Full Length Research Paper

Stakeholders’ perceptions on discipline management as a means to improve students’ academic performance emerging experiences from Bunda Distirct Schools, Tanzania

Haruni J. Machumu¹* and Zuena K. Killugwe²,

¹Faculty of Social Sciences Mzumbe University, Tanzania.
²School of Public Administration, Mzumbe University, Tanzania.

Accepted 28 May, 2013

Establishing vigorous and disciplined educational institution is not an easy pastime. It requires stakeholders’ effort and ability to create and practice the modern ways, strategies, styles and principles of managing discipline to earn ample academic achievement. This study examined stakeholders’ perceptions on discipline management as a means to improve students’ academic performance in ordinary level secondary schools. Two major aspects were concern: perceptions that stakeholders’ hold on discipline management and its contributions made from discipline management to improve students’ academic performance. National form four examination results were used as criterion reference to measure students’ academic performance. Cross-sectional survey research design was employed, with sample of 100 stakeholders’ from four selected secondary schools including teachers, students, parents and education government officials. Inductive (qualitative) approach with some elements of deductive (quantitative) approach was employed. Interviews, documentary reviews and questionnaires formed appropriate data collection instruments. The data were analysed in descriptive and numeric forms in relation to research questions. Findings report that, stakeholders hold positive perceptions on discipline management as a means to improve students’ academic performance in secondary schools as likely to happen in most of best performing schools compared to poor performing schools. The study was informed that to a large extent discipline management contributes to improve students’ academic performance in secondary schools. Thus, discipline management should be used as a process to improve students’ academic performance that build strong societal and behavioural ethos.

Key word: Academic performance, secondary school, discipline management.

INTRODUCTION

From 1990s onwards the Government of Tanzania (GoT) embarked on impressive expansion of the education system especially in primary and secondary level, the aim among others was to re-structure education system and increase accessible by provision of equal opportunity of education to all (URT, 2009). This huge expansion resulted from a greater awareness of formal education returns to the individual and its role in the social and economic development of the nation. It has become an issue of standards and quality education as judged from
the performance of students in public examinations, their general behavior and character development (Burden, 1995). For example, the National Form Four Examination results for 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2010, 2012 indicated a big number of failures which were 70, 77, 74 and 76 per-cent respectively in Mathematics alone and recent overall massive failure noted about 60% in 2013 got division zilch in all subject. There were massive failures in other subjects too (URT, 2008). The general verdict is that poor management of discipline in schools has caused poor performance since teachers who are to teach worries about their life in schools and did not engage in any discipline management at all. School politics has changed at all. As a result there is a growing indiscipline cases in the system of education because of many crises that plague the system and the appalling poor academic performance of students in secondary schools. Take for example, there are reported student who completed seven year of primary education without knowing how to read and write and selected to join secondary education with pass grade.

The concern about students’ achievement has intensified public interest in schools and students’ behavior. In Tanzania for instance, there is an increase of form four leavers with on knowledge on even computing simple and elementary arithmetic mathematics rather than reading consistently. The experience shows that the problem has its trends on the education system, societal and student’s managerial aspects. Discipline management in secondary schools on the other hand, is very important aspect to improve students’ academic performance, while lack of it usually give rise to a lot of problems such as students’ lack of vision and mission, poor time management to both teachers and students, increase of non attendance and frequently violent behaviour among students (Edwards, 2000l; Machumu, 2011). The concept of discipline management, with regard to its emphasis on dealing with inevitable misbehavior among students has been replaced by a more comprehensive body of knowledge on how to improve students’ achievement by preventing management problems (Galabawa et al., 2000). For many years now, students’ academic performance in public examinations has been used as potential tool to evaluate teaching and learning process by parents in Tanzania in which most of them are uninformed with other aspects of students’ assessment procedures.

