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THE INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFOMANCE IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF RUHANGO DISTRICT,RWANDA

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLEMENT OF THE REQUIMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE MASTERS DEGREE IN EDUCATION MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTARTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF KIGALI, RWANDA

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to analyze how school discipline policies influence the academic performance of students in RUHANGO District, Rwanda. The study is guided by a general objective: to analyze t he influence of school discipline policies on students' academic performance in selected secondary schools. There are also specific objectives: to examine how the administration of school rules and regulations contributes to academic performance, to examine how restorative practices management influences academic performance, and to interpret the correlation between secondary school discipline policies and academic performance.The study was conducted in secondary schools in Ruhango District, with a sample size of 85 including students, teachers, deputy heads in charge of discipline, and head teachers. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the research. Secondary data were obtained through documentation, library research, and internet research. Questionnaires, interview guides, and documentary analysis were used to collect data. The data were presented in tabulation formats and analyzed using the statistical package for social science (SPSS).

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made: implementing standardized measures for school discipline policies, improving monitoring and evaluation of the rules and regulations, and establishing guidance and counseling services in schools.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Introduction

On the global, regional, and local level, this chapter addresses issues concerning the effect of school discipline policies on students' academic success in secondary schools. The chapter continues with a description of the study's background, study question, research objectives, research hypothesis, and the study's significance.

Background of the study

Many studies have highlighted the importance of school discipline policies in the continuous attendance of quality education and their effect on students'academic performance. The study found that the most significant obstacle to the education system in the United States was a lack of school discipline policies, with many teachers and students being deeply concerned about chaos and danger in the classroom. Poor time management, insubordination, and bullying by students result in different schools and classroom disruptions, resulting in many suspensions throughout the year. (Chaplain, 2003).

Principals of secondary schools in Kenya were cited as the major contributors to student disruptions, according to (Catherine, 2012).

It was also found that indiscipline individuals are the result of poor leadership skills by professors (Kubai et al, 2017). This was confirmed by (Mirit, 2017), who pointed out that indiscipline in Kenyan secondary schools in Yatta District was attributed to unclear and unfair school rules and regulations, students not believing in the rules, teachers and administrators disagreed on the rules, ineffective administration, and teachers with punitive attitudes.

With the introduction of Free Education for All (EFA) and universal secondary education (use) in Rwanda through nine- and twelve-years basic education (9&12YBE) schools in 2009, the number of students in those schools has increased. This created overcrowded classrooms and created

more challenges for teachers to tackle effective teaching and learning, and there is a need for more discipline enforcement. According to studies on education, there are several instances of indiscipline pupils in secondary schools. Students of 9&12 YBE schools are becoming increasingly involved in pregnancies and early marriage, and cell phone use has become a problem.

In addition, there are many uncontrolled school outgoing and incoming cases as a result of student indiscipline in 9&12 YBE schools. These unnatural mannerisms result in school dropout and academic results (MINEDUC, 2011.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of students' behavior in secondary schools in Rwanda is a significant issue for all education partners, including teachers, parents, and policymakers. Students' conduct can range from minor to severe incidents of violence and bullying in the classroom, as well as significant incidents of bullying and bullying, which can have a negative effect on the learning environment, students' academic success, and the overall well-being of the school community.

An increasing number of secondary schools are revealing a wide variety of potentially disruptive behaviors in the classrooms and around the schools. During class time, many students are seen loitering in town streets, villages, and other places, an indication of disrespect to school rules and regulations. In Rwanda, many cases of disruptive behavior were observed in secondary schools, including the stealing, selling, and consumption of drugs, prostitution,

This resulted in premature pregnancy, a high rate of school dropout, bullying, and disobedience of school among others.

According to Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, Rwanda (MIGEPROF,2017) for example the cases of unwanted pregnancy among school girls aged between 15-19 years old were 17,500 in Rwanda, the majority were dropping the school due to inconsistence and poor school discipline policies and discipline management strategies that favor them to continue their studies. Therefore, the problem to study under this research was to analyze the influence of school discipline policies on students' academic performance in selected secondary school of Ruhango District.

The Research Objectives:

This research was directed by general and specific objectives.

General Objective:

To analyze the influence of school discipline policies on students' academic performance in selected secondary schools in Ruhango District, Rwanda.

Specific Objectives:

The study was directed by the following specific objectives:

i.   To examine how the administration of school rules and regulations contribute to students' academic performance.

ii. To examine how the students' restorative management practices influence students' academic performance.

iii. To interpret the correlation between the secondary school discipline policies and its influence on students' academic performance.

Research Hypothesis

The study was directed by the following Hypothesis:

H1: Administration of school rules and regulations has a significant influence on students' academic performance.

