

Influence of Teachers' Attitudes towards Students' Discipline in Secondary Schools in Murang'a East Sub- County, Murang'a County, Kenya

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Abstract: Discipline is a rudimental ingredient that plays a crucial role in a school system, which insists on upholding the moral values of students. The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of teachers' attitudes towards student's discipline in secondary schools in Murang'a East Sub-County. The specific objectives of the study were: to establish the determinants of students' indiscipline in secondary schools, determine whether teachers' attitudes towards students' gender affects discipline, analyse whether the type of school influences the teachers' attitude towards students' discipline and to establish the relationship between teachers' attitudes and students' discipline in secondary schools in Murang'a East Sub-County. The study employed the use of descriptive survey research design which is suitable for the study of behaviours and attitudes. A sample of 126 respondents was selected that included 54 teachers and 72 students representing a total population of approximately 540 teachers and 720 students. The survey tool was in form of a questionnaire and all analysis was done using SPSS. The study found that there is a significant relationship between teachers' attitudes and students' discipline in secondary schools in Murang'a East Sub-County. The study further established that teachers have prejudiced and discriminative beliefs on the students which may impact negatively on their discipline. The type of school as one of the category of variables investigated was not found to influence students' indiscipline. The study recommends that all the stakeholders should be involved in the development of a good attitude structure in secondary schools. It further recommends the need to have open forums between teachers and students so as to discuss their most immediate problems, regulate behaviour and rectify bad attitudes towards both the teachers and students. The study proposes further research with respect to other determinants that may affect students' discipline such as socio-cultural, socio-economic, class, race, length of stay of teachers in institutions of learning and the academic achievements of the students.

Keywords: Discipline, Attitudes, Gender, Secondary Schools.

1. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY:

Kenya has had a share of discipline issues especially in secondary schools. The period between 1990 and 2008 witnessed many horrific indiscipline issues such as vandalism of school property, murder, assault, and rape among others Republic of Kenya, (2001).The 1991 murder of 19 girls at St. Kizito mixed secondary school in Meru, the Bombolulu incident of 1998 the murder of prefects in Nyeri in 1999, the killing of 68 students at Kyanguli boys in 2011 are some of the worst aftermath of discipline problems. Some problems of discipline may not have been documented but they keep on occurring on daily basis due to the influence of the ever changing lifestyles. This include: influences of drug abuse, high rates of crime, and changing technology of communication among others (Mbogori, 2012).

Some of the breaking news highlighted in the mass media has portrayed schools with students of misbehaving characters. Unrest in schools has been common during the first, second and third terms especially in public secondary schools. According to Karanja (2012), students from Kahuhia Girls High School demonstrated on the streets accusing the administration of denying them a chance to hold co-curricular activities saying that a planned beauty contest was cancelled at the last minute. Seven students of Mugoiri Girls High School were aligned in a Murang'a court for attempting to burn their school hostels where property of unknown value was destroyed. The girls were nabbed by the Deputy Principal carrying a jerrican of diesel and a matchbox. The girls complained of congestion in their places of residence and classrooms. According to Karanja, students of Gikandu secondary school in Murang'a East Sub-County were arrested for reportedly inciting students of a neighbouring secondary school, St. Joseph Kiangage to go on strike. This is in agreement with the District Commissioner who opined that most students copied students from their neighbourhood schools who went on strike. Most of the unrest cases in secondary schools have not been reported.

