

Perception of Teachers and Students on Indiscipline at Mankranso in Ahafo-Ano South District

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Abstract

The main purpose of the study was to examine the perceptions of teachers and students at Mankranso in the Ahafo-Ano South district on student indisciplinary behaviours. The study adopted a descriptive survey and the approach was a blend of quantitative and qualitative paradigms. Purposive and simple random sampling methods were used to obtain a sample size of two hundred and thirty (230) respondents. The main instruments used for the study were the questionnaire, focus group interview guide and documentations. Data was analyzed using inferential statistics to test the research hypotheses. Among the findings of the study was that while there were no perceptual difference between students and teachers in what acts constitute indisciplinary behaviours, there were differences in the students' and teachers' perceptions of the influences of peer pressure, parenting styles, school climate, guidance and counselling officers and teaching experience have on students indisciplinary behaviours. The findings also suggested that sex- type behaviours such as cigarette smoking, which was once regarded in the Ghanaian society as typically a "male behaviour", may no longer be seen as sex-type. The study concluded that; peer group has influence on student indisciplinary behaviour than that perceived by the students. Also the students felt that the school authorities were inconsistent in the implementation of school rules and regulation..

Background to the study

School is established primarily for teaching and learning to take place. The main aim of school setup is to provide cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills to the Pupils so that they can participate effectively in the socio-economic development of their country. In other words, pupils/students are taught in order that they can make use of their head, heart, and hands in productive activities. In another instance, some communities establish a school to transmit its culture to the rising generation. According to Teachers Handbook of Ghana (1994), Schools are purposeful institutions set up by the society to provide instructions for the systematic education of learners. Through the School, the society hopes to get its people to have good morals and conform to the norms and values of the society. Society therefore places emphasis on the type of knowledge imparted to learners so as to achieve these goals. Education should therefore be worthwhile to the society. Afful-Broni, (2004) added that the school, since it is a formal organization, has certain unique structures among other things. He again stated that a school has a set of rules and regulations, which are usually very clear to its members. As a formal organization, a school has to have order and procedures, which are well spelt out, and many of which must be obeyed (Afful-Broni, 2004).

This implies that leaders in any formal organization as the school are quite mindful of these sets of norms and try to enforce them. Students are therefore not exempted from the rules and regulations of schools. Students as well as teachers are in a place of formation, and must abide by the rules, else many may go astray. Discipline is easier to maintain in an environment where there is a formalized, system in place, such as formalities and order. Research findings indicate that student indiscipline in high schools manifested in various ways has now become a common occurrence and trickled down to the Junior High Schools.

Theoretical frameworks

No research problem originates from nowhere. Every research has a source, history, a cause or theory that can help in understanding or explaining the prevalence of the problem. According to Leedy (1989:58), a theory may serve as a point around which the problem may be oriented in searching for relevant data, and in establishing a tentative goal against which a hypothesis can be tested. Theoretical framework, therefore, provides

a model for studying a research problem. There are four most significant theoretical bases to indiscipline which is so relevant to this study and these are: Psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud, the Socialization theory of DeFraun, Piaget's theory on Cognitive development and Erikson theory of psychosocial development.

Psychoanalytic theory

Sigmund Freud and his disciples in their theory of psychoanalysis focused on the importance of children in which the foundation for later life is laid. Freud and other proponents of the psychodynamic theory have emphasized the importance of providing positive emotional environment for the child who needs to believe that the world is a safe and good place and that parents can be trusted in issues pertaining to inculcating good morals in their children. According to the advocates of this theory, although individuals who have suffered fixation in childhood can make dramatic positive changes later in life, it is best if they can help children, as parents to succeed in their endeavour from the very beginning by adopting the best and most suitable parenting strategies so as to guard against indiscipline among the youth.

Bema (1993) citing Gesell (1954) opined that, the forces of growth and development within an individual are essentially creative. He further contended that given moderately constructive circumstances, the individual is self-directing and that its self-direction is intrinsically constructive. The main condition in a child's environment therefore is acceptance and if that is met everything will work out fine. Bema further pointed out that when children and adolescents are not securely attached to their parents this affect their social behaviour. One-way lack of social bond affects an adolescent's social life is that the adolescent will have little interest or even capacity to form or maintain meaningful social relation and this will compel the individual to engage in deviant behaviours. The emphasis here is that, parents should play a fundamental role in inculcating the right morals and discipline in children through recommended childrearing practices. In fact, the disciplinary styles of parents and their teachers greatly influence their adolescent's misbehaviours in school.

