

Administrative Strategies in Mitigating Middle Level Students' Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Rwanda

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Abstract

School discipline continues to be an issue of concern among school administrators. However, in maintaining discipline in schools for a long time, educators have to devise and implement disciplinary strategies that are non-coercive, yet assertive. This study aimed at investigating administrative strategies and levels of students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rwanda. The age group of students considered was between 12 and 13 years. Using stratified and purposive sampling four head teachers and 60 teachers from a target population of 183 individuals were selected from four schools. The findings are that corrective strategies were appropriate for handling level 2 and 3 infractions while preventive strategies were appropriate in handling level 1 type of infractions.. The recommendations are that preventive and corrective strategies be used simultaneously within the provision of the stipulated law and the involvement of parents should be strengthened. Some strategies such as guidance and counseling should be implemented in schools by having qualified teachers in the area something that is lacking at the moment. Police intervention should strictly be limited to level 3 infractions.

Keywords: Administrators, strategies, discipline, infraction, behavior

1. Introduction

Education in itself is a cultural process where a newborn individual is transformed into a full member of a given society (Cotton, 2001). Traditionally in Rwanda, education was informal and delivered largely through the family. Training was also delivered through "amatorero" training schools. Much as it lacked defined institutions of learning, teachers and other learning facilities, it was designed to create an ideal individual who would fully fit into and be accepted by the society through discipline and respect (Okumbe, 1999). Discipline is an important component of human behavior, as it helps not only to regulate people's reaction to various situation but also regulating human conduct and relationship with others. It is the epicenter of school success and all members of the school are expected to adhere to various standards or codes of behavior (Okumbe, 2001). As a matter of fact, both the general public and teachers agree that the major problem for public schools is lack of student discipline (Rose & Gallup, 2004). Rose and Gallup (2004) further observe that schools which typically have difficult time establishing and enforcing discipline policy tend to experience teacher burnout and turnover.

According to Ireri (1992), the factors that cause indiscipline in schools could be social, economic, political, psychological, intellectual level of learner's, the teachers' behavior, peer influence and the administrative structure of school managers. Youth are also exposed to the increased influence of modernity including the media. As a result, misbehavior at school and school avoidance are among the greatest sources of grief to teachers, administrators, and parents. Efforts to deal with such problems take up a disproportionate amount of time and energy (Mejia, 1986). When students' problems become increasingly complex in schools, school leaders have no choice but to confront the issue. Sometimes this may cause public concerns. Essentially schools may need more appropriate strategies for improving discipline in schools by getting all staff, parents, and the community involved (Blandford, 2005).

Recent research in Rwanda shows that parents hardly attend school general meetings to discuss issues relating to school management, development and follow up on the education of their children (Nsengimana, 2014). The study also shows poor community involvement in education and reveals cases where some school staff have engaged in sexual relations with learners in exchange for better marks. There are also cases where students collude with strangers to impersonate parents when summoned to appear in school for discipline issues (Nsengimana, 2014). For over a quarter of a century, the number one concern facing public schools in many countries has been discipline. Today, teachers and administrators are faced with critical problems in their classrooms, and are confronted with unacceptable learner behavior and even threats. School administrators inevitably face unclear situations because there are many more incidents of minor disruptions than incidents of serious violence (Skiba & Peterson, 2000).

The root cause of the problem goes well beyond rule-breaking. After the abolishment of corporal punishment and control, an urgent need arose for innovative ways to deal with behavioral issues. In addition to sound and consistent discipline policies, many students in schools today need more positive behavioral instruction. Supporting this contention, (Osthuizen, 2007) indicates that the abolition of corporal punishment left a definite vacuum in methods of dealing with learner misconduct. This has led to frustration posing challenges for schools administrators and teachers in managing discipline in schools. Van Tassel (2005) indicates that, teachers do not know alternative discipline methods which allow for increased student autonomy. In contrast,

ineffective teachers only attempt to discipline their students with threats and punishments rather than laying a foundation with effective procedures for the learning environment (Wong & Wong, 1998). Inexperienced teachers often do not have the time to develop successful strategies and thus burn out early in their careers (Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001). It is within this framework that the Ministry of education (MINEDUC) within the School Management Program considered it appropriate to organize a training program intended for Deputy Head Teachers in charge of discipline. A training manual was drawn up to serve as a practical tool to be used by Deputy Head teachers in charge of discipline in their daily tasks (MINEDUC, 2008). This study sought to investigate the schools' administrative strategies used in dealing with students' discipline problems, the challenges faced and how discipline can be improved in middle level within public secondary schools. The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. Which strategies are used by administrators in enforcing students' discipline in public secondary schools?
- ii. What is the level of students' discipline in public secondary schools?
- iii. Is there a relationship between administrative strategies used and the level of students' discipline in public school?

