

## Students' Indiscipline: The Case of Secondary Schools in Gombi Educational Zone of Adamawa State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** The study investigated perception of teachers on indiscipline among secondary school students in Gombi Educational Zone of Adamawa State. The study adopted survey research design. The population of the study was 7,468. A sample size of 120 was drawn through stratified sampling technique was drawn through stratified sampling technique. A research instrument titled 'Perception of Teachers on Indiscipline among Secondary School Students (PTISSS) was adapted from Olaitan, Mohammed and Ajibola (2013). The validity of the research instrument was carried out by two experts both in Counselling Psychology and Test and Measurement. Test re-test method was used to carry out the reliability of the instrument and the reliability coefficient was 0.84. The results revealed that students' misbehaviour is a prevailing problem affecting schools in Gombi Educational Zone. It was also revealed that indiscipline of students is as a result of poor seating arrangement with no locker and chairs, overcrowded population of students and imitating the unruly behaviour of colleagues. In conclusion, students' misconduct in the classroom interferes with teaching and learning and this could be precursor to school dropout and similar negative social outcomes. Therefore it was recommended that all members of the staff, including the principals and vice principals should exhibit the spirit of teamwork in order to energize morale and enhance staff motivation and also Government should provide conducive learning environment for learners in secondary schools in order to help minimize indiscipline among students.

**Keywords:** Indiscipline, teachers, perception, attrition, behavioural problems.

### INTRODUCTION

School indiscipline is defined as any mode of behaviour, action and conduct which deviates from the established and approved rules and regulations of a school and the acceptance code of behaviour, action, norms and the ethics of the society at large. Going by the above explanation therefore, any behaviour and action which deviates from acceptable and approved mode of behaviour can be regarded as undisciplined act [1]. Timothy [2] further stated that indiscipline can be said to be the unwillingness of students to respect the constituted authority, observe and obey school rules and regulations and to maintain high standard of behaviours conducive to teaching learning process and essential to the smooth running of the school to achieve the educational objective with ease.

School institutions remain a preparatory ground to empower and certify the requirement for human development. The teacher is faced with the challenges of educating, socializing, empowering and certifying students, but with the help of good teaching atmosphere [3]. By implication, the task of a teacher,

which includes sustaining education system, do not rest on his or her professional competency alone, but on the entire features of the school climate [4]. The school is a type of service organization vested with primary function of educating the child and the control is a problem faced by all organizations especially learning institution, which work with people. For the efficient functioning of the school, school managements reserve power to control the conduct of students through reasonable rules and regulations. Once these rules and regulations are made, they must be enforced on the problems, which beset secondary schools, indiscipline comes first. Disciplinary problems dominate the issues of the day in both large and small schools both in towns and villages. Students disobey school rules and regulations with impunity. They have little or no respect for their teachers and even the school administration.

Students' misbehaviour is a prevailing problem affecting schools not only in Nigeria but also across many nations around the world. Students' misconduct in the classroom interferes with teaching and learning and is thought to be precursor to later

school dropout and similar negative social outcomes. Students' behavioural problems are also thought to be a leading contributor to teachers' stress and attrition. The indiscipline problem in schools is ranked as a major problem among students of secondary schools in Nigeria. Disruptive behavior is a concern to schools and parents and to fellow students, whose education may be adversely affected. Therefore, disruptive behaviour cannot be ignored, and schools must tailor a well-understood sound behavior and discipline policy. In secondary school, the situation is worse because the learners as adolescents, now become aware of their rights namely; to privacy, to freedom of religion, belief, opinion, and expression, among others.

Indiscipline may be said to be as old as the time when men started to organize himself into society and consequently made laws to order the affairs of men in a social set up. In the Holy Scripture Cain exhibited some form of indiscipline when he out of envy murdered his brother Abel in their abode. We have heard of people engaging in indiscipline behaviour on daily basis. Many of our students today especially those in our secondary school exhibit various forms of indiscipline in form of juvenile delinquency. This could be in the form of arson, murder and robbery etc. these acts involve both adult and youths, the rate of indiscipline tends to be on the increase in the modern world. Africa is not an exception of this general increase in the young stars, negative attitude to constituted authority. This rate of indiscipline tends to be on an increase despite the various measure taken by successive government most especially Nigeria, to curb the menace among our students so as to bring about a socially stable society [5].