Learning was disrupted at Kibutha Girls Secondary School after students went on the rampage and razed a store, kitchen and part of a dining hall. According to Mwangi (2012), other schools in the same region of Murang'a County which neighbours Murang'a East Sub-County which also suffered unrests include: Rwathia Girls Secondary School where girls wanted to be allowed to wear miniskirts to school, Kiruri Boys Secondary School where students were charged in court for razing down a hostel, Njumbi High School where students broke all window panes in the school buildings and destroyed property worth thousands of shillings, Gitweku Girls Secondary School where girls complained over the transfer of their principal and Kamahuha Girls Secondary School where girls complained of water shortage. The Sub-County Commissioner condemned the rising cases of unrest in the secondary schools and blaming the strikes on peer influence, he said: "The burning down of school buildings has become a security threat and I have directed the school administration and the administration Police to arrest those behind the strike." The Sub-County Commissioner was cited by Mwangi (2011) who added that most of the students complained of high hardness by the teachers while others complained of poor quality foods, mock fever and copying their neighbourhood schools students who have recently gone on strike. This is in agreement with the Officer Commanding Police Division who opined that some of the students engage in such criminal activities out of peer influence or when they don't want to continue with their studies.

Students are priceless assets and the most essential elements in education. The education systems and programs cannot run and function in the absence of the learners. The systems have been effectively put in place for the benefit and goodwill of learners and which can only be possible in the event of having them following the laid down rules and regulations. According to Varcomby (2008), for the advancement of organized and peaceful school environments and the maintenance of law and order, school administrations specify rules and regulations that guide the activities of the members of the educational organization. Students' discipline is a prerequisite to almost everything a school has to offer students. Academic programs can only flourish in the event of existing of a culture, which allows for the good conduct and instilling of discipline among the learners.

Classroom management is important, especially to convince students to behave. Classroom management has the largest effect on student achievement. This implies that good classroom discipline means that the socio-emotional condition prevailing in the classroom is conducive and harmonious. Classroom management is not a discrete activity but a combination of various processes that occur in the dynamism of the learning classroom. According to Mwiria (2004), an effective classroom manager understands the common determinants of misbehaviour and is able to develop a variety of effective skills and techniques to prevent and deal with such behaviour. Classroom management relates to prevent from students' misbehaviour. Therefore, teachers have to manage it appropriately and establish the rules and rewards effectively to conduct positive classroom environment

The importance of teachers' expectations, attitudes and feelings about learners has been demonstrated dramatically in a series of studies (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 2008). Since teachers' expectations are not for the most part conscious intentions, how are the messages conveyed? So far, it seems as if the nonverbal communication channels are a main mode of transmission pointing out the importance of nonverbal behaviour. The work on teacher expectations clearly indicates that people can't really hide their true attitudes. Perhaps highly skilled actors after disciplined practice can, successfully mask their real feelings, but most teachers, like everyone else, cannot do so. Most students can read their teachers almost like a book. This mirrors studies carried out by Simatwa (2010) who argued that teachers had a major role in promoting students' discipline by way of having a strong self-belief enhancing their capacity to effectively police and guide the students.

People can hold attitudes for varying degrees of favourability towards themselves, and towards any indiscriminate aspect of their environment. Krech & Crutchfield (2008) viewed that there is a wide range of attitudes towards relatively abstract goals like courage, freedom and honesty. Attitude is a particular cognitive, emotional or behavioural reaction to an object, individual, group, situation or action. An attitude is a fairly stable emotional tendency to respond consistently to some specific object, situation person, or category of people. Attitudes are also much more specific than values, which dictate only broad preferences. Besides, it is commonly used in daily conversation that probably all of us have a good common sense notion of the term. Attitudes serve as an index of how we think and feel about people, objects and issues in our environment. In addition, they can provide clues to future behaviour predicting how we will act when we encounter the objects of our beliefs.

Teachers' attitudes towards learners are also important in determining classroom atmosphere. Prohansky (2005) argued that learning climates are subjective and we are all adept learners in determining whether a teacher likes students. The feeling is readily apparent. Does the teacher feel we are incompetent? Do we feel that teachers' really want us to be successful? Is the teacher employing the rightful rewards and punishments system to account for both positive and negative behaviour? A study by Nyamwange (2012) showed that challenges facing teachers in the administration of discipline in their schools stemmed from their attitudes towards the learners. This is attributed to the fact that some teachers have feelings of incompetence thus are unable to effectively handle the tasks at hand.