1.2 Overview of discipline

The essence of discipline is to develop attitudes, habits, ideas, and code of conduct through the medium of social life of the school which should be organized on a cooperative basis. When discipline in schools is organized it becomes similar to life in democratic society (Wong and Wong, 1998). Discipline gives students a feeling of security by informing them of what they may and may not do. It serves as a self-motivation, which encourages students to accomplish what is required of them. Discipline helps students to develop a conscious that guides them in making their own decisions and in controlling their own behavior (Harter, 2006). Discipline can have multiple purposes in schools. It can discourage and restrain or prevent future misconduct and encourage appropriate behavior (Duke, 2002). When applied fairly and appropriately, it can positively influence character development and establish an environment of safety in the school communities (Feldman, 2000).

There are two types of discipline, namely preventive and corrective. Preventive discipline refers to administrative actions taken to encourage students to follow rules and regulations which prevent infractions and stimulate students to meet school expectations (Okumbe, 2001). This type includes clear rules, concern for students as individuals, a visible supportive head teacher, delegations of discipline authority to teachers and close ties with communities (Cotton, 2003). On the other hand, corrective discipline refers to the administrative actions that follow an infraction of a rule in order to discourage further infringement of the rule. It aims to reform the offender and to deter others from similar actions. Contrary to the two classifications, attempting to get to the root of discipline, Wolfgang (2011) and Ikoya (2009) identify three types of discipline, namely, preventive, supportive, and corrective approaches. According to them, preventive discipline deals with positing rules to lessen chances of misbehavior, while supportive punishment involves the use of techniques to help students maintain self-control. However, corrective punishment is explained in terms of the punishment a teacher administers after a student misbehaves.

In secondary schools, discipline includes all forms of disrespect, unruly behavior, use of bad/vulgar language, rudeness, laziness, insolence, smoking, drinking alcohol, robbery, stealing school property, gambling and bullying. Other forms include aggression, suspicion, bullying, cruelty, cheating, truancy, tardiness, stealing, profanity, and all sorts of disorderliness (Nyaga, 2004). Students' indiscipline also includes violence, alcohol and substance abuse, robbery, vulgarity, sexual assault and threats against the school authority (Clarke, 2002). In South Africa for instance, a high school principal started to get death threats and found himself living in fear of violent attacks (McGregor, 2006).

Discipline of students has been categorized under three levels. Level 1 is defined as any first time incident with minor disturbances that interfere with classroom order and instruction. Level 2 is any repetition of level one incident that is meant to show lack of respect for authority. Finally level 3 is any repetition of level two incident with physical or verbal abuse that is dangerous to self or others (Fergusson, Boden and Horwood, 2010). It should be noted that, even low levels of indiscipline at school can result in detrimental working environment for students and good teaching (Khan, Haynes, Armstrong, and Rohner, 2010).

1.2.1 The role of administrators in maintaining discipline

Administrators have a critical role to play in maintaining school discipline by creating awareness among all stakeholders. Students, teachers and parents should be made to understand the importance of discipline. Research on effective schools has consistently pointed to the administrator as the key figure in shaping the climate of a school. The importance of the principal or head teacher in relation to school discipline has featured prominently in many studies of effective schools (Haberman, 2003). Given their influence, the basic issue confronting administrators is how to exercise that influence in enhancing discipline positively in schools.

Teachers should be fair and helpful to the students and appearance and conduct of administrators should be

an example for students, teachers and parents to imitate. Administrators should involve all stakeholders in developing rules and regulations (Glasser, 1992). When students, teachers, caregivers, parents and community are involved, they own the rules and regulation and ensure that they are consistent with the existing policies (Nyakwara, 2009). In such an environment of involvement, learners will learn to trust others and in turn will want to contribute positively to the school (Mohapi, 2007).

The degree of success of discipline will largely depend on school management's application of different approaches, and how consistently they will see them through. The role of the administrator needs to be reinstated, not in an authoritarian way but rather leading learners to self-discipline (Glasser, 2000). Administrators therefore need to emphasize connectedness by building and strengthening connections with at-risk students and their parents. They need to develop a variety of creative options for dealing with even the most extreme behavior (Skiba, Rausch and Ritter, 2004)

1.2.2 Management strategies and methods of enforcing school discipline

A lot can be done to prevent misbehavior which include establishing a warm and supportive relationship with students, letting them make appropriate choices and modeling positive behavior (Closson, 2000). Teachers through the curriculum and methods of teaching should teach students acceptable social behaviors in the classrooms. In addition, administrators have to work to improve students' behaviors by using effective discipline strategies to ensure that students will be disciplined and safe. In this way, teachers can control, prepare and provide students with important skills for successful adulthood (Sugai, Sprague, Horner and Walker, 2000).

Many schools in America have implemented school-wide behavior management systems (Watson, 1995). The administrator gives specific directions for the whole school and then provides positive reinforcement together with teachers for appropriate behavior and disciplinary (Canter, 1984). Additionally, administrators should mentor teachers, and coach those with negative attitude in the use of positive reinforcement. In guiding students to follow certain directions, teachers should first teach them specific behaviors and then use positive repetition to reinforce them. Finally, if a student continues misbehaving after a teacher has taught specific policies and even used positive reinforcement, only then can negative consequences be applied. In addition to equipping students with mental capacities that convey good behavior habits, it is also important for the school to establish sound methods of reinforcing them. The methods and practices must conform to the psychological principle of reinforcement (Mbiti, 2007).