**Background of the study**

Many issues have influence on the quality and the progress of schools’ and students’ performance. The students’ social and economic background as well as their parents’ education and engagement are examples of factors influencing the students’ performance (URT, 2008; Omari, 1995; Okumbe, 1998). Some of these factors are perhaps not seen to be influenced by the government in a short term perspective. However, the level of education and awareness of many parents does not enable them to participate in such complex theoretical arguments. For such parents and the general public, the students’ performances in recent times give cause for alarm and school authorities more than the students themselves are being accused of lack of dedication, carelessness, inattention, daydreaming, declining productivity and even mindlessness (Nwagwu, 1988). If the school management creates confusion, then indiscipline is the bane of the education system. On the other hand, indiscipline cases among government official, headmasters/mistresses, teachers, students, parents and officials of examinations bodies have been rapidly increasing in Tanzania. For example, Masuguliko (2010) blamed students’ unrest and indiscipline in schools on general indiscipline in society caused by break-down of laws, rules and order; changing cultural values and parental abandonment of the responsibility to train and discipline their children at home. In this regard, discipline management has been difficult to teachers as the days goes and hence facilitate poor performance.

The students’ on the other hand have little or no respect for their teachers, heads of schools, schools rules and conduct. Omari (1995) argues that it is difficult to maintain order and discipline in schools where teachers have no space to sit comfortably, to prepare and mark students’ work. With such high levels of indiscipline and poor management in educational institutions, it is difficult to see how effective teaching and learning can go on in the schools. Consequently, students’ poor performance in their academic work appears to be inevitable.

Studies done in Tanzania revealed that it is impossible to talk of disciplined teachers and students in schools where there is no cooperation and rapport between the school and the community around (Hemedi, 1996; Ngonanyi et al., 1973; Lyamtane, 2004). That means, the community around intends to reflect the high-quality disciplined students who respect the community and their teachers towards the success of their study since nothing can be regarded as triumph if students reveal disruptive behaviour to the community around. And the true fact is that education has an everlasting influence on one’s personality, academic achievement, social life and behaviour. There is, indeed, a culture of indiscipline that goes far beyond aggression to students and young people that permeates in our society, including the family and at school, as a whole-and create a reference theory for students and young people (Salas, 1997). The consequences of these incidence in schools among others are increased corporal punishment by teachers and parents; early pregnancy together with early marriage, development of fear, anxiety and insecurity; disruption of teaching and learning process; facilitating
punitive measures; weakening of school discipline and break of school rules and regulations and hence poor academic performance (Ochenge, 2010). This is corroborated by varied media reports which have painted a number of incidents, as for example, on the pages of many national newspapers, radio and television reports abound of increasing incidents of rape, drug abuse, abusive language and other social evils among secondary schools students (Manase and Kisanga, 1978). Although, newspapers and some media sources sometimes are prejudiced and unauthentic, they do inform important and current information which is potential in a study like this one.

In 2010, The Guardian newspaper of February, 22nd, p.4, posits: “All 480 students of Chigunga Secondary School in Geita District, Mwanza Region, have been suspended for two weeks after staging a two-hour demonstration over perceived poor performance in their school”. Again in TanzaniaDaima, a Swahili daily newspaper of February 14th, 2010, p.3, reads: ‘ten students of Nyeruma secondary school in Bunda District, Mara Region have been suspended from studies due to indiscipline cases including beating their fellow form one students’. “Moral decay is a major contributor to poor performance in national examinations” reported The Guardian newspaper, of 22nd February, 2010, pp. 2-3 and appends “last week police in Tabora held 53 students of Idete secondary school in Uyui District for reportedly injuring their headmaster and destroying school property”. In addition to that, in 2010 Sunday Citizen February 7th, had the title “Poor show as form four students of Chigunga Secondary School in Kilimanjaro region are advised to manage their schools and educators are argued to supervise students’ discipline and develop departments of guidance and counselling within their respective schools in collaboration with others stakeholders such as parents, schools governing board and village government so as to ensure righteous conduct/morality and discipline among stakeholders since by doing so they will be helping students to learn effectively and perform better. Poor performing students in secondary schools represent a huge loss for the individuals as well as for the society. It affects the possibility for students to move on to higher education. It also hampers the ability for the government to reach strategic development goals; not just for the education sector, but for the whole society.