Another author [6] also found that the lack of a supportive and friendly school environment influences educators' disciplinary attempt and may cause them to remain cold. Petersen & Rosser [7] contend that serious breaches of school discipline policy include assault by students on teachers and other students, verbal abuse, offensive language against teachers and other students, sexual and other forms of harassment, threat and intimidation of teachers and other students, possessing offensive weapons, supplying or using illegal drugs, and intrusions into the school or classrooms by adults with the intention of confronting teachers. The problem now is rather alarming and jeopardizing the administration of the secondary school.

It is against this background that the management of disciplinary problems in schools needs urgent attention. There is much work to be done since in some schools the situation has reached alarming proportions. This study therefore concentrates on unraveling the various dominant factors attributing to the discipline problems among secondary school students in Gombi Local Government area of Adamawa

State with a view to providing the means of managing disciplinary problems.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It has been realized that students' indiscipline in secondary schools in Nigeria has become a cankerworm that has eaten too deep into the students' moral up bring. Students have become uncontrollable and highly disrespectful to themselves, teachers, school administrators, parents and to the society at large. Students portray different types of indiscipline behaviour among which include the following acts: boycotting of lessons, watching and practicing pornography, lies telling, violence, dishonesty, disobedient to teachers, prefects, and school administration, rapping school/class mates, alcohol consumption, confronting and stabbing teachers in schools, vandalism, lateness to school, cultism, drug abuse, insulting/assaulting, stealing, rioting; among others.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions channeled the study:

- What are the most frequent types of students' indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi Educational Zone?
- What are the home-based factors causes that trigger students' indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi Educational Zone?
- What are the schools-based factors that cause indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi Educational Zone?
- What are the possible solutions to curb the identified causes of indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi Educational Zone?

### **Research Hypotheses**

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference in the views of junior and senior secondary school teachers on the causes of students' indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi Educational Zone.

HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference between male and female teachers views on the identified possible solutions to indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi Local Government Area.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

Descriptive survey research design was used for this study. This design was found to be appropriate because Jen [8] defined survey design as a process of documenting the nature, scope, relationship, dimensions and directions of events, behaviour, attitudes and interest about a person or things.

### **Population and Sample**

The study population comprised of ten public junior and senior secondary schools with population of

seven thousand, four hundred and eighty six in Gombi Local Government Education Zone. Four junior and four senior secondary schools were selected by stratified sampling technique with a sample size of one hundred and sixty teachers. Twenty teachers were selected from each of the eight secondary schools.

**Research Instrument**

A research instrument titled ‘Perception of Teachers on Indiscipline among Secondary School Students (PTISSS) was adapted from Olaitan, Mohammed and Ajibola [9] was used to collect data. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. Section A comprised demographic characteristics of teachers such as name of school, sex, age, and years of experience. Section B comprised twelve items on types of indiscipline in secondary school. Section C comprised fifteen items on causes of indiscipline in secondary schools, while Section D comprised five items on the possible solutions to school indiscipline among students.

**Validity and Reliability of Instrument**

Validity was carried out by two experts in Counselling and Test and Measurement in the Department of Science Education, Adamawa State University, Mubi. The reliability of the research instrument was carried out in Government Senior Secondary School (GSSS) Mubi. The researcher used test-retest reliability method. The first test was administered on 30 teachers, while the second test was administered within the interval of four weeks. The reliability co-efficient was 0.84

**Data Collection and Analysis**

The researchers administered and collected data on the spot. Thus, retrieved data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as mean, Standard Deviation and t-test analysis.

**RESULTS**

Research Question 1: What are the most frequent types of student indiscipline in Secondary Schools in Gombi Educational Zone?