In Rwanda the power of sanction that belongs to the Head teacher is extended to his/her staff and students. The Head teacher sanctions the school personnel, in case of irregularities, or any other lack of professional obligations. The Head teacher sanctions students, taking into consideration the seriousness or circumstances of the mistake and often after the advice from the discipline council. It is strictly forbidden to use corporal punishment, insults or any other inhuman and /or degrading treatment (MINEDUC, 2008).

According to a study conducted by Alaba & Edugie (2012), 150 out of 540 students (27.8%) whose principal engaged in the use of directing and controlling as means of disciplines were found not to be disciplined. Also, 104 out of 360 students (28.9%) whose principal engaged in the use of corporal punishment were not disciplined. However, 91.7% of the students whose principals engaged in motivating and stimulating supportive counseling were found to be disciplined. In order to achieve the objectives of a school, all members of educational organization are required to strictly adhere to the various behavior patterns necessary for maximum performance. In such a case, educational managers use appropriate disciplinary action to maintain organizational standards necessary for optimum goal attainment (Okumbe, 2007). Reducing discipline issues increased both instructional time and the energy staff could direct toward teaching and learning. In a recent study, among the discipline strategies school principals described as most effective, was significantly increasing administrator and teacher presence in the areas where students most often congregated. (Villavicencio and Grayman, 2012).

The main goal of school discipline is to ensure safety of staff and students and to create a conducive environment for learning. Serious student misconduct involving violent or criminal behavior defeats these goals (Moles, 2002). Educators must exercise their authority in the best interest of the learner with emphasis on the development of self-discipline, independence and maturity. Discipline should, at all times, be firm, consistent and positive (Okumbe, 2007). Discipline strategies employed must enable teaching and learning to proceed effectively (Burden, 2005). To maintain authority administrators must strive to cultivate good relationship with members of staff, parents of students and members of the community at large. Poor teaching is another important cause of indiscipline. This may arise from teachers' failure to prepare properly for the lesson in terms of content and presentation. Administrators should ensure success in learning because it is one of the most valuable weapons against disorders in schools (Kaggwa, 2003).

Parental involvement is another important strategy in improving school discipline. Helping parents assume responsibilities as co-partners benefits the student by giving them a perception of parents who are modeling the importance of education to the family (Moore, 2001). It is important that students are properly inducted into the existing standards of conduct and the consequences that accompany any breach of the specified rules. There

must also be consistence in enforcement of discipline by both teachers and parents and that students should fully understand why they are being punished in reference to school rules (Mbiti, 2007).

1.2.3 Challenges faced by school managers in enforcing school discipline.

Maintaining school discipline is a difficult task and sometimes discouraging. Educators today face many challenges. Not only are they expected to oversee the implementation of curriculum in a meaningful way, but they are also expected to be guidance counselors, and monitors of students. At the same time they must maintain a safe and positive classroom climate, and deal with disruptive behaviors (Sousa, 2009). Along the same lines, Martin (2000) concurs that school administrators have the difficult position of weighing the rights of the student against the rights of the student body. In discharging their duties, they run the risk of criticism from both those who support zero tolerance on indiscipline and those who oppose it.

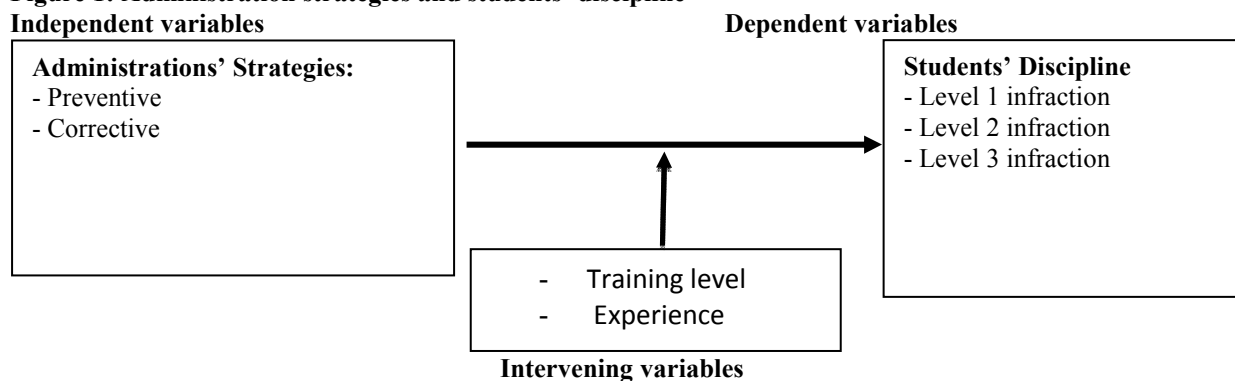
The challenges secondary school administrators face when enhancing student discipline include political interference, parents interference, restriction by law, lack of support by superiors, teachers being poor role models, inappropriate knowledge on disciplinary actions and drug abuse by students. In addition they face the political challenge of balancing what the community desires with what is best for students, especially in regard to the increased awareness of school violence by media (Martin, 2000). Shannon and McCall (2001) also reported that when it comes to dealing with student misbehavior, administrators feel constrained by their communities, parental support, availability of resources and the willingness and availability of staff. This is an indicator that effective methods of maintaining discipline in schools should be varied (Mather, Goldstein, 2001). According to Gottfredson (1989), failure to give sufficient time for implementation of new disciplinary processes may result in discipline problems. Allowing sufficient time for implementation of new disciplinary practices is significant to avoid failure due to unrealistic time expectations. Cases in Kenya show that principals encounter various challenges while enhancing student discipline both legally and in practice. In November, 2006 for instance at Ortum Secondary in West Pokot, students went on a rampage complaining of inadequate food, strict rules, and suspension on flimsy grounds, and accused some of their teachers of consuming too much alcohol. In Kisii Boys' Secondary School, students went on a rampage and set a dormitory on fire complaining that those who scored below 40% in mathematics and science were forced to repeat classes (Rono&Gichana, 2006).

