



## Discipline and motivation: panacea for effective secondary school administration in Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT:-** This paper discussed discipline and motivation as a major tool for effective secondary school administration in Nigeria. Various definitions of discipline were given by various scholars. The nature, types and causes of both discipline and indiscipline were extensively discussed. Also various administrative mechanisms for handling cases of indiscipline were x-rayed. The paper further discussed motivation, its meaning, some motivation theories and their application by the school principals. Finally the paper ended with a logical conclusion and recommendations for a better school administration.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Disciplinary problems in Nigerian secondary schools came to a climax in 1977 when the then head of State, General Obasanjo declared the situation as a state of National Emergency. This led to the national conference of secondary school principals to deliberate on the problems of examination leakages, student unrest, drug abuse and so on. The conference was organized jointly by the Federal Government via the Federal Ministry of Education in July 1977 at the University of Lagos under the chairmanship of Prof. Babs Fafunwa. The main objective of the conference was to; define the goals, formulate the strategy and propose a machinery for instilling discipline in our schools (National Policy Development Centre, 1977, P.5). Discipline is defined in the Dictionary of psychology as the central of conduct either by an external authority or by the individual himself (Drever, 1966). School discipline is defined as the externally imposed or self generated control of conduct to ensure its orderliness, social acceptability and conformity to school regulations. This assumes the availability of school rules and regulations to guide the behaviour or socially unacceptable behaviour which does not conform to the regulations.

Human beings are so unpredictable that they would smile today if you say Hello but will not hesitate to tell you to mind your business if they are in bad mood the following day because of this, one cannot be sure that a worker (teacher) who can do a job today will want to do the same job at all times. It is then the job of the group leader (principal) to find a better way of motivating his teachers to do a good job. Thus, motivation according to Nwakpa (2013) is a process of satisfying both the physical, economic and psychological needs of workers in the work environment. It is an incentive or an encouragement given to somebody to enable him behaves in a desired manner (Nwakpa, 2013). In education, motivation is the boosting of the worker's morale to enable them put in the efforts needed to achieve the educational goals. Koontz(1993) refers motivation to the entire class of drivers desires, needs, wishes and similar forces. A motivator is something that influences an individual's behaviour. It makes a worker to perform better motivators include; higher salary, recognition, promotion, punishment etc.

School principals are encouraged to concern themselves with how to motivate their teachers. Thus, they need to understand and apply the theories of motivating in the practice of education if they want better performance from their teachers and students. Nigerian teachers really need to be motivated by all the concerned authorities for them to perform.

### Nature of Discipline Expected of Secondary School Teachers/Students.

Actually, there are various types of behaviour expected from a school teacher or student. That is expected disciplinary behaviours. They include: respect for one another and constituted authority, punctuality and regularity to work, dedicated to work, truthfulness, humble, loyal honest, obedience, loving and forgiving content, and so on. Even school teacher/student is expected to imbibe the above virtues for the good image of the school and progress of the school.

So, it is the duty of the school principal to ensure that disciplinary behaviours are inculcated in the students and the teachers alike for him to be able to achieve the goals and objectives of secondary education in his school. But since every coin has two sides, the direct opposite of discipline is indiscipline, and the following are some of indisciplinary problems found in Nigerian secondary schools cruelty, faggging, bullying, fighting, vandalism stealing, lying, cheating, drug abuse, smoking, lateness, absenteeism, disobedience, examination malpractice, sexual immorality etc. so, it is a big task on the school principal to fight against all these indisciplinary problems in his school in order to see that the objectives of secondary education are achieved.

### **Causes of Disciplinary Behaviours in Secondary Schools in Nigeria**

Good behaviours among students and staff are not without reasons. One of the reasons of good behaviour in schools is the personality of the school principal. What you want done, do it yourself. For instance if the principal wants to fight lateness to school, he has to start showing it by coming to school on time, the others will follow suit. The behaviour of the school principal is the foundation of all kinds of behaviour you see on any secondary school. It is what you sow, that you must reap by and large. When a blind man leads the blind both must fail into a pit and vice-versa. A teacher is one who practices what he teaches while a preacher is one who teaches another person and may not be able to practice what he preaches.