We acquire most beliefs about a particular object quite directly. We hear or read a fact of opinion or other people validate our expressed beliefs. However, we can often develop fairly nebulous likes and dislikes (affect) and then develop our beliefs subsequently, to justify our feelings. This affective orientation will guide the sorts of beliefs you hold. We form and change our attitudes throughout our lives. However, teachers have an enormous task ahead of them. They go to a school with no attitudes about the students and so have to learn them in order to orient themselves to the students. One way by which they do this is simply imitating the behaviour of other teachers in the school. This may prompt them to form positive or negative attitudes on the students depending on what others hold (Davey et al, 2008).

Prejudice is a learned attitude towards a target object that typically involves negative affect, dislike or fear, a set of negative beliefs that support the attitude and a behavioural intention to avoid or control or dominate those in the target group. According to Gross (2005), stereotypes are prejudiced beliefs. When prejudice is acted out when it becomes overt in various forms of behaviour, then discrimination is in practice. Prejudice refers to a negative attitude towards people who belong to a special social group. Prejudice is ultimately based on exaggerated notion that members of other social groups are very different from members of other groups. As an extreme attitude, prejudice comprises the three components common to all attitudes that's the ABC component.

According to Fiske (2004) the affect component is crucial. This is illustrated by the findings that individual differences in emotional prejudice correlate with discrimination better than do stereotypes. Although the relationship between prejudice and discrimination is moderate, it's comparable to general attitude behaviour. This is in agreement with Kalat (2005) who opined that it is possible to develop stereotypes because of our tendency to remember the unusual. Stereotypes can also be based on exaggerations of correct observations. Researchers have come to admit that many stereotypes are correct. Stereotypes have additionally been regarded as convenient guides to interaction, particularly when others can be rapidly categorized in relation to the self.

According to sessional paper number one of 2005, the government proposed the establishment of more day secondary schools to provide bigger access to education and have lower situations of indiscipline cases. Murang'a East Sub-County has thirty-four secondary schools. They constitute of four private secondary schools and thirty public secondary schools. Five are boarding secondary schools and twenty-five are day secondary schools. Statistics from the DEO's office in Murang'a East Sub-County have shown that, discipline cases are more profound in the secondary schools. The reports show that suspensions from school owing to discipline cases stand at 67% for the secondary schools compared to 33% for the boarding secondary schools. The expulsions from school equally stand at 74% for secondary schools compared to 23% for boarding secondary schools.

The above statistics are a clear indicator of higher situations of indiscipline in the secondary schools. Although many researchers have researched on discipline, most of the independent variables differ. That means that some researchers have studied discipline and other variables such as: influence of principals' leadership styles on discipline, Kingori (2012) Students' perception on discipline practice, Munyua (2007), Challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' discipline Muriithi (2010) among others. Likewise, the issue of attitudes has been studied under various dependent

variables such as, relationship between secondary school teachers' attitudes towards integrated English approach and their teaching performance (Ondoro, 2003), primary school teachers' attitudes towards external instructional supervision (Nyagwa, 2011), the perception and attitudes towards grief of Kenyan youth adults (Ndung'u, 2007), teachers' and students' attitudes to peer counselling in secondary schools (Mbugua, 2006).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Emerging students' discipline issues within secondary schools in Murang'a East Sub-County are of great concern. Several studies have been carried out to investigate students' discipline problems in secondary schools in Kenya with varying variables. However, there is paucity of research on the role of teachers' attitudes on students' discipline not only in Kenya but more so, in Murang'a East Sub-County. It is pertinent therefore to ask the question, could the teachers' attitudes be a factor affecting students' discipline in the Sub-County? The culture of students' indiscipline is rampant among secondary school students not only in Kenya but also worldwide. This is in spite of the government's and schools' efforts to curb it through instituting measures such as the establishment of GC departments in schools, involvement of the school community in the school administration through democratic election of students' representatives, introduction of peer counselling in schools and the MOE organizing for Principals' and Deputy Principals' leadership workshops among others.