Piaget's theory of cognitive development

Jean Piaget a Swiss psychologist (1896-1980) formulated the theory of cognitive development. The theory concern the emergence and acquisition of schemata-schemes of how one perceives the world in developmental stages, times when children are acquiring new ways of mentally representing information. The theory asserts that we construct our cognitive abilities through self-motivated actions in the world. Piaget divided schemes that children use to understand the world through four main stages, roughly correlated with and becoming increasingly sophisticated with age. These stages of cognitive development according to Piaget are:

- Sensorimotor stage (years 0-2)
- Preoperational stage (years (2-7)
- Concrete operational stage (years 7-11)
- Formal operational stage (year's 11-16)

The most relevant stage of Piaget's theory of cognitive development to the topic under study (students' indiscipline) is the formal operational stage. The formal operational stage is the fourth and final of the stages of cognitive development of Piaget's theory. This stage, which follows the concrete operational stage, commences at around 11 years of age (puberty) and continues into adulthood. Incidentally, most students in high school fall within this stage. The implication of this stage to school discipline is very obvious. The adolescent at this stage begins to think constructively and reason logically. The young adult forms his own philosophy about life and as a result vehemently challenges existing norms of society and the entire status quo. As a result the adolescent who is now in school tend to violate school rules and regulations and therefore misbehaves bringing about school disciplinary problems.

Challenges to Piagetian stage theory

Piagetian accounts of development have been challenged on several grounds. First as Piaget himself noted, development does not always progress in the smooth manner his theory seems to predict. "Decalage" or unpredicted gaps in the development progression suggest that the stage model is at best a useful approximation. Piaget's assertion that cognitive maturation occurs concurrently across different domains of knowledge such as Mathematics, Logic, Physics and Language, etc is challenged; critics are rather of the view that cognitive faculties may be largely independent of one another and thus develop according to quite different time- tables.

Psychosocial theory of Erikson

Psychosocial development as articulated by Erik Erikson describes eight developmental stages through which a healthily developing human should pass from infancy to late adulthood. In each stage the person confronts, and hopefully masters, new challenges. Each stage builds on the successful completion of earlier stages. The challenges of stages not successfully completed may be expected to reappear as problem in the future. Erikson developed the theory in the 1950s as an improvement on Sigmund Freud's psychosexual stages. Erikson accepted many of Freud's theories (including the id, ego, and superego, and Freud's infantile sexuality represented in psychosexual development), but rejected Freud's attempt to describe personality solely on the basis of sexuality. Also, Erikson criticized Freud for his concept of "originology", which states that all maladaptive behaviours can be traced to early experiences in childhood.

According to Erikson, an experience in early childhood is important, but the individual develops within a social context. Erikson believed that childhood is very important in personality development and unlike Freud, felt that personality continued to develop beyond five years of age. In his most influential work, *Childhood and Society* (1950), he divided the human life cycle into eight psychosocial stages of development. The most important of all the eight stages of Erikson's theory of psychosocial development which is relevant to the study of student's indiscipline is the sixth stage spanning from 11-18 years which is better termed as adolescence or puberty. The psychosocial crisis experienced at this stage according to Erikson is Identity vs. Role Confusion. Here, the adolescents are newly concerned with how they appear to others. Ego identity is the accrued confidence that the inner sameness and continuity prepared in the past are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others, as evidenced in the promise of a career.

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey and the approach was a blend of quantitative and qualitative paradigms. This design was used because it involved data collection from a fraction of the population (the sample), to generalize the findings to the population. Also this method or design was used since no treatment was administered as the study only sought to gather and analyze information on a situation that already exists, making the descriptive survey design most appropriate for the topic under study. Additionally, it enabled the researcher to obtain information concerning the current status of students' and teachers' perceptions of indiscipline, which is naturally occurring, as they existed at the time of the study.

Furthermore, using the descriptive survey design enabled the researcher to gather data from a good number of responses from a wide range of respondents and at the same time provided a meaningful picture of events and sought to explain people's perceptions, feelings and behaviours on the basis of data that was gathered. This design enabled the researcher to pose follow-up questions by way of focus group interview to get an in-depth explanation to certain ambiguous responses in answering the questionnaire for better clarification. The justification for the use of the descriptive survey design in this particular study is supported by Ary, Jacobs and Razavich (1990), with the assertion that the description survey research is designed to obtain information concerning the current status of a phenomenon and that, this design is directed towards finding out about a naturally occurring phenomenon as it exists at the time of the study. They again pointed out that it focuses on determining the status of a defined population with respect to certain variables. Similarly, Fraenkel and Waller (2000) stated that, obtaining answers from a large group of people to a set of carefully designed and administered questionnaire lies the heart of the survey research.

On his part, Osuala (1991) believes that descriptive survey is versatile and practical, especially to the researcher. He adds that descriptive survey research is basic for all types of research in assessing the situation as a prerequisite for conclusion and generalization. The combination of the qualitative and quantitative approach adopted in this study enabled the researcher to use instruments for both paradigms. One instrument was used to support the other in the process of data collection so as to make up for the shortfall inherent in each of the instruments used, to ensure collection of authentic and an in-depth database. For instance ambiguous responses that came up when answering the questionnaire were captured in the focus group discussion for further clarification.

Population

Fraenkel and Wallen (1996) assert that a population is the group to which the research findings are intended to apply to. The target population of the study comprised all teachers and students in Junior High schools at Mankranso in AhafoAno South District. The total population of teachers and students was five hundred (500); thirty (30) teachers and four hundred and seventy (470) students.