When new rules are introduced in a school, students may reject and protest against them. At Murray Secondary, Taita Taveta in Kenya, form four students who had been sent home pending appropriate action by the Provincial Director of Education for allegedly leaving the school without permission were ordered back to school by a Mombasa High court judge pending the hearing and determination of their case (Daily Nation, 2006). This indeed poses a challenge to the enforcement of student discipline. At classroom level, some students are reluctant to learn and are resentful toward school (Adelman, and Taylor, 2002). Drug abuse by students is also a challenge to school discipline for instance, most high school students involved in arson and other forms of indiscipline have been found to be under the influence of drugs (Siringi, 2003). Teachers have become so pre-occupied with other things that they are increasingly delegating routine supervisory work to prefects, a trend that can be dangerous (Powel, 2003). In fact, occasionally, poor disciplinary management within school can cause a more general breakdown in order, for instance, violence against teachers and other students (Wilson and Lipsey, 2007).

1.2.4 Conceptual Framework

Management of discipline is conceived as an interplay between what administrators do and how well they engage teachers, students and other stakeholders. Within this framework, the independent variable is the administrators' strategies while the dependent variable is students' discipline and the intervening variables are disciplinary measures and social economic and political factors.

Figure 1: Administration strategies and students' discipline



This figure shows the relationship between administrators' strategies (independent variable) used in enhancing students' discipline (dependent variable), the intervening variables that can affect the strategies meant to deal with students' discipline, and also the intended results (dependent variables) when applying those

strategies. The administrative strategies are categorized under those which tend to prevent the occurrence of an infraction such as clearly formulated and communicated rules and regulations, repeated talks, being a role model, trying to make lessons that are as engaging and interesting as possible among others. The corrective strategies on the other hand aim at addressing a misconduct that has already occurred. Such strategies include talking to the offender, involving the parents and administrators, suspensions and at most expulsion. The dependent variable is the student discipline measured by level of discipline. There are three levels, each identified by the frequency of repetition and the severity of the offence. The relationship between administrative strategies and student discipline is cofounded by so many factors, however for this study, the amount of training on discipline strategies and the level of experience of the administrator are considered as influencing factors.

2. Methodology

This study was exploratory in that it attempted to understand how educators manage discipline in the schools. The total population was 184 individuals consisting of head teachers, ordinary teachers and district education officers. Stratified sampling procedure was applied in selecting 4 public secondary schools of Huye district that is made up of four sectors. From each sector 2 boarding and 2 day schools were then purposively selected. This approach was adopted because all school in the area seemed to have common characteristics and therefore results obtained could be generalized. As a result, 4 head teachers, 60 teachers (15 teachers per school) and one district education officer formed the sample size for the study. This method was used because it economizes time, and reliable information is obtained at a much reduced cost and time (Kothari, 2004). In reference to the issue of discipline, the primary focus were students at the middle level who on average are between ages twelve and thirteen thus considered as early adolescents.

The main instrument for data collection was a structured Likert scale questionnaire which is simple to administer and relatively cheap to analyze (Kothari, 2004). The questionnaire was designed to obtain opinions and attitudes on the schools administrative strategies that can be used to deal with students discipline and challenges encountered. Data collected was analyzed thematically by using frequency counts and descriptive statistics. The relationship between administrative strategies and level of students' discipline was analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficient. A comparison of strategies and level of infraction also was presented to show if there was consistency in the strategies used to deal with students' discipline or infraction.

