

Indiscipline Among the Female Secondary School Students in Selected Rural Communities of Rivers State in Nigeria : Causes and Effects on Academic Performance

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the causes and effects of indiscipline on academic performance of female secondary school students in Rivers State of Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was adopted using questionnaire as the main instrument. 225 respondents were randomly selected from four communities in two local Governments in Rivers State. The hypotheses raised were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The results revealed that there is a significant effect of peer group on indiscipline ($X^2C=47.0, X^2T=3.841, df=1, P<.05$), there is significant effect of secondary schools administrative policy on indiscipline ($X^2C=63.0, X^2T=3.841, df=1, p<.05$), there is significant effect of parental influence on indiscipline ($X^2C=58.6, X^2T=3.841, df=1, p<.05$). Based on the findings, it was recommended among other things, that parents should give their children proper upbringing, teachers should be committed to their duties and be upright as students look up to them as a role model

Key Words: Achievement ,indiscipline, academic performance, discipline, rural communities .

Introduction to the Study

The School is a social unit established by members of the society as a formal agency of education where people learn about the custom, attitudes and ways of doing things in their society. Laolu (2005) defined School in sociological context as the place where the culture of the people is transformed from one generation to another. Members of the wider society, including the operators of the educational system are governed by norms and laws that direct the affairs of an individual member. Such laws, according to Asaolu (2007), are meant to compel the entire members of the society to exhibit character that will conform to the societal laws and order. In order to ensure peaceful co-existence in schools, the authorities often make rules and regulations that guide and control the behavior of their students with a view of setting high standards of discipline conducive to the education process. Akinpelu (1981) asserted that the infringement by any student on such established School rules and regulation constitute offences which are subject to appropriate retributive punishment.

Indiscipline, to a novice is the opposite of discipline, but in a comprehensive form, indiscipline refers to improper behavior exhibit by an individual or group of people within the School or community. Olusegun (2005) defined indiscipline as the improper training of the mind and body which can produce desired control necessary for an individual to perform the positive roles required for the achievement of organization or community goals and aspirations. Johnson (2010) pointed out that indiscipline manifests in various ways such as disorderliness, smoking, examination malpractices, bullying, disobedience stealing and dishonesty.

1.2 Factors that Promote Indiscipline among Female Secondary School Students

Amaele (2007) pointed out the following factors that promote indiscipline among the Secondary School students in rural communities in Nigeria;

The teacher, like any other civil servants in Nigeria, is poorly paid and treated. To be able to make little improvement in his income, he has to run after some other money – earning ventures. This means that

he will no longer be fully dedicated and committed to official duties. Such unethical behaviors like lateness, absenteeism, truancy, among others, which he would have taught otherwise by example, will appear real in the School. The poor conditions of service equally expose teachers to the point of demanding and receiving money from students and their parents. This situation equally exposes teachers to the point of demanding and receiving money from students and their parents. This situation equally makes them to engage in examination malpractice and other anti-social behaviors in Schools

Another important factor which makes it difficult for Nigerian schools to inculcate discipline among the students most especially in rural communities is the day school system. Some of the students come from homes that are bundles of indiscipline. Apart from this, where an under-aged student leaves home in the morning for a journey of about thirty kilometers or more, this may encourage truancy and lateness. Some students also use the transition from home to school every day to cause different acts of immorality. Furthermore, Nigerian schools today place much emphasis on paper qualification.

In fact, our school system is academic bias. The teacher's goal is to make his or her pupils acquire the necessary credits. Sometimes, teachers' promotions are determined by the academic excellence of their students. Amaele (2007) asserted that in Rivers State for instance, there was the policy between 1988 and 1991 by the Post Primary School's Board to promote teachers based on the performance of their students in junior and senior secondary school certificate examinations. This policy, indeed, increased teacher's participation in examination malpractice, since every teacher wanted promotions and the only evidence of efficient and effective teaching, by that arrangement, was the level of passes in the examinations and so teachers became very much involved in examination malpractice.

