

Principalship and Effective Management of Teachers' Indiscipline in Nigeria Secondary Schools

Prof. Cletus Ngozi Uwazurike¹, Esther Chinasa Ugochukwu²

¹Former Provost Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri, Nigeria

¹Former Dean, Faculty of Education, Imo State University, Owerri, Nigeria

¹Professor of Educational Management and Planning, Imo State University Owerri, Nigeria

²Department of Educational Management and Planning, Faculty of Education, Imo State University, Owerri, Nigeria

I. INTRODUCTION

Education has been given top priority in the affairs of many nations. Over the years, it has been the desire of man to acquire knowledge. The attraction which education enjoys stems from the fact that it equips one for life. Anugom and Obioha, (2010:15) assert that "it is through education that an individual masters his environment and acquires the necessary tools for living worthwhile life". It also forms the basis upon which economic, social and political development of any nation is founded. Investing in education helps in fostering economic growth, enhancing productivity, contributing to national and social development, and reducing social inequality.

Secondary education is defined as the form of education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage. Abolade (2003:34) describe secondary education level as probably "the most unique and precarious of all other levels of education". This is because, he saw it as a pivot or junction box of all the subsets of the tertiary level. It is that junction where the different higher education takes off.

Secondary school education is bedeviled with problems which assume a gargantuan dimension that may sometimes prove perplexing for an administrator to cope with. These problems are seen in areas of transportation, accommodation, poor staffing, inability to form a workable forum at meetings, indiscipline, absenteeism, truancy, late coming, low student population as among other problems which an administrator often has to battle with.

The principal's effective leadership is considered to be an important element in proper school functioning. The principal as the chief executive officer of the school is accountable for the success or failure of the school. For the school to achieve its goal, the teachers must be disciplined and committed to their duties. At all times, the principal should provide disciplinary control over the behaviour of teachers for higher level performance. Presently, the school system has come under serious scrutiny by managers of education due to the inability of school heads to effectively manage indiscipline among teachers. In some schools, one notices that school principals are not forthcoming in the management of teachers' indiscipline. Indiscipline among teachers manifest in

truancy, lateness, absenteeism, non-attendance to lessons, selling of goods during school hours and so on. The exhibition of these negative attitudes by teachers defeats the goals of education and inhibits the efficiency and effectiveness of secondary education (Ekpoh, 2007).

Offiong (2002) points out that ensuring effective discipline in schools depends on the ability of the school principal to intelligently utilize the various approaches of staff discipline in order to ensure compliance and good behaviour. The ability to use a particular disciplinary strategy at the appropriate time and condition is fundamental to effective management of school discipline (Ikoya, 2009).

It should be noted that the efforts of secondary education administrators to develop in the staff the habit of behaving in ways generally acceptable by the society is the subject of discipline. It is a tendency to behave in a socially acceptable way without external pressure. In fact, it is a self-directed conformity to rules and regulations, respect for and submission to constituted authority.

As posited by Ezeocha (1999), teachers are the greatest determinants of quality in an educational system, therefore, it is of great importance for them to be of good conduct ethics. He further observed that staff discipline and their attitude to work would generate increased productivity and job satisfaction. Moreover, without a healthy state of discipline, or the threat of disciplinary action, the school's effectiveness may be severely eroded. These existing situations are likely to be attributed to the ever-increasing rate in students' enrolment, the general deplorable conditions of school environment, family values and upbringing, and the administrative inefficiency of the school head.

Secondary Education in Nigeria

In Nigeria, secondary level of education falls between the primary and tertiary levels of education. It is the stage of education where students are prepared for Polytechnics, Colleges of Education and Universities. As specified in the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN,2013), secondary education shall last for six years, broken into two distinct parts that are perfectly correlated with the ground works of the first three years – Junior Secondary School (J.S.S.) – which dovetails into the next three years of Senior

Secondary School (S.S.S.). Secondary school, according to Owojori and Asaolu (2010) is otherwise known as High-tier of education in the education pyramid which usually comes immediately after primary education but before tertiary education.

Secondary schools are made up of many professional, para-professional and non-professional adults who work in the school and they include the Principal, Vice-Principal and the Teachers. In addition, schools require the service and skills of variety of non-professional persons (ancillary workers): Gardener, Night watchmen, Bursar, Cooks, Clerical officers and Laboratory attendants. In this level, we also see youths between the ages of twelve to eighteen known as the students.

The aims and objectives of secondary education make it clear that the future of any nation depends quite considerably on the quality of education it provides for its citizens. In specific terms, the secondary school system is geared towards realizing the following objectives:

- a) Provide all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background.
- b) Offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, Opportunities and future roles;
- c) Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and commerce at sub professional grades;
- d) Develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage.
- e) Inspire students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence;
- f) Foster National unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity;
- g) Raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour, appreciate those values specified under our broad national goals and live as good citizens;
- h) Provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development. (New National Policy on Education,2013).