Statement of the problem

Poor students’ academic performance in most of secondary schools is currently a growing predicament in education system and the issue is well known and discussed by many stakeholders for so long in Tanzania. Different education stakeholders perceive poor students’ academic performance differently; for instance, affluent parents are searching for alternatives to the public schools and they are prepared to pay huge sums of money to patronize good private schools or to send their children to other countries with better organized schools (those sell serious teaching and facilitate learning as well as academic balanced knowledge). Unfortunately, neither the government nor deprived parents are able or even willing to pay more for education (Sumra et al., 1999). To other different strategies, rules, principles, and laws have been adopted to address the problem, others provide blanket blames to teachers and school management team as the causal factors of students’ poor academic performance since they fail to handle their duties appropriately. It is a concern that good performance of students is essential for social and economic development. Despite these ambitions there are massive failures in all subjects in ordinary level secondary schools as most recent form four results indicate 60% failure. This study designed to find out stakeholders perceptions and contributions generated from discipline management as a means, strategies to improve students’ academic performance in secondary schools.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study was to examine stakeholders’ perceptions on discipline management as a means to improve students’ academic performance in ordinary level secondary schools. More specifically: to investigate any contributions made from discipline management in relation to student’s academic performance. However, the following research questions
Significance of the study

It was perceived that information obtained from stakeholders perceptions on discipline management would make significant contributions to establish a baseline for formulating school discipline management strategies, techniques and school discipline policy which can be adhered to ordinary secondary schools clientele. Second, it was perceived that education stakeholders could use the study to recognise possibility of conducting managerial training for school management team and teachers so as to come up with useful policy recommendations towards effort against indiscipline and poor academic performance among secondary schools students. Third, the study also recognizes the necessity of generating local knowledge that will help all education stakeholders on managing students discipline in their schools on the way to improve academic performance. Finally, it was perceived that findings of this study will shed light on how to improve discipline management and how discipline management can improve the efficiency of secondary schools in their missions and visions to offer quality education and minimise failure.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed cross-sectional survey research design, with sample of 100 stakeholders’ from four selected secondary schools. The choice of this design was influenced by the objective of this study and the fact that data can be collected from multiple groups of people in a relatively short period of time (Bryman, 1992). Inductive (qualitative) approach with some elements of deductive (quantitative) approach was employed. Methodological justification for bringing quantitative and qualitative approach together was to capitalize on the strengths of the two approaches and to compensate for the weaknesses of each approach; as well as the light of the practical circumstances (Punch, 2004).

Multiple data collection techniques were employed to ensure reliability and validity of the study, since there is no single data collection technique that is sufficient in collecting valid and reliable data. This study collected data from both primary and secondary sources since both types of data can be productive for descriptive, confirmatory, explanatory, inductive and hypothesis-testing purposes (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Data were collected through interviews (semi-structured interview (in-depth) with interview guide questions), documentary reviews (examination results and continuous assessment records) and open-ended questionnaires administered to teachers and students of higher grades. The data were analysed in descriptive and numeric forms in relation to research questions.

The study incorporated all students, teachers, parents, district education officers, school inspectors and heads of schools in selected secondary schools since they perceived to have good information about discipline management and academic performance in their respective schools. Also, the study employed purposive sampling to select the district, schools, and heads of schools, discipline masters/mistress, district secondary education officials and school inspectors. Furthermore, stratified sampling was also used to select students and teachers and finally simple random sampling was employed to select parents. The sample respondent categories involved four secondary schools that were Ellys, Bunda, Nyiendo and Kunzugu; four heads of schools, four discipline masters/mistresses, 26 teachers, 10 parents, two district education officers (secondary department), four secondary school inspectors and 50 students making a total of 82 respondents. Table 1 exhibits a clue of sample size and its composition.