Teachers' attitudes therefore may be an important factor that plays a leading role in determining the standards of discipline in learners in secondary schools. This realization however does not actually guarantee this fact and therefore it is necessary to scientifically carry out some investigations. The purpose of the study was to investigate the role of teachers' attitudes towards student's discipline in secondary schools in Murang'a East Sub-County, Murang'a County.

The specific objectives of the study were:-

- (i) To establish the determinants of students' indiscipline in secondary schools in Murang'a East Sub-County
- (ii) To determine whether teacher's attitudes towards students' gender affects discipline in secondary schools in Murang'a East Sub-County.
- (iii) To analyze whether the type of school influences the teachers' attitude towards students' discipline in Murang'a East Sub County
- (iv) To establish the relationship between teachers' attitudes and students' discipline in secondary schools in Murang'a East Sub-County.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive survey design. The study was carried out in Murang'a East Sub-County in Murang'a County and targeted only the secondary schools in the Sub-County.

The target population of this study consisted of all 540 TSC teachers of public secondary schools and 720 form three students in Murang'a East Sub-County. A sample of 126 respondents was drawn from the target population and included 54 teachers and 72 students. Questionnaires were used as the main data collection instruments. Prior to embarking on data collection, the researcher pre-tested the questionnaires using two secondary schools in Murang'a South Sub-County. To ensure that the instruments used were valid and reliable, the researcher discussed them with the supervisors from Maasai Mara University. All analysis was done using SPSS and descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used as data analysis techniques.

3. STUDY FINDINGS

This section shows the analysis of specific objectives of the study from the data collected.

3.1 Determinants of Students' Indiscipline in Secondary Schools in Murang'a East Sub-County:

The respondents were given statements on factors of indiscipline on a Likert scale rating. The two categories of respondents were given different questions regarding what they think are the determinants of indiscipline in the schools.

Table 1: Teachers 'responses to determinants of indiscipline in secondary schools

Percent %	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Disruptive Students Influence Others To Misbehave	37%	26%	1%	17%	19%
Students Elect Prefects Who Favour Them	43%	17%	5%	22%	13%
Teachers Embrace Dialogue In Dealing with Students Problems	20%	13%	12%	31%	24%
Students Provided With Variety Of Meals	30%	23%	3%	18%	26%
Poorly Performing Students Indulge in Drugs	48%	14%	8%	15%	15%

From the above Table 1, 37% of the teachers strongly agreed that disruptive students influence others to misbehave while 26% agreed, 1% remained undecided, 17% disagreed and 19% strongly disagreed. This implies that overall, 63% of the teachers were in support of this argument and 36% differed. On the issue of the election of prefects, 60% of the teachers felt that students elect prefects who will favour them against 35% who disagreed with the idea and 5% who were undecided. The teachers who agreed with the view, may be the ones who impose prefects on students. The ones who disagreed may be the ones who democratically constitute the prefect body and the undecided may be the newly posted teachers to the schools. Prefects chosen by the administration may not be favoured by the students and the students choose prefects who would favour them. Unfavourable prefects may suffer from the students' activities.

On the issue of dealing with the students' problems, teachers were asked to indicate whether the teachers embraced dialogue in dealing with students' problems. 33% of the teachers were in support of the idea against 55% who opposed and 12% who remained undecided. At times teachers rush to conclusions especially when dealing with indiscipline cases and feel that investigating the cases and having dialogue with the students would take much of their time which should be used doing other things. This is in agreement with (Mckenzie & Rutto, 2010) who argues that when dealing with students discipline problems, one should develop reinforcement schedules and use them with misbehaving students and collaborate on developing and signing contingency contracts to help stimulate behavioral change which should be followed through dialogue with the students.

To determine whether meals served in secondary schools may be a determinant of indiscipline, the teachers were asked to indicate whether students are provided with varieties of meals. 53% of the teachers agreed that a variety of meals are served against a significant 44% who disagreed meaning that the meals are not varied and the rest 3% of the teachers remained undecided. The teachers who felt that meals are varied may not be involved in the provision of meals as this does not directly fall in their docket.