Secondary education in Nigeria is faced with many challenges, Ekundayo (2010) stated that a careful examination of the secondary school system in Nigeria reveals the following as some of the problems bedeviling the system which have been hindering the system from achieving its lofty goals: Inadequate funding, Inadequate facilities, Low staff morale, Poor supervision of schools and Frequent changes in policies

II. MEANING OF DISCIPLINE AND INDISCIPLINE

Discipline is systematic instruction given to disciples to train them as students in a craft or trade, or any other activity which they are supposed to perform, or to follow a

particular code of conduct or "order", Amado and Freire (2009:233) opined that the "first level of indiscipline": are incidents of "disruptive" nature whose "disturbance" affects the "good classroom functioning. Hence, some people view discipline as curtailment to their right (to action without restraint). How workers view and accept discipline will largely enhance the success of their organizations.

Discipline may also imply a system by which orderly operation and control are maintained for the effective management of an organization or established institutions. To Okeke (2016), discipline in the work place does not mean strict and technical observance of rules and regulations for the survival of the organizational system, rather, it implies a situation where workers are expected to cooperate and behave in a normal and orderly way, as any reasonable person would expect an employee to do. This has become imperative since the goal of every organization or establishment is to enhance workers' satisfaction that would lead to higher productivity and profitability. This can only be realized where there are sets of rules and regulations that would govern the conduct of people at work. The absence of these rules and regulations will lead to anarchy, workers dissatisfaction which is antithetical to the basic principles that informed the establishment of such an organization.

Indiscipline, a derivative of the word, discipline, according to the chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary is a mode of life not in accordance with rules; non-subjection to control. The Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, defines it as lack of control in the behaviour of a group of people. In other words, it is the inability of a person to live in accordance with rules. Indiscipline is the breaking of rules and regulations of institutions and individuals willingly or unwillingly violate laid down rules of an institutions, which hampers the smooth running of the institution. To this end, indiscipline can simply be seen as mode of life not in conformity with rules and non-subjection to control.

III. CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF TEACHER'S INDISCIPLINE

To say that teachers occupy significant position in the education of a child and play significant role in the development of a nation is to be echoing the obvious. As stated by Akindele (2009), without doubt, teachers are the fulcrum upon which the lever of educational system rotates. The issue of indiscipline of teachers in educational institutions can however go a long way in undermining the realization of the objectives of an institution and education as a whole if not addressed.

Several factors can influence teacher's indiscipline. Of particular note is the issue of poverty. The situation where teachers take home (salary) cannot really take them to any destination not to talk of their homes, where family needs could not be met due to poor income would oftentimes compel such teachers to engage in unwholesome acts aimed at generating additional income for their sustenance. It is thus

not surprising that many teachers consider the period of examination nowadays as the period for 'harvest' due to the illegal money they hope to collect from pupils / students.

Inadequate supervision by institutions' administrators including head of department, vice-principals and principals can encourage the acts of indiscipline among teachers, (Peretomode 2009). In an ideal situation, a teacher is supposed to be supervised by superiors in the school. Through this, such teacher's excesses and weaknesses would be noticed and corrected. When there is lack of or inadequate supervision of teacher, such teacher's weaknesses would not be detected for possible correction.

Government factor is another issue in teachers' indiscipline. There is no doubt that teachers' welfare needs adequate and prompt attention in the school. Their salaries and allowances should be paid promptly, also there should be regular promotion and provision of other better conditions of service. Situations where teachers' salaries are not paid as at when due, where promotion is not granted and where other conditions of service are not granted, would lead to frustration of teachers and to the displaying of unruly behavior in the school. Admittedly, when teachers are not well paid, they are alleged to embark on industrial or strike action in protest over poor economic conditions of service (Uwazurike, 2019).

Teacher's indiscipline has grave consequences in the school system. It brings the level of education so low and has adverse effects on the students' academic performance. It makes management of schools by the principals, inefficient and ineffective; thereby making the school work a herculean task. It jeopardizes the administration of the school system. It is an impediment to the realization of the objectives of a school and the education system as a whole. On the other hand, when the teachers involved are caught and dismissed, many of them can enlist in different negative acts like: armed robbery, prostitution and others to keep the body and soul together since 'devil always finds work for idle mind'.

IV. ROLES OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

The principal in the Nigerian secondary school occupies a unique position as both the administrative and academic head of the school. He is regarded as an educational leader, school disciplinarian, organizer of school schedules, supervisor of instructional programme, director and evaluator of teaching efforts, the manager of school facilities and generally a professional leader. His task is to guide the efforts of his staff and students so that their individual and collective behaviour will contribute significantly to the fulfillment of the school's objectives.