Sample Size and Sampling Strategy

Amoani(2005) states that sampling, is the procedure whereby elements or people are chosen from a population to represent the characteristics of the population. It is the most intelligent way of learning about what is happening within a population. The sampling procedure for the study was the purposive, simple random and convenient sampling methods. Sample size used was two hundred and thirty (230) respondents who were mainly teachers and students, and purposefully selected from the three Junior High schools at Mankranso. The total number of teachers that took part in the study was 20 and that of students was 210. Before the study, letters were taken from the researcher's department. The purposeful sampling technique was used to select the schools; these schools are the only public Junior High Schools in the study area and anecdotal evidence point to the fact that students in these schools have similar characteristics.

The individual respondents were selected from their population using randomization. After entering a school all teachers in the school were made to group together. Randomization was carried out by writing (Y) or (N) on pieces of paper for the administration of the questionnaire in all the schools. Any teacher who picked Y= Yes, was included in the sample study. In the case of the students, their attendance registers were sought. Numbers were assigned to the various names in the attendance registers and whose name corresponds to an odd number was selected. The simple random sampling was preferred because it ensured that each teacher had an equal and independent chance of being chosen (Gall & Borg, 1996). This selection technique was necessary in order to meet the assumptions of the parametric test used to test the study hypotheses. The researcher administered his questionnaires to them. The assumption was that all the students have similar characteristics; data from those engaged in the study could be conveniently generalized for the entire population.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

The main instruments used for the study was the questionnaire, focus group interview guide and documentation. The questionnaire was constructed by the researcher with close direction and guidance of the supervisor. It was divided into three parts. Part A of the questionnaire was designed to record the personal attributes or demographic data of students and teachers who formed subjects for the study; it is made up of ten items or questions. The relevance of this part was to provide background information about respondents whose views were expressed in the study. Part (B) of the questionnaire was constructed based on a 5 point Likert type scale as described by Best and Khan (1996). It contained twenty-three close-ended questions to which respondents were to show their degree of response; that is, Strongly Agree (S. A), Agree (A), Not Sure (N. S), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (S. D). There were both positive and negative questions; examples of positive items were "truancy is an indisciplinary act", "drinking alcohol by students is a deviant behaviour" and "involving students in the formation of rules and regulations in school can help in minimizing students misbehaviours", while some negative ones are: bullying is not an indiscipline act, it is not necessary sending habitual late comers to school away from classes and students need not consult the school Counsellor when they are choosing their subjects and course of study. The direction of scoring for all the scales is that the higher a respondent score, the better his /her perception on factors that constitute indiscipline behaviours and also the factors that influence indiscipline behaviours.

In order to be consistent with the direction of scoring, the negative items in the questionnaire were reversed, that is strongly disagree = 5, disagree = 4, not sure = 3, agree = 2 and strongly agree = 1.

1. Factor one represented items on perceived behaviours that constitute student indiscipline.
2. Factor two contained items on perceived influences of peer group pressure on indiscipline.
3. Factor three involved item on the influence of parenting styles on student indiscipline.
4. Factor four involved the perceived roles of school guidance and counselling officer in minimizing Students' deviant behaviours. The Likert type scale questions were used because they were found to be the most suitable type of instrument /questions for the measuring of attitudes and perceptions; this is because it enables respondents to indicate the degree of their belief on a given statement (Best and Khan, 1996).
5. The final part of the questionnaire or part C was made up of ten (10) unrestricted questions meant for both teachers and students. These questions were to elicit responses from subjects concerning students' indiscipline and the perceived role of the Counsellor.

Interviews

As indicated earlier, Focus Group Interview (FGI) Schedule formed part of the data collection procedure. The interview as a research method in Survey research is unique in that it involves collection of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals or groups (Borg and Gall, 1996). The interview situation

usually permits much greater depth than the other methods of collecting research data. The semi-structured interview was used to enable respondents express themselves freely. An interview guide which contained open-ended questions was used to direct the course of the interview. The interview commenced with an introduction that explained the purpose, ground rules and duration and also conveyed the expectation that everyone will contribute. Respondents were also assured of confidentiality. A tape recorder was used to record the discussion and interactions, also salient points and contributions made by respondents were recorded in a field notebook. For the purpose of easy transcribing and analysis of responses from the Focus Group Interview from the total number of twelve interviewees from the three schools viz: D/A JHS, Methodist JHS and Holy Prophet JHS that is four respondents from each school, the interviewees were given code numbers.

At D/A JHS, out of the four students who took part in the interview, three were male and one a female. They were assigned 01, 02, and 03 for the boys and A4 for the girl. At Methodist JHS, the four respondents were made up of two boys and two girls. The boys were assigned 05, 06 and the girls given code numbers of B4 and B04 respectively. Holy Prophet JHS respondents comprise a boy and three girls and the boy was given 07 as his code number while the girls were assigned C4, C04 and C004 as their code numbers. The interview was conducted through Focus Group Discussion, which allowed the researcher to discover ideas, concerns, attitudes and perceptions of people in their own terms. Focus Group Discussions often stimulate people to talk and to reveal facts and opinions that may not have been revealed otherwise. It also allows the group to clarify perceptions, attitudes or beliefs in words that were probably not easy to articulate. (Gatrell 2002).