Again, Ezewu (1995) opined that most homes lack sound moral environments. Like the teacher, parents ought to live exemplary life for their children and wards to emulate. What examples will a father who leaves home every day and returns drunk leave for his children? How can a father or mother who does not keep to matrimonial chastity advice his or her children advise his or her children against sexual abuse? The above is the home environment where most of pupils, scholars and students come from and yet we want the School to work magic.

Ridiculously, our different religious groups today preach religious dichotomy, violence, hatred, fanaticism, false propaganda and similar other vices. These vices are not even witnessed between one religious body another like Muslims and Christians but among one religious group Ezewu (1995) pointed out that among the Christians for instance, there is the doctrinal conflict, leadership tussle, procedural conflict, among others. These things break the same body into little bodies. Consequently, these break, make unity impossible among brethren. This experience is not limited to the Christian bodies alone. It is also the case with the Muslims and the Traditionalists.

Indeed, the dichotomies initiated by the different religious bodies in Nigeria have helped in fuelling ethnic sentiments, inequalities or imbalances in power and economic sharing as well as general indiscipline in the country

On the other hand, Jackson (2007) asserted that discipline involves self-respect, control and self-restraints against immoral behavior. This behavior is guided by moral and social norms which impel such individual to do what is good at all times. Johnson (2010) opined that at the school level, discipline is defined as the ability of the students and the teachers to obey School rules and regulations necessary for the smooth running of teaching – learning process.

At the school level, Johnson (2010) pointed out the following as the factors that influence the standard of discipline in the school environment

- Involvement of dedicated teachers with appropriate technical skill
- Enforcement of School rules and regulations that guide against immoral behavior.
- Teaching of moral and religious education to rekindle moral values in students.
- Principals and teachers should serve as a role model to the students

Even though the literature on indiscipline among the youth and adult in Nigeria is very vast and rich, it became clear that most of these have been written outside of the mainstream of the causes and effect of indiscipline on academic performance of students in rural communities. Thus this research work will fill this gap.

20 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The study adopted descriptive survey research design of *ex post facto*. The independent variables cannot be manipulated because the variables had occurred. This research design was adopted for the study because most of the secondary school students are highly undisciplined, thus the variables cannot be manipulated.

2.2 Sample Procedure and Sample Size

The sample for the study comprised of 225 respondents which were chosen from two local government of Rivers State and these are Ndoni and Okrika Local Government. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents from the following communities; Okarioma, Eginta, Ibewa and Erema. The respondents comprised the parents of the secondary school students, secondary school teachers in these local governments and the principals of various schools chosen.

2.3 Research Instrument

The research instrument used for the study is a questionnaire tagged Indiscipline in Secondary Schools (ISS). The questionnaire was in two sections. Section A comprised of demographic information of the respondents. Section B with twenty (20) items gathered responses on the causes and effect of indiscipline on academic performance.

Data Analysis

The Chi square was used as a statistical tool for analysis of data for the study. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significant.

Hypothesis One

Peer group influence has no significant effect on indiscipline among the female secondary school students in rural communities of Rivers State

| Opinion | F0 | Fe | Fo – fe | (Fo – fe) ² | $\frac{(fo - fe)^2}{Fe}$ |
|---------|-----|----------------------------|---------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| YES | 164 | 112.5 | 51.5 | 2652.25 | 23.5 |
| NO | 61 | 112.5 | -51.5 | 2652.25 | 23.5 |
| | | | | | 47.0 |
| | | $\frac{\sum(fo-fe)^2}{Fe}$ | | | |

X^2 calculated = 47.0

X^2 Tabulated = - 3.841

Degree of frequency (nr – 1) = (2 – 1) = 1

Level of significant 0.05

Inferences: Chi square calculated is higher than chi square tabulated $47.0 > 3.541$. Thus the alternative hypothesis was not rejected. This indicates that there is significant effect of peer group influence on indiscipline among the female secondary school students in rural communities of Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two

Secondary schools administrative policy has no significant effect on indiscipline among the female secondary school students in rural communities of River State.