In Ekundayo (2010), School administration has to do with managing, administering the curriculum and teaching, pastoral care, discipline, assessment evaluation and examinations, resource allocation, costing and forward planning, staff appraisal relationship with the community, use of the practical skills necessary for surviving the policies of

organization such as decision-making, negotiation, bargaining, communication, conflict handling, running meetings and so on. Uwazurike, (2016) added that the basic responsibility of the school principal is to ensure that qualified and competent staff are made available in his school. All these tasks can be reduced to the following: planning, organizing, directing, supervising, and evaluating the school system.

Succinctly, the duties of the principal have to do with ensuring that the multi-faceted problems facing the secondary school system do not hinder efficient service delivery towards producing quality outputs in this 21st century. This he can do through the following measures:

Management of school finance: The principal is the chief executive and accounting officer who is entrusted with the responsibility of controlling the revenue accruing from the school and ensuring judicious utilization of Parents' Teachers' Association (PTA) levy.

Provision and maintenance of physical facilities: Principals must be fully concerned with the physical environment and other facilities around the school. As a result, the principals have the responsibilities of ensuring that these facilities are in good shape. Even with the meagre resources at their disposal, they have the responsibility of providing teachers and other instructional staff with necessary resources for effective teaching.

Principal as a motivator: Babayemi in Babalola, Ayeni, Adedeji, Suleiman and Arikewuyo (2006) opined that a school principal must not only be trained in the act of administration but must be well-acquainted with the principles that guide and control administrative processes. He owes it a duty to modify the attitude of the staff and motivate them to put in their best at achieving educational goals through effective teaching-learning process. Motivation enhances job performance (Ajayi and Oguntoye, 2003).

Principal as a curriculum and instructional supervisor: The functions of the school principal as a supervisor include: obtaining and making available for teachers all educational information; visiting classrooms often to observe his teachers teaching; inspecting teachers' lesson notes and class registers, diaries and teaching aids and offering professional advice for their improvement.

Principal as a change facilitator: When it comes to efforts to improve the quality of school, the principal is the critical person in making change to occur. According to Uyanga (2008), since a school is known to be an instrument of change and reforms in the society, the principal is said to be the pivot of such reforms and changes.

School Principalship and Quality Assurance

Principalship is a well-established position of the chief executive who provides instructional leadership by coordinating curricula, co-curricular programmes and is responsible for the general administration of the secondary

school, Ayeni (2012). The principals being instructional leaders are at vantage positions to supervise, monitor, assess, evaluate and disseminate current information on educational issues and modern teaching techniques to teachers in order to stimulate them for scholarship and best practices in curriculum delivery.

Quality assurance is achieved in schools that have strong principals who devote considerable time to coordinating and managing instruction; such principals are highly visible in the school and stay close to the instructional process. In many instances, effective principals adopt continuous and consistent classroom visitation to ensure adequate teaching and learning processes. At the same time, instructional leadership is in many ways a shared responsibility.

- 1) It engenders a common sense of commitment and collegiality among the staff.
- 2) Establishes clearly defined goals for academic achievement
- 3) Concentrates their available resources and their operations on attaining effective service delivery and provision of instructional facilities and materials to enhance quality teaching-learning processes.
- 4) Monitors the implementation of curricular and ensure desirable increase in teachers' capabilities, upgrade their conceptual knowledge and teaching skills. (Wiles, 1975; Oyekan, 1997, Adepoju 1998; Olagboye, 2008; Adetula, 2005).

V. DISCIPLINE AND TEACHER'S JOB PERFORMANCE

In the application of the rules of discipline there should be consistency if good work attitude that enhances job satisfaction is to be achieved (Emiola, 2000). Considering Emiola's view, Ukeje (2002) posited that inquiry into the application of educational rules sometimes de-motivates staff and have its concomitant effect on the job satisfaction of staff and *ipso-facto* the institution

Though teacher's levels of discipline are related to job satisfaction, the satisfaction one gets for himself depends on the individual's levels of discipline and other moderating variables, the person (teacher), which may also adopt many different strategies to cope with discipline situation to enable him derive satisfaction in work environment.

VI. CONCLUSION

The success of secondary schools lies greatly in the effective management of various acts of indiscipline usually portrayed by teachers. Managing teachers' indiscipline is a herculean task for the principal but could be curtailed by a good disciplinarian on whose shoulders rest the entire administration. The principal identifies and set goals and objectives of the school, which of course, must be in line with the national objectives, analyzes tasks and share responsibilities of the staff according to specialization and expertise. Administration, which is a coordinating function,

only succeeds where there is co-operation of various stakeholders in education system, namely the government, students, teachers and parents. Teachers' indiscipline, which include indecent dressing, absenteeism, nonchalant attitude to work, lateness to work, among others is not a welcomed behaviour in the school environment as it affects the school good climate and culture.

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