Distinctiveness of the studied secondary schools

Four ordinary secondary schools were selected purposively following a number of frequencies in the best performing (top ten) or poor performing (last ten) secondary schools vis-à-vis general performance in district level over five year (2007-2011). To make the study more representative one rural (Kunzugu secondary school) and one urban (Nyiendo secondary school) schools were selected. However, schools were Ellys and Bunda secondary schools (selected among best performing schools); Nyiendo and Kunzugu secondary schools (selected among poor performing schools). Table 2 shows additional distinctive characteristics features of the studied secondary schools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study used 100 respondents including classroom ordinary teachers, students, school inspectors, parents, heads of schools and discipline masters/mistresses to investigate their knowledge, perceptions, awareness and working experiences in teaching and managing discipline, academic qualification and time spent in the same school. The selected four secondary schools were found...
Table 1. Selection of Respondents in Selected Ordinary Secondary Schools (n=100).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Respondents Category</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>HS</th>
<th>DM</th>
<th>SI</th>
<th>DSEO</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best</td>
<td>Ellys Secondary School</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Bunda Secondary School</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Kunzugu Secondary School</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Nyiendo Secondary School</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2013
Key: B = Boys, G = Girls; F = Female, M = Male; HS=Heads of schools; SI=School Inspector, DM = Discipline Master/Mistress and DSEO = District Secondary Education Officer.

Table 2. Distinctiveness of the studied secondary schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Ellys S.S.</th>
<th>Bunda S.S.</th>
<th>Nyiendo S.S.</th>
<th>Kunzugu S.S.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locality</td>
<td>Semi-urban</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Semi-urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of students</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>998</td>
<td>465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of classes</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library services</td>
<td>1 room</td>
<td>1 room</td>
<td>NIL</td>
<td>NIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline committee</td>
<td>6 member</td>
<td>5 member</td>
<td>5 member</td>
<td>7 member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NIL</td>
<td>NIL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, January, 2013
Key: S.S = Secondary School

in urban, semi-urban and rural areas of Bunda district. Those schools were intended to make the collected data most representative and reliable. Data from different sources are presented as per research questions, giving results from interviews, followed by questionnaires and lastly from documentary analysis. It should be noted that this sequence may not apply, as not all the data could be secured from all sources.

Question 1: How far does students’ discipline management contribute to improve academic performance?

The study intended to examine how discipline management in secondary schools contribute to improve academic performance among students. The findings obtained from heads of schools, DSEO (District Secondary Education Officer.), school inspectors, discipline masters and mistresses and teachers revealed that discipline management in schools is a pillar of students’ academic success. It has been confirmed that without appropriate discipline management schools suffer from insecurity and hence difficult to achieve good academic performance.

When teachers were asked how discipline management contributes to improve academic performance in their secondary schools, their responses are summarised in Table 3.

Based on teacher’s perceptions on Table 3, 13(100%) teachers from best and 12 (92.3%) from poor performing secondary schools responded that they tend to build positive relationship with difficult and wrong doing students hence building interest for them to perform better. However, 11(84.6%) teachers from best performing schools perceived that ideal school have more than one goal, discipline management being among of them build respectful and sensitive interactions that provide opportunity for students to achieve better since in ideal school, teachers hold their students to appropriately high standards of academic while only 4 (30.7%) teachers from poor performing secondary schools perceived the same. On the other hand, 10(76.9%) teachers from best performing schools perceived providing explicit and implicit messages to students while only 6(53.8%) teachers from poor performing schools perceived to do
Table 3. How does discipline management contribute to improve students’ academic performance (n=26)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ways on how discipline management contribute to improve students’ academic performance</th>
<th>Best performing schools (n=13)</th>
<th>Poor performing schools (n=13)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing explicit and implicit messages</td>
<td>10(76.9)</td>
<td>6(53.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building relationship with difficult students</td>
<td>13(100)</td>
<td>12(92.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful and sensitive interactions that build opportunity to achieve better.</td>
<td>11(84.6)</td>
<td>4(30.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create positive school climate for learning</td>
<td>10(76.9)</td>
<td>(65.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2013

the same. These findings imply that different teachers employ different discipline management skills that in turn contribute to improve students’ academic achievement and their behavior for future life. It was also discovered that creating positive school climate for learning among students is enough to bolster their achievement hence to reducing indiscipline behaviours.