Good Government educational policies and practices will go a long way to encourage both principals, teachers and students to be disciplined. Most importantly the ability of the government and the school principals to implement educational laws and policies will bring about discipline teachers and students.

As there are causes of disciplined behaviours, there are also causes of indisciplined behaviours in our secondary schools in Nigeria. Many people view school indiscipline in Nigeria as deeply rooted in education political, social economic, religious health and psychological factors. Let us see what some educators had to say: Fafunwa (1977) believed that the causes of indiscipline in our society generally may be attributed to the “uncertainty of sanction” since people would break the law with impunity and have 50/50 chance of escaping unpunished, due to the presence of god fathers, long legs and influential connections.

Onabamiro(1977) identified student unrest with eight major causes as: the irrelevance of the boarding school concept, influence of the permissive western culture, cult of violence, rapid increase in school enrolment, secularization of education, effects of divorce from nature, effects of inflation and the subversive influence of disloyal members of staff.

Hamza (1977) traced the causes of school indiscipline to factors external to the school, internal to the school, or both external and internal. His external factors included: the general society in which adults manifest gross indiscipline and emulated by the children, students of higher educational institutions who set bad examples with frequent demonstrations and riot, overcrowding in schools and inadequate physical facilities, shortage of qualified staff and erosion of the principals authority to discipline both staff and students, teachers’ lack of dedication to duty, poor schools administration with vague school rules, poor feeding in the boarding houses, and lack of involvement of students in school affairs.

Obe (1979) summarized the causes of school indiscipline under the following ten factors: parents and home background, corrupt society, physical and emotional sickness of students; need for social approval; inappropriate curriculum, government laxity with education; principals administrative style; teachers personality and methods.

It has been observed that majority of the teachers and students are always involved in one indisciplinary act or the other, while very few of them are disciplined to some extent. So, it is the duty of the school principal to ensure that discipline is promoted in his school.

### **Principal’s Role in Promoting Discipline in His School:**

The school principal has the following roles to play in promoting discipline in the school.

(1) The principal, first and foremost must be disciplined in all ramifications for him to be able to maintain discipline since one cannot give what he does not have. (2) The principal must make the school rules and regulation well known to teachers and students their implications and consequences. (3) The principal must ensure that the school rules and regulations are strictly carried out and offenders punished accordingly. (4) The principal should ensure that exceptionally well behaved teachers or students are adequately rewarded openly so as to encourage good behaviour among teachers and students.

### **Remedial Approaches to be Adopted by the School Principals in Correcting School Indiscipline in Nigeria**

The approaches to correcting school indiscipline are divisible into: the traditional “punitive” approach, the modern “corrective” approach and sometimes a combination of both. In the past, a school child who misbehaved was simply labeled as bad, depraved or devilish. The solution was perceived as discipline through punishment, aimed at demonstrating the teacher’s supremacy, teaching the offender a bad lesson and expelling

the demon in him. This approach emphasizes control of behaviour by an external authority, and it is less concerned with the development of self discipline.

The punitive methods frequently adopted could be any or a combination of the following:

1. Physical force (flogging, slapping twisting the ears, knocking the head etc).
2. Detention after school hours, extra work etc.
3. Penalties – monetary fines, surrendering some valuable property, non – promotion etc.
4. Censure – (scolding shaming, using sarcasm, public embarrassment etc).
5. Manual labour – (cutting the grass, sweeping the classroom, scrubbing class, suspended, or summary dismissal from school).

Flogging was by far the commonest style. The teacher ruthlessly pursued the policy of “never spare the rod and spoil the child.

Many studies have been undertaken to study the effect of punishment on children’s behaviour. The conclusion generally is that ordinarily, Punishment has the effect of temporarily suppressing the misbehaviour being punished (Skinner, 1983). Other research findings concluded that the effect of punishment depends much on the level of emotional attachment between the punished child and the punishing teacher, and that punishment is most effective if it is applied soon after the offence, made commensurate with the gravity of the offence and the child is taught the acceptable behaviour to be substituted for the punished (Obiora, 1977).