Table 2

| Opinion | Fo | Fe | fo – fe | (fo – fe) ² | $\frac{(fo - fe)^2}{Fe}$ |
|---------|-----|-------|---------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | 172 | 112.5 | 59.5 | 3540.25 | 31.5 |
| No | 53 | 112.5 | - 59.5 | 3540.25 | 31.5 |
| | | | | | 63 . 0 |

X^2 calculated = 63.0

X^2 Tabulated = - 3.841

Degree of freedom = (nr -1) = (2 – 1) = 1

Level of significance = 0.05

Inferences: Since chi square calculated is more than the chi square tabulated (63.0 > 3.841), we reject the research hypothesis and uphold the alternative hypothesis. Thus there is significant effect of administrative policy of the school on indiscipline among the female secondary school in rural communities in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Three

Parental control of children has no significant effect on indiscipline among the female secondary school students in rural communities of Rivers State.

Table 3

| Opinion | Fo | Fe | fo – fe | (fo – fe) ² | $\frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$ |
|---------|-----|-------|---------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| YES | 170 | 112.5 | 57.5 | 3306.25 | 29.3 |
| NO | 55 | 112.5 | -57.5 | 3306.25 | 29.3 |
| | | | | | 58.6 |

X^2 Calculated = 58.6

X^2 Tabulated = - 3.841

Degree of freedom = (nr – 1) = (2 – 1) = 1

Level of significance = 0.05

Inferences: Since chi-square calculated is higher than chi square tabulated (58.6 > 3.841), we reject the research hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. Thus, this indicates that there is significant effect of parental control of children on indiscipline among the secondary school students in rural communities of Rivers State of Nigeria.

3.1 Discussion of Findings

It was confirmed from the data analyzed above that peer group influence, either at home or schools, play a vital role in shaping the life pattern of the individual learner. The finding correlates with the opinion of (Egunjobi 2005) that the negative influence of peer group on the female secondary school students was higher than the positive aspect of it. Peer group influence affects the good foundations laid in the home as a result of the desire of the female students to copy negative character of their colleagues in their schools. Oladeji (2010) pointed out that members of secret cults even at secondary school level were found to be a mixture of students from the rich and poor family, this is traceable to the effect of peer group.

Type of school administration as an important tool in the determination of the level of indiscipline in school also formed the focus of studies carried out by Popoola (2010). He asserted that the more democratic the school administrator is, the more discipline the students of such School will be. He pointed out further that student democracy at that level of education could be enhanced if the school authority constitutes effective Students' Representative Council (SRC). If the students are encouraged to participate in decision making that affects their welfare, they will obey the rules and regulations of the school and through this they will be more discipline.

The finding tallies with the assertion of (Ajila and Olutola, 2007) that home has a great influence on the students' psychological, emotional, social and economic state. The state of the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socializing agents in an individual's life, this assertion is traceable to the fact that the family background and context of a child affect his reaction to life situations and his level of performance. Although the school is responsible for the experiences that make up the individual's life during school periods, yet parents and the individual's experiences at home play tremendous role in the moral and academic performance of their children.

Furthermore, parents have important role to play in curbing indiscipline among the female secondary school students. Aderoju (2004) traced a very vital role of the parents which can be achieved between the school and the home. In his findings, he asserted that the notorious students came from homes where parents do not care about what goes in the school. He pointed out further that once a student knows that an impromptu visit can be made on him by the parents, such a student will be very careful and this will help them to be more disciplined.

3.2 Conclusion

It was revealed through the study that most parents are no longer concerned with the moral and academic performances of their children, as they give more time to their businesses than they do to the moral training of their children. The absence of this home training affects, to greater extent, the moral and academic achievement of their children.

The study revealed further that school supervision is one of the most essential ingredients of our school system that has suffered the worst neglect. This neglect has caused our education a lot of moral, intellectual, psychological, social and economic derogations

3.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations were offered to the stakeholders in the educational sector on how to avert indiscipline among female students in our secondary schools.

1. There should be prompt and adequate use of rewards for hardworking teachers and students as well as punishment for defaulting ones. Teachers and students who are not committed, even after warning should be expelled from the school.
2. Series of regular programmes like seminar, workshops, in-service training and others should be organized to update teachers knowledge as well as guiding both teachers' and students' behavior in schools
3. If parents spend time with their children, before and after school periods, the children moral upbringing and academic performance will be harmonized and strengthened.

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