**Table-1: Mean scores of respondents on the most frequent types of students indiscipline in secondary school**

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	REMARK
1	Truancy is the most disciplinary problem that happen frequent in schools	3.00	0.23	Accepted
2	Some learners repeatedly ask to go to the toilet	1.88	0.41	Not accepted
3	School with too much discipline encourage student not willing come to school	1.81	0.50	Not accepted
4	Learners in my class are often absents from school	3.00	0.23	Accepted
5	Learners in my school are often late for school	3.06	0.29	Accepted
6	Learners often leave the school premises without permission	3.56	1.08	Accepted
7	Some learners bring dangerous weapons to schools	3.16	0.29	Accepted
8	Students fight a lot in school	3.13	0.37	Accepted
9	The student disobey the prefects	3.06	0.29	Accepted
10	Some students steal one another property	2.81	0.08	Accepted
11	Student like to steal school properties	2.78	0.07	Accepted
12	Student like to steal teachers valuable and money	2.13	0.15	Not accepted

\*Accepted ( $\bar{x} = 2.5$  and above; Rejected ( $\bar{x} =$  less than 2.5)

Table-1 revealed that the respondents agreed that the most frequently types of indiscipline in school are learners often leaves the school premises without permission ( $\bar{x} = 3.56$ );truancy is the most disciplinary problem that happen frequent in schools ( $\bar{x} = 3.00$ ); leaner’s in my school are often late for school ( $\bar{x} = 3.06$ ); some learners bring dangerous weapon to school ( $\bar{x} = 3.16$ ); students fight in school ( $\bar{x} = 3.13$ ); students disobey the prefects ( $\bar{x} = 3.06$ ); some students steal one another property ( $\bar{x} = 2.81$ ); students liked to steal school properties ( $\bar{x} = 2.78$ );Leaners in my school are

often late for school ( $\bar{x} = 3.06$ ). The respondents however disagreed with the following types of student indiscipline. Some learners repeatedly ask to go to the toilet ( $\bar{x} = 1.88$ ); school with too much discipline encourage students not willing to come to school ( $\bar{x} = 1.81$ ); Student like to steal teachers valuable and money ( $\bar{x} = 2.13$ ); Based on the result from the table above, it can be established that the most common frequent types of student indiscipline in Gombi Education Zone are: truancy, absenteeism, lateness, leaving the school premises without permission, bringing dangerous weapon to school, fighting, stealing and disobedience.

**Research Question 2:** What are the home-based secondary schools in Gombi Education Zone? features causes that trigger student’s indiscipline in

**Table-2: Mean scores of respondent on home-based factors that caused students indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi educational zone**

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	REMARK
1	Societal celebration of negative over positives makes children to indulge in deviant behaviour	3.50	0.23	Accepted
2	Poverty as a result of lower socio-economic family status enhances poor in discipline	2.16	0.74	Not accepted
3	Acquisition of negative information from audio-visual material promote disciplinary problem in school	3.38	0.13	Accepted
4	Most times bad behaviour emanate from parenting at home	2.03	0.98	Not accepted
5	Neglected children are troublesome at school	3.44	0.18	Accepted
6	Financial problems makes most parents to ignore their children education	3.03	0.00	Accepted

\*Accepted ( $\bar{x} = 2.5$  and above; Rejected ( $\bar{x} =$  less than 2.5)

Table-2 shows home-based factors that caused indiscipline among student. The result revealed that students agreed with societal celebration of negative over positives makes children to indulge in deviant behaviour ( $\bar{x} = 3.50$ ); acquisition of negative information from audio-visual material promote disciplinary problem in school ( $\bar{x} = 3.38$ ); Neglected children are troublesome at school ( $\bar{x} = 3.44$ ); Financial problems makes most parents to ignore their

children education ( $\bar{x} = 3.03$ ). However, the respondents disagreed with poverty as a result of lower socio-economic family status enhances poor in discipline ( $\bar{x} = 2.16$ ); most times bad behaviour emanate from parenting at home ( $\bar{x} = 2.03$ ).