H2: There is a significant influence of restorative management practices on students' academic performance.

H3: There is a significant correlation between school discipline policies and students' academic performance.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature

This section is about the theoretical analysis of the subject investigated in the report. The variables of the research are fully explained in this section, and the implications of school rules and regulations on students' academic success are well-defined.

The influence of Management of school rules and regulations on students' academic performance

Management is the act of working with and through individuals to achieve organizational objectives, according to Mafabi et al (1993). Management involves the drafting of rules and regulations, as well as undertaking activities that aim at achieving the objectives of a particular

organization. For a scientific communication about a thought or action, rules are suggested or self-imposed guidelines, or a prescribed procedure and custom is used.

Norms or norms of conduct can be defined as the common needs of a group of individuals. These include what the group considers to be a socially acceptable pattern of conduct expected of every individual in the group (Harris, 2005).

Ideally, schools should have rules and guidelines for the proper governing of the various lifestyles of students, including the dos and don'ts (Okumbe, 1998). On the other hand, laws, on the other hand, are general orders with a system of rules designed to improve efficiency and order in an organization.

Influence of Restorative management practices on students' academic performance

In Uganda's secondary schools, there are various forms of restoratives, according to the (Mpiso, 2018). These include the different forms of reprimand, bawling, insulting sarcasm, belittling, name calling, denial of privileges, social exclusion, standing or kneeling in front of class, exercise exercises such as lifting arms while carrying weight, suspension and expulsion

from school, corporal rehabilitation, and detention or keeping students after school. Children were expected to take instructions from adults and assimilated knowledge without questioning its source. To question its source and challenge the instructor's opinion may be rude and tantamount to restorative (Gyekye, 2022).

Despite the existence of learning theories indicating the challenges that restoratives strategies pose to effective teaching and learning, the approach continues to be based on accepted social norms and expectations, as shown by our schools, where adults expect that children who cheat in class or at home will be punished (Rosen, 2017). &., 2020), restoratives are supposed to reduce unwanted responses during the time students are under teacher's supervision. This view is also shared by (Cotton, 2020), who said that restoratives in a school system are supposed to teach students the connection between their behavior and the result of their failures. (Cowley, 2022) teaching could also be one of the most rewarding jobs in the world, according to the author.

Relationship between School Discipline Policies and Students' Academic Performance

Effective school discipline plans result in high student success because self-discipline is involved, which places emphasis on the achievement of a learner's goal, but indiscipline can have negative effects, such as high failure rates, school vandalism, etc. Lewis and Doorlay (2015) argue that good student success can only be achieved if the educators themselves are well disciplined and aware of their work as well as their learners and potential challenges.

Excellent educators know their jobs and understand the learners' needs. Since there are teachers who have self-respect and are familiar with school discipline laws, learners were in a good position to succeed academically.

When Sonny (2019) emphasizes the importance of self-respect and kindness to others, he argues that: in a classroom environment, learners will develop self-discipline.

Theoretical Framework

Mc Gregory's theory X and Y

This study was influenced by Mc Gregory's X and Y model, which is an alternative to Max Weber's classical organization model (Okumbe, 1998). The application of the theory x to a school was to be a group of individuals made up of three groups of people, namely teachers, students, and non-teaching staff. All of these groups of people require discipline to achieve their desired organizational goals and objectives by establishing rules and regulations that are then followed by mandatory punishment. On the other hand, y considered a school as an organization with a head teacher who was able to use leadership skills to gain willing support from teachers, students, and non-teaching staff by using rules and regulations imposed by the school.

Mc Gregory's theory X and Y's basic principles include rules and regulations, discipline, and time management, particularly when administering punishments in the classroom. The key variables, according to Mc Gregory's model, were school rules and regulations for effective management and administration of punishments for students who do not adhere to school rules and regulations, as well as time management, which refers to the effective use of time allocated to individual activities in an education institution. These activities include both classroom and outdoor activities, such as swimming, gardening, and cleaning, or housekeeping (Mafabi, et al., 1993).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Methodology

The study followed a correlation research approach. A correlation research method aims to determine the degree of correlation between two or more variables. According to Ikegbusi (2022), a correlation research method indicates the direction and magnitude of a relationship between two or more variables.

This is done to investigate the relationship between secondary school discipline policies and students' academic performance. The study was also employing a descriptive survey method (Grinnell, 1990). A mixture of quantitative and qualitative research methods was used. To determine whether the school discipline policies influence their students' academic success, qualitative research involves interviewing the teachers and focus groups for the students. Data were collected using a self-structured questionnaire from both the students and the teachers of the selected secondary schools.

Secondary data was collected from various sources such as textbooks, surveys, journals, and internet sources in order to gather sufficient data for the subject of the study.