In his opinion Gatrell (2002) postulated that a focus group comprises a small number of persons basically between 4 -12 that converge to discuss matters of mutual interest with the support of a facilitator. He added that mostly these groups hold particular position, opinion, perceptions, views, or interest. According to Jato (1994) FGI are socially ideal and that they are in particular very effective in assembling data about issues that are sensitive in nature. Concluding Jato claimed that a principal motive of the FGI is that it gives participants the chance to freely express their experiences, views or opinions on a topic. The FGI as instrument for data collection was used because it enabled the researcher to get firsthand information from students who had been involved in disciplinary problems and were brought before the disciplinary committee. The discussion with the focus group members who were twelve in number was centered on certain ambiguous response that crop up in responses to some items on the questionnaire for further clarification.

The focus group interview technique as a tool for data collection is relatively new but a popular qualitative research technique in education, health and recreation. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) posit that, focus group interview is a term denoting where a researcher works with several people simultaneously, rather than just one. To these authors, focus group interview can be classified as; unstructured, semi-structured and highly structured. Since different types of focus group interviews have different purposes, the type is to be used in a particular research situation therefore depends on the context and research purpose? Fontana and Frey (1994). For this particular study the full group was used. The researcher deemed it expedient to select students who misbehaved in school and were brought to book since such students would have an in-depth knowledge and experience about issues pertaining to student indiscipline and their contributions and responses would be worthwhile.

Validity and reliability

Creswell (2005) the goal of a good research is to have measures that are reliable and valid. Validity is concerned with whether the findings are really about what they appear to be about (Roberson, 2002). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) it is based on the view that a particular instrument measures what it purports to measure. The issue of validity was addressed in this research using triangulation. Triangulation involves the use of multiple sources to enhance the rigor of the research. As stated in the discussion on the questionnaire, some form of validity was established by giving the questionnaire to the supervisor and lecturers with specialization in test and measurement to modify it. Again, the triangulation was used in data collection strengthened the validity of the study. Regarding the semi-structured interview schedule, specific steps were taken to ensure validity, which included:

1. Seeking permission from respondents regarding their willingness to participate.
2. Playing back the tape to respondents after the interview session to ensure that what they said has been correctly recorded.
3. Reading out the transcript to them to ensure that the tapes were correctly transcribed.

Reliability according to Cohen et al (2003) means that scores from an instrument are stable and consistent, scores should nearly be the same when researchers administer the instrument multiple times at different times

and also scores need to be consistent. Reliability was achieved initially in this research by pilot testing the questionnaire and interview survey.

Administration of the Instruments/Research Procedure

The researcher took the opportunistic approach by capitalizing on the conduciveness of the period in administering the instruments. This was the time when the first and Second year students were writing their end of second term examination and the third years were busily taking their mock examination as final preparation toward the forth coming Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). Permission was sought from the headmasters of the three schools visited, after showing a letter of introduction obtained from the head of Department, Psychology and Education, University of Education, Winneba. The researcher with the assistance of some members of staff distributed questionnaires to students and teachers who were readily available during the recess. All those who received the questionnaire constituted respondents for the study. These subjects were made to occupy vacant classrooms to fill the questionnaires. They were given one hour and the researcher was around to offer assistance to anyone who may be in need of any sort. The filled questionnaires were immediately collected and this ensures almost hundred percent return rates of the filled questionnaires.

At Mankranso D/A JHS 100 respondents took part in the study and this was made up of 90 student and 10 teachers. At Methodist JHS 75 respondents participated in the survey, these were made up of 70 students and 5 teachers. And at Holy Prophet JHS 55 respondents were used, these were made up of 50 students and 5 teachers. Three series of focus group interviews were conducted that is one each in the three schools visited. Each group was made up of four participants. The researcher called for the "log books" on disciplinary cases dealt with for the first half of the 2012/2013 academic years from the chairmen of the disciplinary committees. Four culprits were randomly selected from the three 'log books' for the three schools. Discussion was centered on ten open-ended interview schedules and each of the session lasted for between thirty to forty-five minutes. The conversation and discussion that transpired during the session was tape-recorded and other vital points documented in the researcher's field notebook.

Teaching Experience of Teacher Respondents

This item sought to find out the teaching experience or the number of years teachers who participated in the study have been teaching.

Distribution of Teachers' Years of Service

Service (Years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
3-8	5	25.0
9-14	7	35.0
15-19	6	30.0
20 and above	2	10.0
Total	20	100

From Table 4.4 above it could be inferred that six teachers representing 30 percent have 3-8 years teaching experience. Also seven teachers representing 35 percent have being teaching for 9-14 years. Three teachers representing 15.0 percent have 15-19 years teaching experience. One teacher representing 5.0 percent of those who took part in the study has been teaching for 20 years and above. This could be interpreted thus, the majority of teacher respondents in the present study having between 5-20 years teaching experience. This therefore implies that the sample contained teachers with varied and reasonably long experience in teaching and therefore more likely to have experienced student disciplinary cases than those with shorter period of service, which should go some way towards the validity of the data obtained from them.

Test of hypotheses

In order to test the study hypotheses, mean scores were computed for the questionnaire items on the five points Likert scale constituting the factors dealing with student indiscipline behaviours. The direction of scoring

is that the higher a respondent's score, the better his/her perception of the act constituting student indisciplinary behaviours and the lower the score, the lesser the person deems the act as constituting indisciplinary behaviours.