To determine the involvement of drug abuse as a determinant of indiscipline, the teachers were asked to indicate whether students who perform poorly in examinations indulge in drugs. The findings indicated that 62% of the teachers agreed with the statement against 30% who disagreed with the item and 8% who were undecided. This is in tandem with Chege (2002) who opined that majority of the youths who take drugs do so to stave off stress and hopelessness. The more the teenagers take the drug, the more they are likely to be involved in violent crimes either as victims or perpetrators. Even though it is undocumented, students in secondary schools abuse drugs such as alcohol and cigarettes mostly as they go home from schools. Findings of a survey carried out by NACADA (2004) revealed that students abuse drugs in the learning institutions. Students are always aware of nearly every activity, legal or illegal taking place in the school. They might have feared to expose their schools despite the assurance of the researcher that all the information would be held in confidence.

Table 2: Students 'responses to determinants of indiscipline in secondary schools

Percent %	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Students practice what they watch on TV screens	40	29	6	15	10
Students not involved in election of prefects	56	32	6	1	5

Teachers investigate indiscipline cases before acting	11	17	1	54	17
Meals served are monotonous and boring	22	17	11	25	25
Students use drugs and sneak some to school	19	3	4	28	46
Harsh punishments given even for petty crimes	48	10	11	12	19

Students were also asked questions as to what they think are the determinants of indiscipline in their schools and their responses are illustrated on Table 5 above. 69% of the students agreed with the statement that students try to practice what they watch on screens to see their effects thereby leading to disruptive activities. However, 25% disagreed with the idea while 6% were undecided. Those students are at their adolescence stage of development. According to MOEST (2001), adolescence is a volatile stage of life. It is the stage where those who are in it rebel against authority and respond to peer group influence. These students can easily be influenced because they can do anything to be able to fit in the peer group.

On the issues of meals in school, 50% of the students disagreed with the idea that the meals served are monotonous and boring. However, 39% agreed and 11% remained undecided. The students who felt that the meals are not monotonous or boring are the ones who may have come from home backgrounds which provide similar meals as the schools provide and those who are not easily influenced by others. This is in agreement with Macharia (2001) who opined that among the common indiscipline determinants identified from a research carried out in Central Province the issue of food came out in most schools. This is in tandem with Gakumu (2002) who attested that in most schools, there is a lot of monotony with the diet and that school diet has become a major outcry in schools across the country.

When the students were asked if teachers investigate indiscipline cases before acting, 71% of the students disagreed, 28% agreed and 1% remained undecided. With the majority disagreeing with the idea, the researcher can imply that the students might have been victims of uninvestigated cases and may at one time have suffered from harsh judgments from the teachers.

The study also investigated on whether students are involved in election of prefects. 88% disagreed with the statement, 6% remained undecided and another 6% agreed. The ones who disagreed may be the students whom the prefect body is imposed to them while those that agreed may be the ones who are involved in the election of prefects. The undecided may be the students who have joined the school recently or those who are absent most of the time and at times the prefects themselves. This is in the line with Owiro (2002) who found out that a good prefect is one who is self discipline, well balanced, presentable, moderate, obedient, creative, and has leadership qualities. According to Thungu (2008), in some institutions the prefect body is democratically constituted while in others the teachers choose the prefects.

To determine the effect of punishment on indiscipline, the students were asked to indicate whether harsh punishments are given even after petty crimes. 58% of the students agreed with the idea against 31% who disagreed and 11% who were undecided. From the findings, the 58% of the students may be students who may have been punished time and again and maintains that they may have been innocent while those who disagreed or were undecided are those who are rarely punished or never punished at all. The intensity of the punishment is determined by the recurrence of the punished behaviour. This is in agreement with Thungu (2008) who argues that a punishment should be sufficiently aversive to discourage undesirable behaviour. It should not be unreasonably severe. It should be unpleasant enough to motivate learners to change their behaviour.