3. Findings

The investigation of administrative strategies and students' discipline in public secondary schools is discussed in this section by first presenting the demographic data, then the independent, dependent variables and the relationships. The experience and level of training provided by the schools in this sample is first presented, the different strategies used by administrators to enforce discipline, the examined level of discipline and the relationship that exists between the variables are finally presented. The experience of the administrator was discussed in respect to how they handle discipline. For this reason the respondents were asked to respond to a question that assessed how long they had served in the school where they worked and the findings were as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Length of service

Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-2 years	15	23.1	23.1
	above 2 to 3	46	70.8	93.8
	above 3 years	4	6.2	100.0
	Total	65	100.0	100.0

Out of the 65 respondents, 46 (70.8%) had worked for above 2 years but below 3 and these were the majority in the sample. Fifteen (23.1%) and 4 (6.2%) of the remaining respondents had 1 to 2 years and above 3 years of experience. According to Bosch cited by Ünal & Ünal(2012), school management is not a gift, but rather a skill that develops through training and many years of experience in the field. It is observed that experienced teachers prioritize classroom management and student discipline while beginners find it as one of the most challenging activity in the school life. However, the 1 to 2 years are sufficient and expected to play a significant role in equipping the beginning teachers with relevant skills in discipline management. Table 2 summarizes the opinion of the teachers about the frequency of discipline-related training services in their schools.

Table 2. Frequency of training

	Frequency	Percent
Less Frequent	48	73.9
Quite Frequent	7	10.8
Frequent	2	2.9
More Frequent	3	4.6
Most Frequent	5	7.7
Total	65	100

The respondents revealed at a response rate of 48 (73.9%) that trainings in discipline management are less frequent. Seven respondents (10.8%) acknowledged that their schools quite frequently provided training and 5 (7.7%) most frequently train. It is argued that there is a positive significant relationship between in-service training and teacher effectiveness in service (Gaudreau, 2013). The 7% who frequently obtained training were the administrators, especially the in-charge of discipline and the head teacher while the majority of school teachers are rarely given any in-service trainings in most schools. Lack of training for teachers who highly interact with students incapacitates the teachers' well intentioned ambition to maintain discipline by presenting minimal discipline management strategies to choose from.

3.1 Administrative Strategies used in enforcing Discipline.

Experience and training can sharpen the confidence of a teacher or an administrator in handling discipline of their students. Training services provide the disciplinarian with up-to-date school discipline issues and effective strategies to employ. The strategies are categorized as corrective and preventive. Corrective discipline administrative strategies included measures taken by the disciplinarian after the occurrence of the infraction. These come into play when the preventive measures have failed. The result of the examination is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Corrective administrative strategies

	Less Frequent Count (percentage)	Quite Frequent	Frequent	More Frequent	Most Frequent
Conversation with teacher	27(41.5)	38(58.5)			
Involvement of Parent	15(23.1)	33(50.8)	9(13.8)	8(12.3)	
Isolation	32(49.2)		33(50.8)		
Denial of privileges		37(56.9)	28(43.1)		
Conversation with Administrator			21(32.3)		44(67.7)
Suspension	12(18.5)	49(75.4)		4(6.2)	
Expulsion	50(76.9)	15(23.1)			

It was quite common for the offender to have a conversation with the teacher as rated by 27 (41.5) % of the respondents. Other administrative strategies include, involvement of parents by 33 (50.8%), denial of privileges such as prohibition from talking with others, limiting access to communally available objects in the class. This strategy was quite frequent as rated by 37 (56.9%) while drastic measures such as suspension and expulsion were also quite frequent as rated by 49 (75.4%) and 15 (23.1%) respectively.

Measures designed to provide knowledge of an infraction with detailed consequences before even the infraction has occurred is known as preventive strategies. The frequency of use of such strategies is the aim of this subsection and the findings are as presented in Table 4

Table 4. Preventive administrative strategies

	Less Frequent	Quite Frequent	Frequent	More Frequent	Most Frequent
	Count (percentage)				
I frequently contact students parent by sending them our agreed upon classroom rules to be signed and returned	15(23.1)	33(50.8)	9(13.8)	8(12.3)	
I frequently limit distracting materials in my class	26(40)	18(27.7)		16(24.6)	5(7.7)
I and my students frequently work together to form classroom/School rules and regulations	36(55.4)	14(21.5)		15(23.1)	
My class is frequently arranged in such a way that students see each other and the teacher clearly	33(50.8)		21(32.3)	11(16.9)	
I frequently work to make lessons engaging for the students in order to promote student involvement in learning and to minimize the opportunity for misbehavior	22(33.8)		43(66.2)		

Preventive strategies require involving students in their own discipline management. Teachers and administrators were asked if they frequently contacted the students' parents with classroom and school rules and regulations co-formulated by students and the school administrators to sign and return to the school. In regard to this 33 (50.8%) do it quite frequently, 9 (13.8%) frequently and 8 (12.3%) more frequently did so. Fifteen (23.1%) contacted parents less frequently. In this respect, the respondents were asked a number of questions that examined their frequency in student involvement in preventive measures. Asked if they frequently limit distracting materials, 26 (40%), 18 (27.7%) 16 (24.6%) and 5 (7%) less frequently, quite frequently, more frequently and most frequently responded respectively. The majority less frequently limited distracting materials. This scenario makes the students less conscious of rules to follow and therefore makes them more likely to break implied rules.