Hypothesis One

The first hypothesis tested the assumption that there would be a significant difference between the perceptions of teachers and students about what constitute indisciplinary behaviours. Table 4.5 shows that there was a difference between the mean (teachers =4.0291, student=3.8872) of the two groups on the behaviours that constitute student indiscipline. To test whether this difference between the mean of the two groups was statistically significant, an independent sample t-test was performed.

Summary Statistics and Independent Sample t-test of Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Indiscipline Behaviours

Group	N	Mean	SDT	T	dfp-value
Teachers	20	4.0291	.55700		
Students	210	3.8872	.554582		
				1.644	228

As shown in Table 4.5, the result of the t-test revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the teachers' and the students' perception of behaviours that constitute student indiscipline. (t=1.644, df=228, p=.101). Therefore the study hypothesis that teachers would perceive those behaviours that constitute indiscipline differently from that of students is rejected and the null hypothesis that there would be no significant difference between teachers and students in what constitute indisciplinary behaviour is accepted.

Hypothesis Two

The second hypothesis tested the assumption that there would be a significant difference between teachers' and students' perceptions of the influence of peer group pressure on student indiscipline. Table 4.6 shows that there was a difference between the means of the two groups (teachers=3.3491, students =3.1038) on the peer group pressure score. To test whether this difference between the two groups was statistically significant, an independent sample t-test was performed as shown in Table 4.6.

Summary statistics and independent sample t-test of teachers and students on the influence of peer pressure on indiscipline.

Group	N	Mean	SDT	T	df	p-value
Teachers	20	3.3491	.57248			
Students	210	3.1038	.48884			
				3.336	228	0.0013

The result of the independent samples t-test showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the teachers and students in their perceptions of the influence of the peer group pressure has on students' indiscipline behaviours (t=3.336, df= 228, p= 0.001). Therefore the study hypothesis that there would be significant difference in students' and teachers' perceptions of the influence that peer group pressure has on student indiscipline behaviours is accepted, and the null hypothesis that there will be no significant difference between teachers and students perception of influence of peer group pressure on student indiscipline behaviours rejected. This result suggests that the teachers perceived peer pressure as influencing indiscipline behaviours more than that of the students.

Responses from Focus Group Discussion (interview).

As indicated in the methodology, qualitative data was collected through focus group discussion to complement the questionnaire and also to elicit the response that could not be obtained from the questionnaire and for getting in-depth explanation to certain issues pertaining to student indiscipline in the study area. The interview session centered on level of respondent's perceptions and experiences on knowledge of student indiscipline behaviours and the possible factors that promote indiscipline among student at Mankranso in Ahafo-

Ano South District. The data was presented using direct quote of interviews and more than one quotation was used to emphasize the issues which emerged from the themes. The data was presented to reflect the similarities and differences of the views expressed by respondents in the three schools within the study area.

Respondents Views of the Offence that brought them before the School Disciplinary Committee.

Students who were involved in indisciplinary cases and were brought before the school disciplinary committees were randomly selected from the school disciplinary record books and were interviewed on acts that brought them before the disciplinary committee. Participant in the focus group (FGD) mentioned various acts such as bullying; having sexual relationship with student girls, teenage pregnancy, disturbing in school, abusing drugs and drinking alcohol as the offence they committed. However, some respondents also claimed they were brought before the school disciplinary committee for committing minor offences as habitual lateness to school and truancy. From the responses of the respondents it can be concluded that indisciplinary behaviours take different forms and also they differ in severity.

Whether the Culprit sees the Offence they committed as being serious or not serious

Respondents were also interviewed to find out their views on whether they perceived the offences they committed as being serious or not serious. The interviewees gave various views (70%) indicated that the offence they committed was not a serious one as indicated by sample of their statements. *"the juniors were very stubborn, they don't take simple instructions, as a senior, I see no reason why I can't bully a junior student who refuse to obey my orders so as to bring him to submission."* This student further said *'as a senior I have to be given enough authority so that I can control the juniors in the absence of teachers, so I see nothing wrong when I ask a notorious student to kneel down in the scorching sun.'* Another respondent at Mankranso D/A JHS said *"I see nothing wrong when I use a belt to whip a first year student who refused to pick around the dormitory."* Also at Holy Prophet JHS an interviewee retorted that, I see nothing wrong when I locked up a junior in the lavatory for fusing to fetch water to the school kitchen and as he put it *'when I was in JHS I, I was given the same treatment and though I reported to my class teacher, the culprit was not brought to book, so I see no justification in being brought before the school disciplinary committee for committing a similar offence.'*

On the contrary, one respondent at Mankranso Methodist JHS who became pregnant in school claimed the offence she committed was a serious one, as she put it *" it is against the regulation of the school and the norms of society for a girl to get pregnant in school so I have committed a grievous offence by becoming pregnant in school"*

Whether Culprits were Influence by anyone in committing the Offence

The respondents were also interviewed to find out whether they were influenced by someone in committing the offence. Respondents gave various views; however, the majority of respondents (80%) indicated that they were influenced by their colleagues in engaging in deviant behaviours, as indicated by samples of their statements. *"At the assembly and our gatherings I see my friends engaging in the behavior and they lure me into committing the act"* Some even say when they try to resist the influence of their colleagues; they were branded as not being abreast with time.