Documentary analysis

The study used a document search. The method involved data collection from carefully drafted official school papers or documents. This included official correspondence, student record numbers, and students' discipline files, as well as other published literature. The researcher could cross-check the validity of the data collected by the questionnaires by using a document such as a punishment records sheet, and the written records on the number of students accepted for certain tasks or awards, as well as the number of teachers associated with certain activities were also obtained. The use of documentary research enabled the researcher to record some data about the types of misbehavior and punishment given to the offenders, as well as some information about their general performance as well as individual.

Questionnaire

According to (Moses and Kalton, 2009), a question is a series of questions asked to a group of individuals in order to gather information about the problem being investigated. The question consists of a mixture of open-ended and closed-ended questions. To gather data from the respondents, the study used a self-structured questionnaire and interview guides. The

questionnaires were used to gather data on school discipline practices and their effect on students' academic success in Ruhango District.

Interview

According to Marshall (2015), interviews are a conversation with a purpose, and therefore data is easily obtained.

Interviews have also been enhanced in terms of flexibility and the ability to restructure questions (Kothari, 2018).

Interview guides were used because they help the interviewer to remain focused during the probing process for more details. Teachers of the sampled schools were interviewed, and the researcher would also use student focus groups to gather more data from the students.

Analysis of Data

In this study, quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed using frequency and frequency tables obtained from the respondents to the research questions. Since the investigation involved two variables, the Pearson product moment correlation was used to determine the current relationship between school discipline policies and students' academic success. Qualitative data from interviews was also analyzed quantitatively and information was presented in narrative form.

Reliability and Validity

Validity refers to the degree to which the methods used during the experiment address the problems they are intended to address (Amini, 2020).The questionnaire and the interview guide were developed under the strict supervision of the researcher to ensure the validity of the research findings.

The validity of the questionnaire items was verified by examining them during their development. Questions were discussed with the supervisor before being given to two independent lecturers from the school of education.

Ethical Consideration

(Jowel, 2018) it was found that ethical consideration in study involves describing the research's content and expectations for the participant, how informed consent was obtained, and how confidentiality was maintained. It involves the protection of respondents' autonomy while still minimizing unnecessary costs for research assistants.

Therefore, the researcher sought permission from the office of the mayor of Ruhango district, District Director of Education

(DDE), before collecting data, and requested permission for the investigation to proceed in the District. In addition, the researcher sought permission from the selected public and private secondary school administration to gather the required data. Each questionnaire had an opening introductory letter requesting that the respondents cooperate in providing the required information for the study.

The respondents were kept informed of the confidentiality of the information they provided and were informed of their participation. The findings of the study were therefore considered confident because of the researcher's right to privacy and the respondents' autonomy.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

This research was directed by three specific objectives: To examine how the administration of school rules and regulations influence students' academic performance; to examine how students' restorative management practices influence students' academic performance; to interpret the correlation between the secondary school discipline policies and students'

academic performance in selected secondary schools in Ruhango District.

Hypothesis One: Administration of school rules and regulations has a significant influence on students' academic performance

Teachers and students were asked to participate in school rules and regulations, respect to school assets, administration of restoratives, and punctuality. it was found that the sampled schools had school rules and regulations. Head teachers must understand the role of class monitors in promoting discipline in the classroom, ensure that students are dressed in uniform and that they have permission before going out of school, as was pointed out. Head teachers were also strict on students' dressing code, cell phones, upsized students' hair, and examinations. However, the majority of teachers and students agreed that the school rules and regulations were mostly followed by head teachers, so it was not done effectively and students did not strictly follow the rules, affecting their academic

success.Although students and parents were not usually involved in the development of school rules and regulations, they played a vital role in discipline management.Majority of students said they were unaware of the school rules and regulations that were used in their schools and they were not given a copy.

Teachers and students (representatives) were also not involved in presenting school rules and regulations to students and parents. The correlation was strong at the 0.01 level, but it was negative. As the rules and regulations were not effectively followed, students became more reluctant to follow the rules and regulations, resulting in a significant decrease ($p = 0.000$, $r=0.678$).

In terms of punctuality, the majority of respondents stated that administrators were strict on schedule and that all activities were carried out according to the prescribed schedule. However, head teachers did not guarantee that their students were on schedule and on schedule at the school. Students were always reminded of examination timetables, and all activities in the class were conducted according to the scheduled time. Poor time management, according to teachers and students, impacted students' academic success. The overall response to the punctuality question was

rated at a mean of 2.68, indicating a slight disagreement. This result has a significant effect on the learners' academic success, as shown by their mean score of 3.01 responses to the question "poor time management in my college has a significant effect on my academic performance."

The correlation was found to be significant at the 0.01 level in the relationship through it was a negative ($P= .001$, $r= -.183$).