Students and their school need to work together to form rules and regulations for effective discipline management. A question was designed to ask the respondents if this was true about their schools. Thirty-six (55.4%) less frequently did so while 14 (21.5%) and 15 (23.1%) quite frequently and more frequently did so respectively. In this respect, Forty-three (66.2%) of the respondents more frequently organized lessons to engage learners while 22 (33.8%) do not. Other preventive strategies include close contact with the students and planning lessons that will excite and engage the learner so as to minimize opportunity for misbehavior. Asked how frequently the sitting arrangement in the class allowed student to student and student to teacher close contacts, 33 (50.8%) responded less frequently, 21 (32.3%) frequently and 11 (16.9%) more frequently. The sitting arrangement in most schools is rectangular with the teacher standing in front of students.

3.2 Level of Students' Discipline

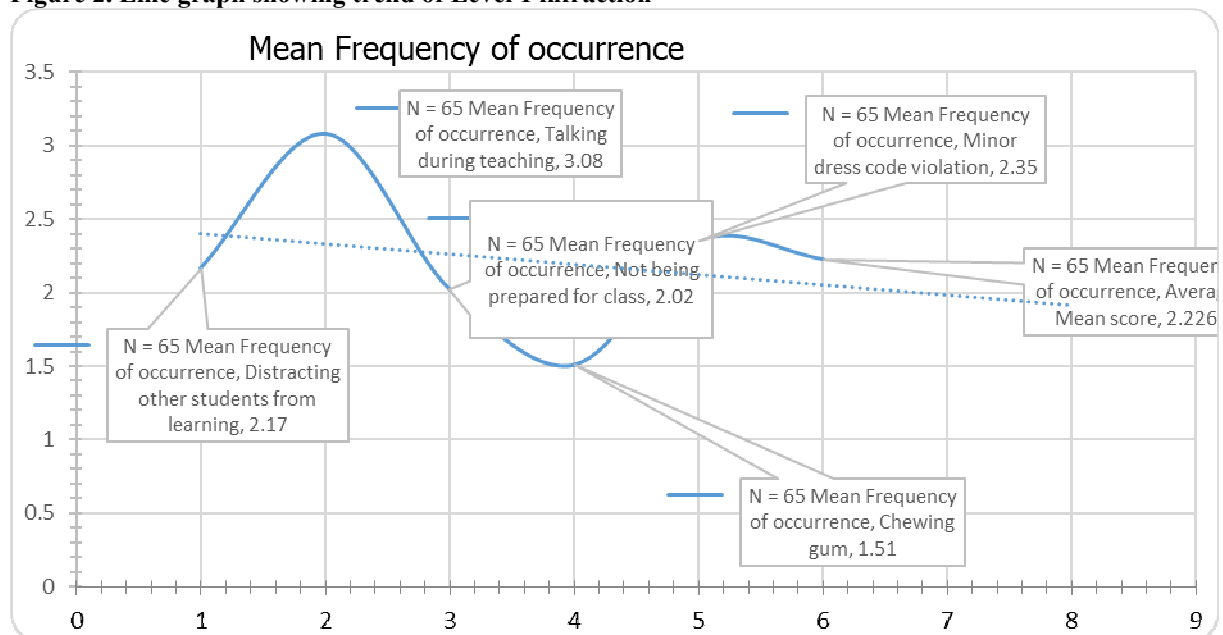
Discipline in the schools was discussed under infraction levels with a number of cases categorized to describe it in details. An infraction is categorized by its level, however the frequency of its occurrence also qualifies it to the next level of discipline issues. The responses were evaluated on a scale of 0 to 3 where 0.0 to 1.5 implied the infraction belonged to level 1, 1.51 to 2.5 is level 2 infraction while 2.51 to 3.5 implied level 3 infraction. The frequency of an infraction was rated by respondents indicating how frequent the infraction occurred. Level 1 infractions are those that were minor by severity and sometimes occurring accidentally or less frequently as indicated in Table 5

Table 5. Level 1 infraction

Infraction	N = 65 Mean Frequency of occurrence
Distracting other students from learning	2.17
Talking during teaching	3.08
Not being prepared for class	2.02
Chewing gum	1.51
Minor dress code violation	2.35
Average Mean score	2.226

Table 5 reveals that distracting others from learning occurred with a mean of 2.17, talking during teaching (3.08), not being prepared for class (2.02), chewing gum (1.51), and minor dress code violation frequency was at 2.35. Figure 2 shows the infractions that were most frequent.

Figure 2. Line graph showing trend of Level 1 infraction



Infractions.