**Research Question 3:** What are the schools-based factors that cause indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi Education zone?

**Table-3: Mean score of respondents on the schools based factors that cause indiscipline**

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	REMARK
1	School curriculum deficient in moral training	2.09	0.86	Not accepted
2	The ever changing curriculum confuses learners	3.23	0.04	Accepted
3	Learners find the curriculum boring	3.56	0.29	Accepted
4	Fierce teachers cause the student to dislike his or her class	3.31	0.08	Accepted
5	Poor seating arrangement with no locker and chairs	2.96	0.00	Accepted
6	Overcrowded population of student in the class room causing the teacher difficult in handling the class effectively	3.38	0.13	Accepted
7	Some students imitate the unruly behaviour of their colleagues	3.19	0.03	Accepted
8	The students always spend their time in the company of friends	3.06	0.00	Accepted

\*Accepted ( $\bar{x} = 2.5$  and above; Rejected ( $\bar{x} =$  less than 2.5)

Table-3 shows the school- based factors that cause indiscipline in secondary schools are that learners find the curriculum boring ( $\bar{x} = 3.56$ ); the ever changing of curriculum confuse learners ( $\bar{x} = 3.23$ ), fierce teacher cause the students to dislike his or her class ( $\bar{x} = 3.31$ ), poor seating arrangement with no locker and chairs ( $\bar{x} = 2.96$ ), overcrowded population of students in the class room caused the teacher difficult

in handling the class effectively ( $\bar{x} = 3.38$ ), some students imitate the unruly behaviour of colleagues ( $\bar{x} = 3.19$ ), and the student always spend the time in the company of friends ( $\bar{x} = 3.06$ ),The table also shows that respondent disagreed with school curriculum is difficult in moral training ( $\bar{x} = 2.09$ ).

**Research Question 4:** What are the possible solutions to curb the identified causes of indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi Educational Zone?

**Table-4: Mean analysis on possible solutions to curb the identified causes of indiscipline in secondary schools as perceived by teachers in Gombi Educational Zone**

S/N	Possible Solutions to curb students indiscipline	Mean	Decision
1	Moral leadership and education	2.98	Accepted
2	School authorities to be of good models	3.22	Accepted
3	Provision of adequate facilities for teaching, games and sports	2.68	Accepted
4	Involvement of students in making rules and regulations	2.85	Accepted
5	Reduction of class size	2.74	Accepted
6	Value orientation	2.95	Accepted
7	Effective Parents Teachers Association (PTA)	2.97	Accepted
8	Emphasis on extracurricular activities	2.86	Accepted
9	Positive teacher/students relationship	2.98	Accepted
10	Provision of ICTs and internet in schools	2.76	Accepted
11	High parental and school supervision and counseling	2.84	Accepted

\*Accepted ( $\bar{x} = 2.5$  and above; Rejected ( $\bar{x} =$  less than 2.5)

From Table-4 shows the possible solutions to curb indiscipline in secondary schools as perceived by teachers in Gombi Educational Zone are school authorities to be of good models, value orientation, moral leadership and education, effective Parents and Teachers Association (PTA), high parental and school supervision counseling, provision of ICT and internet in schools, reduction of class size, positive teachers/students relationship, involvement of students

in making rules and regulations, provision of adequate facilities for teaching, games and sports and emphasis on extracurricular activities.

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant difference in the views of junior and senior secondary school teachers on the causes of student’s indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi educational zone.

**Table-5: t-test analysis of the views of junior and senior secondary school teachers on the causes of student’s indiscipline in secondary schools**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal.	t-crit.	Decision
Junior teachers	80	3.03	3.60				
				138	0.020	1.960	Accepted
Senior teachers	80	3.04	3.40				

\* Not Significant: (P > 0.05)

Table-5 reveals that t-cal. (0.020) is less than t-crit. (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the view of junior and senior secondary school teachers on the causes of student’s indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi educational zone, is accepted. Therefore, there is no significance difference in the view of junior and senior secondary school

teachers in the causes of student indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi educational zone.