Hypothesis Two: Influence of Restorative Management Practices on Students' Academic Performance

The association between management of rehabilitation activities and student academic success was positive ($r = 0.668$) and significant ($p = 0.000$) in the overall analysis therefore combined all the variables of the independent variable and assessed their effect on the student's success in the sampled schools. Besides, the descriptive findings are consistent with the qualitative data obtained from interviews with head teachers and head of departments. It was discovered that student academic success in secondary schools is not only influenced by academic discipline but also by other factors. It was pointed out that factors such as students' attitude towards school, automatic promotion, motivation, housing,

poverty, and inadequate instructional materials, among others, greatly influence their academic success.

In the overall analysis, the correlation between rehabilitation activities and student academic success was positive (r = 0.668) and significant (p = 0.000),

so we combined all the independent variables and assessed their effect on student success in the sampled schools. The correlation results are shown in table 4.20, and the descriptive findings are in agreement with the qualitative data obtained from interviews with head teachers and department heads. It was discovered that academic achievement in secondary schools is not only influenced by academic discipline but also by other factors. It was pointed out that factors such as students' attitude towards school, automatic promotion, motivation, housing, poverty, and inadequate instructional materials, among others, can greatly influence their academic success.

Hypothesis Three: There is a significant correlation between school discipline policies and students' academic performance

The relationship between school discipline policies and students' academic success was positive, with (r = 0.236) and (p = 0.000).

However, it should be noted that school discipline policies can have a significant effect on students' academic success. According to one head teacher, this was proof of qualitative findings:

"Students who follow rules and regulations have discipline, and it is easier to teach them, no time wasted leading to academic success".

"Another head of discipline said,

"There is no discipline, no academic success." A disciplined student excels in class.......they follow school rules and regulations that contributed to the student's academic success."

Conclusion

The research sought to determine how school discipline policies influence students' academic success. Head teachers face a problem with students who are not familiar with school rules and regulations as they are given copies and therefore violet them, according to the report. Many students dump them without reading them carefully in order to grasp their true meanings, a sign of a lack of awareness and contact among school

administrators. Many students believe that many of their classmates have been victims, which they believe to be faults with school administrators. Students are therefore dissatisfied with school decisions made in accordance with non-compliance with school rules and regulations, which result in bullying in school that affects their academic success.

According to the report, students are not punished for the right thing at a time. Various forms of punishment were also discovered, including hard work, caning, sweeping toilets, and compound, absence from school, expulsion, kneeling or standing in front of the class, and exercise drills among others. Head teachers also demonstrated that punishment was a way of keeping order and maintaining discipline in class, provided that they met the committed offenses. However, all agreed that these punishments are sometimes unfairly applied because they are not given for the desired effect of dissatisfactioning students. This raises students' skepticism, which can lead to violent conduct, which can result in a lot of harm to school buildings, such as classrooms, dormitories, library equipment, and laboratories, which ultimately affects students' academic success.

Some punishments were found to be excessive, such as expulsion, which was found to be the primary method of punishing students in school. Students are unsatisfied when they are either suspended or dismissed from school for about every offence, big or small. They also discussed cases in which light offenses are punished with very harsh penalties, while heavy offenses are given light punishment.

Students become angry and violent as a result of punishments. This was cited as one of the main reasons for violence in Rwanda, as demonstrated by strikes in many secondary schools. Therefore, for addressing these unhealthy behaviors, there should be a specific school discipline for enhancing the students 'academic success, as shown by the study, which found that school discipline policies influence the students' academic performance.

Recommendations:
Recommendation to Education Policy Makers

Recommendation to Education Policy makers The District of Ruhango has to make common measures on school discipline Policies and improve monitoring and evaluation on the applicability of the rules and regulations in order to prevent

indiscipline cases that can provide non-performance of students' academic.

Recommendation to Head Teachers, DOS and Teachers

Head teachers and dos as school leaders must be trained in a constructive leadership style in order to familiarize them with the challenges of discipline management.

For effective discipline management, such leadership styles as autocratic, paternalistic, consultative, as well as democratic have been found to be effective and can be applied. head teachers should provide guidance and support services in school to assist students in their academic endeavors as well as in psychosocial situations. Students can also be counseled to help them understand the offenses they commit and why they should be punished. Also, head teachers should devise appropriate punishment strategies. Therefore, discipline committees must be established in schools, be respected in terms of decision making, and be given powers and authority to carry out their duties. In addition, restorative techniques should be used instead of punishments.

Recommendation to Parents

Though schools are conceived to play an important role in instilling society values and good mannerisms in students, this cannot be achieved without parental involvement. Therefore, parents or guardians should collaborate with teachers in enforcing discipline among students.

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