The line graph shows that chewing gum is the least frequent infraction as measured from the item average mean score of 2.226. On the other hand, talking during teaching with a mean score of 3.08. The implication from this finding is that all the infractions categorized in level one are in the range at least above 2 (level 2 infraction) by frequency except for chewing gum. The trend line (broken line) shows that infraction level is tending towards the 2.5 mark implying that the discipline level is towards level two infractions. Using the same criteria used to interpret infraction at level 1, level 2 infractions was likewise interpreted as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Level 2 Infraction

Level 2 Infraction	Mean frequency of occurrence	Std. Deviation
Cell Phone use in school	2.20	.887
Leaving classroom without permission	1.25	.662
Immodest clothing	2.08	1.020
Talking back to teacher	1.38	.490
Teasing	1.80	.712
Cheating	2.49	.504
Average Mean Score	1.9	0.713

The mean score of the six level 2 infractions showed that the mean ranged from 1.38 to 2.49. Teasing others was the least frequent infraction while cheating in exams and tests was the most frequent infraction. On average the infraction level 2 scored a mean of 1.9 by frequency implying it falls above 1.5 range interpreted as level 1 or accidental occurrences but rather moderate repetition of level 1. Therefore, the infraction at this level is a level 2 infraction. There standard deviation was 0.713 on average, however modest clothing scored the highest. This implies that there are few students who have immodest dressing in the schools as compared to the other items. Talking back to teacher had the least standard deviation (0.49) implying more students presented this problem to the teachers.

Table 7 shows a summary of the items that describe infraction level 3. It represents also the frequency and the standard deviation of the responses.

Table 7. Level 3 Infractions

Level 3 Infraction	N = 65	
	Mean frequency of occurrence	Std. Deviation
Fighting	1.54	.502
Bullying	1.00	.000
Public display of affection	1.25	.434
Profanity	2.25	.751
Immorality	1.00	.000
Stealing	1.45	.501
Lying	1.74	.443
Other drugs	1.00	.000
Average Mean Score	1.40375	0.328875

Fighting was rated (1.54), bullying (1.00), public display of affection (1.25), profanity (2.25), immorality (1.00), stealing (1.45), lying (1.74) and others, such as use of drugs (1.00). The highest mean was 2.25 and the lowest 1.00 while the overall mean score for level 3 infraction was 1.4. The implication of the findings is that by category, these items indicate that level 3 infraction is evident in Huye District schools though the frequency is not very high. In addition, the very low standard deviation implies that these infractions could be spontaneous.

3.3 Effectiveness of Administrative Strategies used in Students' Discipline.

Correlation between preventive strategies and corrective strategies and the three levels of discipline (level 1, Level 2, and Level 3) was performed and the Pearson correlation coefficients presented as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Correlation between administrative strategies and level of students' discipline

	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3	
	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Preventive strategies	-.095	.002	.104	.411	.150	.233
Corrective strategies	.072	.037	-.411	.002	-.467	.035

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In reference to Table 8, the Pearson coefficient $r = -.095$, $P < .05$ resulted in the relationship between preventative strategy and level 1. This implies that a negative relationship existed between the relationships. The current preventative strategy to control discipline in schools is increasing level 1 discipline cases. On the other hand, $r = .072$, $P < .05$ implying there was a positive and significant relationship between corrective strategies and level 1 infraction. Pearson Correlation Coefficient $r = -.411$, $P < .05$ between corrective strategies and level 2 infraction implies that corrective strategies had a significant influence on level 2 infractions. The relationship was negative implying that, the more the corrective strategies are employed the lesser the likelihood of level 2 infraction to occur. There was also $r = -.467$, $P < .05$ for the correlation between corrective strategies and level 3 infraction. This implies that, corrective strategies reduced the occurrence of level 3 infractions.

4. Discussion

Drastic measures of handling discipline such as suspension and expulsion are quite frequent as established from the findings. This is in contrast to what is expected in schools today in as much early adolescents face a number of challenges as they explore and try to adjust to school life. Research has repeatedly indicated that suspension, expulsion, and other punitive consequences are not the solution to dangerous and disruptive student behaviors. Consequently dangerous students do not become less dangerous to others when they are excluded from appropriate school settings (Canter and Wright, 2002).

It is therefore argued that, preventive measures could appropriately be utilized to positively enhance discipline. Preventive strategies require involving students in their own discipline management and this can be done by clearly communicating instructions or physically removing materials which take away the attention of students. For instance, a teacher needs to stand at the door and tell students to enter in silence and move to the material table for a practical session. These preventive measures if employed appropriately are more effective in improving student disciplines (Taylor and Baker, 2001). Positive behavioral interventions, strategies and support, focus on increasing desirable behaviors instead of punishing undesirable behaviors (Sugai and Horner 2001). This may entail the use of positive reinforcement, modeling, supportive teacher-student relations and family support.

