to strengthen Guidance and Counselling both at the ministry and school level by providing teacher counsellors to every public school, facilitate their training and provide the necessary resources to enable them perform their duties effectively. It is imperative that all teachers have some basic skills in guidance and counselling services so that they can manage learners effectively. Auxiliary bodies providing

for peer counseling and pastoral care should also be established in all schools (MOEST, 2000/2001, p. 16).

CONCLUSION

According to Nelson (2002, p. 76), appropriate behaviour by students is essential to their ability to attain successful education. Without a disciplined atmosphere, teachers cannot teach effectively and learners cannot learn effectively. From the above discussion it is clear that appropriate school discipline practices involve all stakeholders in their designs. However, headteachers should be at the forefront, by being available, accessible, and establishing structures and climate, which promote participatory democracy, dialogue, teamwork, transparency, accountability, open communication systems and good public relations.

Recently, the government introduced alternative methods to corporal punishment after outlawing its use in Kenyan schools. Many issues have been raised by teachers on the effectiveness of these approaches to discipline in the wake of rising indiscipline in Kenyan secondary schools. It has further been illustrated that although the importance of Guidance and Counselling services in Kenya has been appreciated, the Government has not put in place the personnel in schools to offer the services in learning institutions.

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