Whether Parents were informed about the Misbehaviours of their Wards

A question was posed to respondents to find out whether their parents got to know the offence they committed in school. Almost all the respondents confirmed that the school authority invited their parents to the school and informed them about their deviant behaviors, as one respondent who absconded to town from the boarding house put it *"the housemaster asked me to go and bring my parents and I complied by reporting to school the following day with my father to see the headmaster in his office."* The headmaster invited member of the school disciplinary committee and my father was informed about my misconduct. Another student who impregnated a student girl said, *"I was given a letter to be given to my uncle who is looking after me in school, inviting him to see the headmaster. I came to the school with my uncle and he was informed about my misdemeanour. "Also another said, "I was only punished but my parents were not invited to the school and I did not inform my parents about my misbehaviours".*

Whether Participants were referred to the School Counsellor

Majority of respondents (70%) said they were not referred to the counselor neither do they made any effort on their own to relate with the school counselor. However, one respondent from Holy Prophet said *"I*

realized the offence I committed was bad so I decided to see the counselor in his office, but when my friend saw me with the counselor they asked 'what have you done?' implying that it is notorious students who see the counselor. On the role of the guidance and counselling officer in curbing indiscipline behaviours, the t-test revealed that the students rather than the teachers perceived the guidance and counselling officer in curbing indiscipline. Therefore it is interesting that the students in the Focus Group reported that they were not referred to the guidance and counselling officer. It is a classic case of the school authorities' negative attitudes toward guidance and counselling officers influencing their behaviour of not referring these students to the guidance and counselling officer.

Discussions

Perceptual Differences in Acts Constituting Indiscipline Behaviours

The present study found that there was no significant difference between teachers' and students' perceptions of acts that constitute student indiscipline behaviours. One possible reason for the similarities in the perceptions of teachers and students on acts that constitute student indiscipline behaviours in the study area might be due to the strong influence of the media in both print and electronics. There are now very interesting and captivating educational programmes on the numerous radio, TV and FM stations across the country sensitizing the youths on immoral acts abhorred by society with its attendant negative consequences suffered by adolescents who engage in such deviant acts. Furthermore, the immense role played by churches and other religious bodies in bringing to the fore the sudden increase in social vices could equally account for why adolescents for that matter, students, seem to be equally aware of acts that constitute deviant behaviours just as their teachers. Participants in the focus group interview mentioned bullying, having sexual relationship with student girls, teenage pregnancy, disturbing in school, abusing drugs, and drinking alcohol as offences committed. However, some respondents also claimed they were brought before the school disciplinary committee for committing minor offences such as habitual lateness to school and playing truancy.

As one interviewee at Methodist JHS put it *"I insulted and threatened to beat a girl in JHS 2 and the case got to the notice of the school authorities and I was summoned before the disciplinary committee"*. Another respondent also at D/A JHS said *"I was lured to the palm wine base by friends where they sell palm wine near the school compound to drink, the senior prefect detected this in my walking and mood, so he reported me to the assistant headmaster who also referred me to the disciplinary committee"*. The responses of the interviewees in the focus group interview showed that even though deviant acts committed are not so violent, care must be taken to nip it in the bud before seemingly less violent problems to develop into major student crisis.

The findings from the questionnaire and the FGI confirms the findings of Osei-Hwedie and Ndilo (1989 p.224) that students in the adolescent age groups are in the worst period in their youth life due to their overall circumstances of living. This point is further supported by Ansawoe (1992) who stated that 'students are no longer willing to accept the complete unquestioned authority of stereotypical teaching'. They constantly seek ways of dealing with the ever-changing situation in the school environment. In this case, the students mostly engage in what school and society considered as indiscipline behaviour. These include; smoking drug abuse, fighting, stealing, truancy, disobedience, and lateness to school, boycott of classes, rape and lying.

Perceptual Differences in the Influence of Peer Group Pressure on Student Indiscipline Behaviours

The findings of the study further revealed that there was significant difference between teachers and students in their perceptions of the influence peer group pressure has on student disciplinary behaviours. The teachers perceived peer group pressure as having more influence on student deviant behaviours than that perceived by the students. This supports Ngozi (2004), who posited that, adolescents in peer group often revolt against all imposed proof and authority because to them, life is idealistic. Their revolt hinges on the development of morals and values. These developments are closely related to the individual environmental experiences. The adolescent is living in a real world of conflicting values where logic does not necessarily apply.

According to Ngozi, the adolescent is only searching for his or her personal belief based on experiences and expectations and in doing so he or she becomes very critical and fastidious, trying to find an in-depth explanation to the practices of the elders and most often the cherished values of the adolescent conflicts with those of teachers and parents implying that the adolescent will see the negative influence that their contemporaries are having on their behaviours as a way of getting the attention, recognition and approval of their peers. When students refused to do what teachers and parents ask them to do, they usually weigh the effects of their defiance on their standing among their peers. The misbehaviours at this point can be attributed to the value teenagers place on peer norms. Teenagers therefore see their behaviours in peer group as right and ideal, while teachers on the other hand, label such behaviours as bad and attribute them to negative peer group influence.