The study shows that, a high number of respondents did not generate rules and regulations with the student implying that, they were formulated and handed down to the students. Students and their school need to work together to form rules and regulations for effective discipline management. Overall, school rules contain the

potential for optimal learning and a safe environment, however if used inappropriately they can lead to further discipline problems. Rules that focus more on internal motivations, rather than external preventions can more effectively reduce behavior problems in the future (Nichols, 2000). In an educational system, disciplined students are those who comply with rules and regulations of the school. They exercise self control in circumstances where unruly behavior could have been exhibited (Idiaghe, 2003). Discipline therefore, does not require forcing the school rules on students rather, it has to do with conscious acceptance. Discipline management does not imply controlling the students but supporting them to make the right decisions. By involving them in formulation process, the rules are owned and implementation becomes student based (James & Richard, 1997). Other preventive strategies include close contact with the students and planning lessons that will excite and engage the learner so as to minimize opportunity for misbehavior

A study conducted by Yaghambe, and Tshabangu (2013) in secondary schools in Tanzania, revealed that some modes of punishments created fear among students and lead to truancy. Also, Ndibalema (2013) found that some forms of punishments like caning created psychological problems among students and resulted in making them hesitant for fear of being caned again. These practices end up defeating the whole purpose of education and thus affecting the students' academic achievement. Positive punishments such as blame, rebuke of un-achievement of tasks, such as restart a duty not done or done carelessly, to clean the classroom or another place, loss of privileges such as not going out for breaks subtraction of marks and social isolation can be adopted. The Ministry of Education in Rwanda adds that, it is strictly forbidden to subject a students to corporal punishment, insult or subject him or her to any other inhuman or degrading treatment. This therefore gives the school administration the right to discipline students but with restrictions.

Findings clearly showed that the more the corrective strategies are employed the lesser the likelihood of level 2 and 3 infractions to occur. Attending to students' personal concerns about issues unrelated to their academic performance can help to prevent or decrease the severity of discipline problems. Providing students with formal and informal outlets to discuss troubling issues helps to alleviate their tendency to bring these issues into class (Villavicencio and Grayman, 2012). Mixing different strategies therefore helps to handle an array of discipline issues. In the current study, corrective strategies were found to handle level 2 and 3 while level 1 discipline issues were best addressed through preventive strategies hence aligning with the findings of Alaba (2012). According to Maphos and Mammen (2001), in the research about maintaining discipline in South African schools, it was revealed that some teachers view learners' discipline as synonymous to punishing them. Since this has negative effects on students' academic performance, it is appropriate that administrators create conducive learning environment requiring an ethic of caring that shapes staff-student relationships. The findings imply that, it is significant for administrators to discuss the concept of mutual respect with their students, spend time talking and demonstrating appropriate behavior, model respectful and caring behavior and involve students in rules making (DiGiulio, 2000). Preventive discipline measures should be highly advocated in schools. The argument to this effect rests on the belief that any method which does not aim at transforming the life of students should not be used in schools (Ikoya, 2009).

Furthermore, provision of guidance and counseling services at school, creation of good environment, parental involvement, and provision of appropriate communication channels strategies are highly recommended (Maphos and Mammen, 2001). In essence, some learning theories indicate that punishment is ineffective for producing significant and lasting behavioral change (Cornoley, and Goldstein, 2004). This is supported by a Kinyarwanda proverb which says "Inkoni ivuna igufwa ntivuna ingesoeted as "a stick damages the bone but does not correct bad behavior". Therefore, the best practices for enforcing discipline among students is empowering guidance and counseling services within the school so as to enable them make wise decisions. However, in case the student despises the guidance, other drastic measures proportionate to the level of infraction need to be administered with ethical procedures as guidance. Educational leadership of schools and teachers should find or create a solution that is designed to encourage students to have an idea of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. They should also be made aware of their respective punishments in order to avoid inappropriate behaviors.

5. Conclusion

Schools today face a married disciplinary challenges that administrators need to contend with. It needs to be understood that discipline is not about punishment but about teaching students appropriate ways to behave. In handling teenagers, administrators and teachers should know that discipline is about agreeing on and setting appropriate limits and helping them live within those limits. At least teachers and administrators must clearly and specifically inform students of standards of acceptable behavior before they are violated. When limits are unclear, students will test the system to find out what they are. This strategy will enable school managers help students to learn independence and how take responsibility for their behavior.

The strategies adopted can vary according to different situation but the ultimate aim should be to increase classroom time available for teaching and learning. At the same time strategies will respond to students'

behaviors in a manner that decreases disruption, improve school atmosphere and relieves educator's stress and fatigue. The researchers concur with DiGiulio (2000) that discipline management, at its best, involves creativity and provides an optimal situation for one to transform students. However, at its worst, it can become negative and adversarial. In support of schools, the ministry of Education needs to strengthen the school safety policy. A school which is not friendly and safe both to the learner and the teacher is a barrier to quality learning. Some strategies such as guidance and counseling should be implemented in schools by having qualified teachers in guidance and counseling; something that is lacking at the moment. Police intervention in cases of level 3 infractions should also be implemented. Parents need to be closely involved in the behavior of their children since evidence has shown that children whose parents closely associate with the school, behave in a better manner than those whose parents do not. Therefore, engagement strategies should be devised for example, parent and teacher meetings, parent administration meetings, clear communication channels between parents and school established among others.

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