3.2 Role of Teacher's Attitudes towards Students' Gender on Discipline in Secondary Schools in Murang'a East Sub-County:

Table 3: Teachers' attitudes towards students' gender in secondary schools

Percent %	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Boys are more involved in disruptive activities than girls.	35	27	2	20	16
Students who join our school from other school influence others in carrying out disruptive activities	37	21	7	23	12

Teachers always tend to associate student with past misbehaviour event even when they have changed.	23	41	5	19	12
Teachers favour students in classes which they are assigned as class teachers	54	32	1	4	9

To identify which gender was mostly involved in more disruptive activities the respondents were asked to indicate whether boys are more involved in disruptive activities than girls. From the findings on Table 3 above, it can be observed that a combined percentage, 64% of the teachers agreed with the statement against 36% of the teachers who disagreed and 2% who were undecided. It is evident that both genders are significantly involved in disruptive activities as has been the case recently in secondary schools in Murang'a East Sub-County. According to Karanja (2012) and Mwangi (2011), students from girls' and boys' boarding secondary schools have been aligned in court after attempting to burn down hostels and other school facilities and from mixed day secondary schools for students being found inciting students from other schools to go on strike. This is in agreement with data from the DEO's office (2013), which recorded that all public secondary schools had recorded cases of disruptive activities where property of unknown value had been destroyed. On the issue of involvement in disruptive activities, the teachers were asked to indicate whether students who join their schools from other secondary schools influence others in carrying out disruptive activities. A combined percentage indicated that 58% of the teachers agreed against 35% who disagreed and 7% who were undecided. In most cases, teachers tend to associate students from other secondary schools with having been expelled from their former schools due to having participated in disruptive activities. However, this might not be the case. Students may transfer on health grounds, inability to pay exorbitant school levies in high cost schools forcing them to transfer to low cost schools, parents transferring from one place to another in day secondary schools among other reasons. Comprehensive transfer letters should be sought from current schools before the students are admitted to new to their new schools. This is in agreement with Nyagwa (2011) who opined that there are several factors that can influence attitudes.

In regard to behaviour and school rules, the teachers were asked to indicate whether teachers always tend to associate students with past misbehaviours even when they have changed. From the findings, it can clearly be observed that a combined 64% of the teachers agreed with the idea against 31% who disagreed and 5% who were undecided. Teachers handling the students can easily remember past misbehaviour events which students may be involved in and can easily associate them with current events. Teachers agreed with the idea because schools give sheets of papers containing rules and regulations which students and parents are supposed to read and sign and then return them as requisite requirement on admission. The students are not informed on their consequences and easily forget the rules for they do not keep copies of the same.

The study also sought information on favouritism. To answer this question, the teachers were asked to indicate whether teachers favour students in classes, where they are assigned as class teachers. According to the findings, it can clearly be observed that a combined 86% of the teachers agreed with the statement while 13% disagreed while 1% was undecided. The teachers felt that other teachers tend to defend students who come from classes where they are class teachers even when some students have been involved in disruptive activities with members of other classes. This may be due to the fact that there are always stiff competitions between classes even in the same forms. The teachers who disagreed with the statements may not be in good relationships with other class teachers. This identifies with the findings of Eiser (2007) who described attitudes as a subjective experience involving an evaluation of something or somebody. That something or somebody is represented within the experience.

Table 4: Responses of teachers favouring students of their opposite gender

	Teachers		Students	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	14	25.9	24	33.3
Agree	18	33.3	16	22.2
Undecided	11	20.4	18	25.0
Disagree	6	11.1	9	12.5
Strongly Disagree	5	9.3	5	6.9
Total	54	100.0	72	100.0

From the findings according to Table 4 above, it can clearly be observed that a combined percentage of the respondents, 59.2% of the teachers and 55.5% of the students agreed that teachers favour students of their opposite gender while 20.4% of the teachers and 19.4% of the students disagreed. The respondents who agreed with the view were aware of the phenomenon while those who disagreed or were undecided may be denying the facts on the ground. This is because in all schools, there were members who had the characteristics being investigated here which was gender. There are both male and female teachers in all secondary schools even when the schools are of single genders. The views were rated in a Likert scale rating where the respondents were not given a chance to give their own indicators of the favourability or unfavourability of the students by the teachers of their opposite gender.