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference between male and female teacher’s views in the identified possible solutions to indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi Local Government Area.

**Table-6: t-test analysis on differences between male and female teachers view on the identified possible solutions to indiscipline in secondary schools**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal.	t-crit.	Decision
Junior teachers	70	3.46	0.19				
				158	1.810	1.960	Accepted
Senior teachers	90	3.74	0.05				

\* Not significant: (P > 0.05)

Table-6 shows that t-cal. (1.810) is less than t-crit. (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance. The null

hypothesis, which states that there are no significant differences between male and female teacher’s views in

the identified possible solutions to indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi local Government Area, is therefore accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference between male and female teacher's views on the identified possible solutions to indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi Local Government Area.

## **DISCUSSION**

The study has been concerned with perception of teachers on indiscipline among secondary school students in Gombi educational zone. Research question one investigated the most frequent types of student indiscipline in secondary schools. It has become an established fact that the most frequent types of students indiscipline in the study area are truancy, often absent from schools, often late for school, often leave the school premises without permission, bringing dangerous weapon to school, fighting, disobedient to prefects, stealing one another's property and stealing school properties. This finding is in line with Rosan as cited in Ngwokabuenui [5] who identifies ten other types of disciplinary problems or indiscipline acts among the students such as truancy, fighting, damaging school properties, leaving school without permission.

Research question two revealed the home-based factors that cause students indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi educational zone; it is accepted that the home based factors that cause students indiscipline are: societal celebration of negative values, acquisition of negative information from audio-visual material, neglected children and financial problems. Thus findings are in agreement with the report of Morongwa [10], which identified parent/ home influence, teacher/ educator, political, social and economic factors as the causes of indiscipline.

Research question three revealed the school based factors that causes students indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi educational zone are: the ever-changing of curriculum, the boring of the curriculum, fierce teacher, poor seating arrangement, overcrowded population of students in a class, imitating the unruly behaviour of colleagues and lastly spending much time in the company of friends. This finding is in contract with the report of Pearson [11] when she itemizes internal causes of indiscipline which include lack of realistic rules, wrong ideals, idleness and lack of good leadership.

Research question 4 showed the possible solutions to curb indiscipline in secondary schools as perceived by teachers in Gombi Educational Zone are school authorities to be of good models, value orientation, moral leadership and education, effective Parents and Teachers Association (PTA), high parental and school supervision counseling, provision of ICT and internet in schools, reduction of class size, positive teachers/students relationship, involvement of students

in making rules and regulations, provision of adequate facilities for teaching, games and sports and emphasis on extracurricular activities. This Finding was similar to Ponfua [12].

Research hypothesis one revealed that there is no significant difference in the view of junior and senior secondary school teachers on the causes of students indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi educational zone.

Research hypothesis two also revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female teacher's views in the identified possible solution to indiscipline in secondary schools in Gombi local Government Area.

## **CONCLUSION**

Indiscipline is a prevailing problem among students which could be as a result of poor seating arrangement with no locker and chairs, overcrowded population of students and imitating the unruly behaviour of colleagues. Students' misconduct in the classroom interferes with teaching and learning and this could be precursor to school dropout and similar negative social outcomes.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made for effective management of disciplinary problems:

- All members of the staff, including the principals and vice principals should exhibit the spirit of team work in order to energize morale and enhance staff motivation.
- The causes of disciplinary problems are addressed if teaching staff are actively involved in the teaching programmes of their school. This will lead to active participation of the students which subsequently confine their frivolities.
- Government should provide conducive learning environment for learners in secondary schools in Gombi Educational Zone.
- Government should build more classroom for students in secondary schools in Gombi Educational Zone to avoid over crowding.
- Moral punishment, rewards, praise and blame create room for reinforcement of positive performance which is the guideline for the impulsiveness of the students.
- All staff should cultivate model self-discipline behaviour. This serves as role-models for their learners thereby inculcating self-discipline in learners.

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