Perceptual differences in the influence of parenting styles on student in disciplinary Behaviours

The finding of the study suggested that the students perceived parenting styles as having more influence on deviant behaviours than the teachers' perceptions. This could be due to the fact that teachers would like to think that they have more influence on students' indisciplinary behaviours than parents. This finding supports the assertions of Baumrind (1991), Weiss and Schwartz (1996), Miller et al. (1993), that parenting styles have been found to predict child well-being in the domains of social competence, academic performance, psychosocial development, and problem behaviours. About ninety percent (90%) of the interviewees were unanimous in saying that, their parents were not pleased with what they did and as one respondent put it 'my parents were not happy about my misconduct, *they felt highly ashamed that I became pregnant in school at the tender age of sixteen. My mother said I have disgraced her, in that I put her parenting obligation into disrepute*'. This respondent vowed never to misbehave again and that she has changed for the better. These responses from the students also confirm the power of parents in influencing student indiscipline behaviours.

In support of the assertion that parents are influential in their wards indisciplinary behaviour, that is whether a child would grow up to become a deviant or not will all depend on the parental home upbringing, the present finding therefore supports the assertions of Freud and Erikson in their psychosexual and psychosocial theories of personality and human development respectively stressing that parental discipline patterns and attitudes have significant consequences for a child's later personality development. That is, whether a child will grow up to become a deviant or not, depends on the parental upbringing. So it is not surprising that the students in the present study perceived their parents as having more influence on their behaviours.

Perceptual differences in the role of the school guidance and counselling officer in curbing student Indisciplinary behaviours.

The finding of the present study indicated that there is a significant difference between the perceptions of teachers and students with regard to the role of the school guidance and counselling coordinator in curbing student indiscipline behaviours. The students perceived the guidance and counselling coordinator as having more roles to play in curbing indiscipline behaviours than the teachers' perception. This finding is contrary to the finding of Dankwa (1981) who asserted that at the inception of guidance and counselling programmes in Ghanaian schools, their roles were performed by housemasters, housemistresses, teachers, and chaplains, hitherto, the situation remains the same due to insufficient number of trained guidance and counselling officers in our schools.

The Counsellor's role is rendered by teachers so they stand a better chance of appreciating the significant role of guidance and counselling officers in student disciplinary issues than the students who only know the school Counsellor but never availed themselves to their services. In the present study students seems to be more aware and appreciative of the Counsellor's role in school disciplinary cases than teachers probably because, Counsellors play dual role in the school system. Apart from the counselling work they do, they also teach and interact more with the students than teachers do, and as a result students are more favourably exposed to the Counsellor as compared to teachers. Teachers' misconceptions of the activities of the Counsellor might be due to the existing animosity between teachers and Counsellors which is likely due to lack of respect, confidence, trust and co-operation for Counsellors by the teachers and more importantly, the failure of school Counsellors to plan and execute programmes that will better expose them to the school community.

However, the present study supports that of Morrissette (2000) who stated that, school Counsellors contend with a number of unique issues, and that they also face personal, professional, physical and psychological isolation as practitioners, coupled with this in many schools, there is only one Counsellor assigned by the school or in some cases the school district and they are expected to perform as a generalist (Morrissette, 2000). As a result of their heavy work schedule, Counsellors may not even have the opportunity to exchange ideas with their colleagues or participate in professional development activities and therefore teachers may not see the essence of the Counsellor's role. It is worthy to note that, the t-test conducted revealed that the students rather than the teachers perceived the guidance and counselling officer as having a role in curbing student indiscipline. It is therefore interesting that students in the focus group interview, reported that they were not referred to the guidance and counselling officer since teachers are not very much appreciative of the Counsellor as being capable of assisting students with problems that need reform.

This is a classic case of school authorities' negative attitudes toward guidance and counselling officers influencing student indiscipline behaviours hence their reluctance in referring deviants to the Counsellor as majority of the respondents (70%) in the focus group discussion said they were not referred to the school Counsellor by their teachers and that neither did they make any effort on their own to relate with the Counsellor. As respondent (04) a female student at Holy Prophet said "I realized the offence I committed was bad but I felt reluctant to see the Counsellor for assistance, because if my friends see me with the Counsellor, I will be branded

as a notorious student. Implying, students have the impression that, it is only notorious students who see the Counsellor. This may also be indicative of the general negative attitudes that school authorities have toward guidance and counseling officers.

Teaching length of service and perceptual difference in what constitute Indiscipline behaviours

The findings of the study established that, there is a significant difference in teachers with longer period of service and those with shorter period of service. According to the findings, teachers with longer service had better perceptions of what constitute disciplinary behaviours than those with shorter length of service. Apparently, there is no previous related finding to this present finding, as there seem to be no studies conducted in this area. This could be so because teachers with longer period of service are most likely to be in school administration. Therefore as disciplinarians, see student misbehaviours that slightly deviates from the norm as gross misconduct while their counterparts with shorter period of service tend to overlook most misbehaviours put up by students as not constituting acts of student discipline behaviours since most of them have just completed college and university so they are more likely to misbehave just as the students they are teaching and would not see anything wrong with such behaviours. The perceptual difference in teachers with longer and those with shorter period of service in what constitute student discipline behaviours could also be accounted for by the fact that since teachers with shorter period of service are in their youthful stage, they would probably take delight in watching foreign films and thereby be exposed to foreign culture just like the students. They would therefore be more prone to imitating behaviours being exhibited by their role models on the TV and other media and as they engage in such behaviours. On the other hand, teachers with longer period of service would see such behaviours as maladaptive behaviours and would therefore abhor it due to the generational gap between these two groups of teachers.