3.3 Influence of the Type of School on Teachers' Attitude Towards Students' Discipline in Murang'a East Sub County:

The respondents were asked to rate the levels of students' indiscipline in their respective schools which was intended to measure the attitudes.

Table 5: Teachers' responses to levels of indiscipline in relation to the type of school

Percent %	Not Rampant	Rampant	Highly Rampant	Don't Know
Girls Boarding	66.7	22.2	11.1	0
Boys Boarding	11.1	55.6	33.3	0
Mixed Gender School	5.6	58.3	30.6	5.6
Totals/General Percentage	16.7	51.9	27.8	3.6

From the findings on Table 5 above, majority of the teachers, 51.9% rated the levels of students' indiscipline as rampant, 16.7% not rampant, 27.8% highly rampant and 3.6% don't know how to rate. However, 66.7% of teachers from girls' boarding schools rated indiscipline as not rampant. This is consistent with the findings of this study that found that most teachers believe that boys are more involved in disruptive activities than girls. From the boys' boarding schools, majority of the teachers, 55.6% rated indiscipline rampant while a significant 33.3% rated highly rampant. In mixed gender schools, the ratings of indiscipline were 58.3% rampant and 30.6% highly rampant.

These findings are consistent with the belief that boarding secondary school students have more time being with their peers while in day secondary schools students may have more contact with the parents, other family members, home peers and also students from other secondary schools. This may give rise to acquisition of influence from other students in both residential statuses.

3.4 Relationship Between Teachers' Attitudes and Students' Discipline in Secondary Schools in Murang'a East Sub- County?

The question on whether teachers are reluctant in dealing with students' indiscipline sought to establish the attitudes of teachers towards indiscipline. It was structured as an open ended and close ended question. The respondent was required to answer "yes" or "no" and if "yes" give reasons. The distribution of responses was represented in figure below.

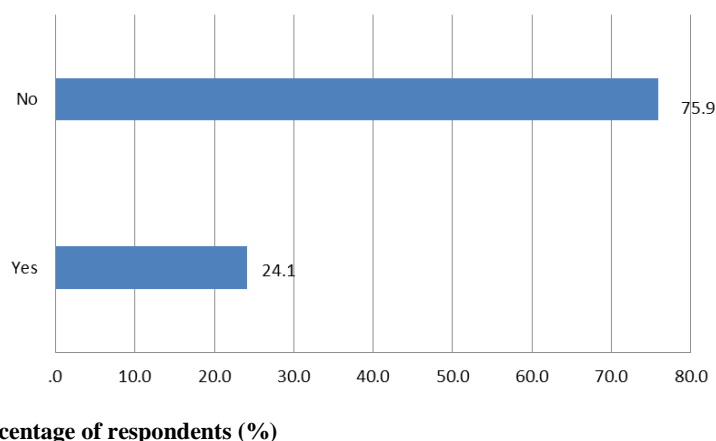


Figure 1: Views on "if there is teachers' reluctance in dealing with student indiscipline"

From the findings above, it is evident that 24.1% of the teachers felt that teachers are reluctant in dealing with students' indiscipline against 75.9% who disagreed with the statement. From the findings teachers felt that the MOEST has defined the roles of different members of the teaching fraternity where students' discipline should be handled by the deputy principals. This is in agreement with Thungu (2008) who argues that ensuring that proper school discipline is maintained in primary schools is the responsibility of deputy head teachers which translates that in secondary schools it will be the responsibility of the deputy principals. However, discipline should be the responsibility of all teachers for as Thungu opines, classroom discipline is crucial if the teaching and learning process has to be effective. Classroom discipline is the responsibility of the subject teachers.