The modern approach to discipline stresses the “corrective” rather than the punitive methods and emphasizes the development of self-discipline. Since behaviour is caused and misbehaviour (indiscipline) is traceable to the child’s needs, the misbehaving child may be regarded as somebody who has certain urgent needs to be promptly satisfied or problems to be solved. In this regard the school principal should always be on the look out for solutions to both students and staff’s identified problems. Thus, the principal should always employ behaviour modification and counseling for individuals or groups as corrective measure or method.

## **II. MOTIVATION**

Earlier in this paper motivation has been defined according to Koontz (1993) as the entire class of drives, desires, needs, wishes and similar forces. So, motivator is something that influences an individual’s behaviour and action. It makes an employee, worker to do a better work.

### **Some theories on motivation:**

The understanding of some theories on motivation by the school principals will enable the school principals to know when and how to apply some of these theories to their own advantage. (1) Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs (1954). Maslow identified some of the basic and social needs of man and classified these needs in an ascending order of importance as follows physiological needs to include: food, water, clothing, shelter, sleep and sexual satisfaction. For a worker to perform as expected, the above needs must be provided. (2) Security or safety needs. These include freedom from physical danger, fear of loss of job, property, food, clothing and shelter. Fear of failure will make one to work very hard, insecurity can make a worker not to be serious in an organization or place of work. Thus, principal must ensure that teachers’ safety needs are provided for an increased output. (3) Love and social needs include accepting the teachers, showing them love and likeness and tolerating them at all times by the school principal so that they can put in their best in their job. (4) Ego and esteem needs. Teachers need to achieve high prestige, status and recognition in their working place and even beyond. Thus, the school principals must at all costs help teachers to achieve these needs so as to enable them perform their duties very well. (5) Need for self actualization. Maslow regards this as the highest need in the hierarchy of needs. It is the desire to become what one is capable of becoming in life. So, the principal should provide all the highest position in their profession as this will make teacher to be more effective in their job.

Another good motivation theory that the school principals need to know and understand is Herzberg’s two factor theory. Herzberg identified a - two factor explanation of human motivation. The first groups of factors listed by Herzberg were: company policies, administration, supervision, working condition, personal life, salary, status job, security. These factors are referred to as “hygiene” or maintenance”. These factors do not motivate but are necessary as they can bring about dissatisfaction. In the secondary group, Herzberg mentioned the needs for achievement, recognition, challenging work, advancement and growth on the job. These factors he called motivate or satisfiers. He was of the view that unless the “maintenance” needs were met, the motivators or satisfiers would not motivate. Thus, for teachers to perform effectively, their employer should see that the two factor theory of Herzberg is put in practice.

The school should also understand McGregor's theories X and Y. The satisfaction causes performance theory etc.

**How to motivate Nigerian Teachers for Effective Job performance Nwakpa (2013).**

- [1]. At every level of education teachers should be paid better than their counterparts in other occupations.
- [2]. The condition of service of teachers should be better than that of their counterparts in other occupations.
- [3]. Teachers' promotion should be regular and should be released on time.
- [4]. Teachers' arrears of payment should be paid to them.
- [5]. The government should provide adequate school facilities and materials such as office/ materials, laboratory/materials, library /materials etc.
- [6]. Government should provide opportunities for teachers to grow on their job.
- [7]. In giving political appointments, teachers should not be forgotten.
- [8]. Exceptionally performing teachers should be given awards in any form by their employer.
- [9]. Adequate punishment should be given to teachers who contravene the education laws. The above where applicable, should be extended to students.

### **III. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the writer is of the opinion that indiscipline in our secondary schools is mostly caused by the school principals' inability to maintain strict discipline in their schools. Thus, the school administrators are the brain behind indisciplinary problems in schools in Nigeria. The larger society, Nigeria is corrupt in all sectors of the economy, including the educational sector. The only way forward is for the school principals to adopt the administrative mechanisms x-rayed in this paper in the areas of discipline and motivation. If the school principals take the school business as their personal business and face their operations squarely, all will be well with our secondary schools.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are made for a better school administration:

1. Principals should see that first and foremost that they are adequately disciplined by themselves, so that they can have the boldness to correct or discipline others.
2. Principals should also see that all the suggestions made in this paper are religiously carried out.
3. The application of the discussed motivation theories in this paper is mandatory for better school administration.
4. Both teachers and students should cooperate with their principals to achieve the desired school goals.

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