Sex Difference And Perceptions Of What Constitute Indisciplinary Behaviours

The t-test result of the present study with regard to sex difference of both students and teachers on student discipline behaviours indicated that there was no significant difference in responses so far as the sexes were concerned. Male teachers and students as well as female teachers and students sample for the study had almost the same perceptions of acts that constitute discipline behaviours. This might be due to the equal opportunities both sexes have enabling them have access to information on issues pertaining to disciplinary cases in the school system. It may also suggest that the behaviours that constitute discipline are not sex-typed these days. For example alcohol drinking which at one time was regarded by Ghanaians as 'men' behaviour may now be regarded as disciplinary behaviour if boys or girls are found engaging themselves in.

Conclusions

The conclusions drawn from the research findings on the perception of students and teachers with regard to discipline behaviours among students at Mankranso in the AhafoAno South District are that;

With reference to whether there was a significance difference between the perception of teachers and students about what constitute disciplinary behaviours. It was evident that the view of teachers and students perceptions on students' discipline was representative with regard to sex and status of the population. This confirms the assertion of Osei-Hwedie and Ndilo (1989) that students in the adolescent age groups are in the worst period in their youth life due to their overall circumstances of living

On the issue of teachers' perception of discipline, which the present study sought to investigate, could be said to be representative of teachers within the age group of 30-39 years in the Ahafo-Ano South District. This therefore implies that the sample contained teachers with varied and reasonably long experience in teaching and therefore more likely to have experienced student disciplinary cases than those with shorter period of service, which goes a long way to validate the data obtained from them.

The study also revealed that students usually weigh the effects of their defiance on their standing among their peers because teenagers place value on peer norms. Teenagers therefore see their behaviours in peer group as right and ideal, while teachers on the other hand, label such behaviours as bad and attribute them to negative peer group influence. From the study students seem to be more aware and appreciative of the Counsellor's role in school disciplinary cases than teachers probably because, Counsellors play dual role in the school system. Apart from the counselling work they do, they also teach and interact more with the students than teachers do, and as a result students are more favourably exposed to the Counsellor as compared to teachers.

Finally, it was further noted that the behaviours that constitute discipline are not sex-typed these days. For example alcohol drinking which at one time was regarded by Ghanaians as 'men' behaviour may now be regarded as disciplinary behaviour if boys or girls are found engaging themselves in.

It is hoped that the findings of this study will enlighten educational administrators on the acceptable and recommended administrative style that can create a conducive environment devoid of student misbehaviours. It is again envisaged that the outcome of the study will throw more light on the duties of the school Counsellor and also his role in curbing student indiscipline. Despite the numerous research work conducted on students' indiscipline in foreign countries, there is apparently lack of empirical studies in Ghana relating to this area of study. Apart from adding to the research on indiscipline, the study would also provide the basis for other prospective researchers to study into other domains of school indiscipline not covered in this research.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions the following recommendations were made:

- The district guidance and counselling coordinator should organize capacity building workshops for school guidance Counsellors to equip them to function effectively in their various schools.
- The school counselors should also work in consonance with the teachers to bring about the needed change in the students life.
- The school authorities must endeavour to foster harmonious living among staff and students for teaching and learning to go on effectively as this can help in minimizing student disciplinary behaviours.
- Stakeholders such as, the District Education Oversight Committee should therefore ensure that proper mechanisms are put in place to check these negative acts put up by students.
- School rules and regulations could be few, simple, fair and consistently enforced by teachers so that students would not become confused about what is expected of them in terms of good conduct
- Students must be oriented and sensitized to correct the stigma they have for student who see the Counsellor as deviants and rather be better predisposed towards counselling and thereby avail themselves for guidance services provided by the Counsellor. This can be done by the school guidance and counselor.
- The district assembly as the local government should fund or sponsor guidance and counselling programmes in schools in the district by way of promoting discipline among students in the district.
- Educational authorities should plan activities that would aim at informing students on the consequences of negative peer group influence.
- Finally, parents should be invited to the school occasionally, and be briefed on their wards conducts through PTA meetings. Parents are also to adopt good parenting styles in their childrenupbringing so as to inculcate good morals into them.

Areas for Further Studies

The present study covered only students at Mankranso in Ahafo-Ano South District of the Ashanti Region. A replication of the study in other districts in the region is suggested to confirm or disprove the results of the present study. It is also suggested that three or more districts be compared to make the finding more generalizable to the Ashanti Region as a whole. The method adopted for this study can be used for replication. Furthermore, studies should be done into finding the effects of student disciplinary behaviours on the socio-economic development of the country and also the effects of student indiscipline behaviours on students' academic performance.

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