Other views were that the teachers are not allowed to use the cane or administer corporal punishments. This makes them administer instant punishments which students refer to as harsh. Other teachers cited that their responsibility is only to teach in order to realize set targets which make them expel disruptive students. This should not be the case for teachers can use alternative measure to inculcate discipline in the students. Some measures would include negative reinforcement, withdrawal of privileges and even referring students to the GC department. This is in agreement with Corey (2008) who cites that group counselling is especially suited for adolescents because it gives them a place to express conflicting feelings, explore self doubts and to come to the realization that they share these concerns with their peers. It would take time before the counsellors get a befitting group for certain students and individual counselling may be difficult for all the students due to time constraints.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Among the many determinants of students' indiscipline in secondary schools in Murang'a East Sub-County, teachers' attitudes were found to be among the leading determinant of students' indiscipline in secondary schools. This was concluded so because students who have been observing teachers' reaction to various incidents in schools felt that teachers discriminate against some students. Teachers develop stereotypes which they associate with some students especially those who perform well whom they think cannot involve themselves in disruptive activities, indulge in drug abuse and influence others to misbehave. Also, cited as teachers' beliefs which are stereotypic and discriminative was the fact that teachers usually associate the students with past misbehaviour even when they have changed. This leaves the students in a dilemma and wonder whether the teachers employ the rightful rewards and punishments system to account for both positive and negative behavior.

In the effects of the teachers' gender, the study concluded that teachers and students observe that some teachers favor students of their opposite gender. This might be another type of stereotype because they can easily remember and cite incidents when such vices occurred. The favored students may also be involved in indiscipline cases for they are prejudiced against the other gender. This may give rise to rebellion by the unfavoured student. Disruptive activities were recorded to be in all public secondary schools in the last five years. During investigations, teachers may have drawn some conclusions which would be due to association with past events. Students in secondary schools are well versed with whatever goes on the ground. Teachers then discriminate against the students believed to be involved and vote for their expulsion because they can influence others but this may not be the case.

Students also form stereotypes about their teachers. This makes them react on their beliefs. Stereotypes may be positive or negative. The students then involve themselves in undesirable behavior against all in their environment. This therefore indicates that there is a relationship between teachers' attitudes and students' discipline in secondary schools in Murang'a East Sub-County. Schools should be encouraged to start families in schools where each student belong to a family of learners that has within it peer counsellors, teachers and students from all classes. All the stakeholders, parents, teachers, the community and the students should be involved in the development of a good attitude structure. Teachers should be taken for in-service courses and seminars to be taught on how attitudes are developed and their implications in schools and the society at large. This is to help them know that whatever they are doing in school in the process of maintaining discipline and administering authority judiciously, they are also building either good or bad attitudes towards themselves, the students or authority. They should therefore develop positive attitudes towards the students.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Central to this study was to critically assess the teachers' attitudes towards students' discipline, identify or pin down the problem and come out with tentative solutions to the problems in secondary schools in Murang'a East Sub-county. From the findings, it is clear that teachers' attitudes do have influence on students' discipline. Therefore, the following recommendations were put forward:

- i. Teachers should treat all students equally by developing conducive rapport with them, being fair in administering punishments which are measurable and which avoids favouritisms to students. They should avoid associating students with past misbehaviour in future.
- ii. There is need to have open forums between teachers and students so as to discuss their most immediate problems, regulate behavior and rectify bad attitudes towards both the teachers and students.
- iii. There is need for recognition of role models in behavior and class performance to boost vicarious reinforcement and imitation, as learning can also take place through observational learning.
- iv. Schools should be encouraged to start families in schools where each student belongs to a family of learners that has within it peer counsellors, teachers and students from all classes.
- v. All the stakeholders, parents, teachers, community and the students should be involved in the development of a good attitude structure.
- vi. Teachers should be taken for in-service courses and seminars to be in -serviced on how attitudes are developed and their implications in school and the society at large. This is to help them know that whatever they are doing in school in the process of maintaining discipline and administering authority judiciously, they are also building either good or bad attitudes towards themselves the students or authority. They should therefore develop positive attitudes towards the students.

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