The findings of this study is supported by Welsh (2000), Charney (2002) and Rimm-Kaufman et al. (2006) who found that providing explicit and implicit messages and making an effort to get to know students, spent time individually with wrong-doing students and building network (connection) to community will help to follow up students’ discipline and hence improving students’ academic performance. The general consistency of the current findings with past research on contributions of discipline management to improve students’ academic performance suggests that key variables that have previously surfaced may be equally important across different schools and populations. Indeed, one practical implication of this study is that diverse secondary schools may equally benefit from research findings conducted on a sample of 82 respondents. This finding is in line with Theory X which states that when employees find work distasteful they do all they can to avoid it. Heads of schools who believe that their place of work is populated with this type of employees feel the need to maintain an autocratic, discipline-driven workplace (Doyle, 1986). For instance, students and teachers who believed to adhere to Theory X, and expected to display signs of laziness and irresponsibility whenever left unsupervised until force and extra effort is applied. Basing on the findings, it can be concluded that, discipline management contributes to improve academic performance through various variables as notified in Table 3. The interviewed teachers indicated that various appropriate discipline management strategies, skills and knowledge of discipline management contribute to improve students’ academic performance. These findings encourage the continued consideration of factors that may enhance academic performances among students.

Furthermore, parents were interviewed on the same question, one parent from poor performing school perceived that:

“...If we want to improve students’ academic performance in our schools, we should not ignore about developing skills of managing our students’ behaviour since good behaviour encourages study morals...that highly contribute in improving students’ achievement...” (28/1/2013)

Another parent who was a school board member responded that, a directed, self-disciplined students to their parents, teachers and community members should have better progress in their studies since they would be assisted with their teachers and parents in all academic matters which can easily lead into academic performance improvement.

Building on these and previous results, interventions can be developed to maximize students’ success while reducing disruptive behaviour. Such interventions are currently used with success, typically focusing on academic related topics such as study skills (Morakinyo (2003) and Asikhia (2010). The current finding from the survey do support and extend Kiumi et al. (2009) study on relationship between principals’ management approaches and students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Nyandarua and Laikipia districts, in Kenya, with 261 participants. Kiumi and colleagues found that students’ discipline is critical to the attainment of positive school outcomes since it depends on whether the principal- as the chief executive of the school- enlists the support of teachers and parents in discipline management. The findings suggest that discipline management was the most powerful predictor of good behavioural ethos and hence academic successes.

When teachers were asked to what extent does the discipline management contribute to improve students’ academic performance in ordinary level secondary schools, their responses were as shown in Table 4.

The data in Table 4, had shown that the majority
Table 4. Contribution of discipline management to the improvement of students’ academic performance (n=26).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Best performing schools (n=13)</th>
<th>Poor performing schools (n=13)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td>N (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To large extent</td>
<td>8(61.5)</td>
<td>5(38.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>3(23.1)</td>
<td>5(38.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>2(15.4)</td>
<td>2(15.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>0(0)</td>
<td>1(7.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10(100)</td>
<td>10(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2013

8(61.5%) of teachers from best performing schools and 5(38.5%) of teachers from poor performing schools perceived that discipline management contribute to improve students’ academic performance in their respective secondary schools to large extent. In this case, these findings imply that the majority of respondents perceived that discipline management to large extent contribute to improve students’ academic performance. This current findings support the ideas of Macbeth (1993) who found that well managed discipline in turn contributes to high quality teaching and learning hence had led to improve students’ academic performance. This seem to agree with Baffour’s (2006) who disclosed that good academic performance amongst secondary schools students in South Africa was contributed by appropriate discipline management since students learn and perform high in harmonized school environment (stable, calm) without disruption (chaotic) that hinder smooth delivery of teaching and learning.

These finding is in line with McGregor Theory X which assumes that people are not eagerly to do work properly until they are coerced, forced, monitored and managed to do it. However, the current survey result seems to differ with Taylor’s classical (scientific) Management Approach, by arguing that workers (teachers) were in charge of both planning and performing of their duty, a situation he seem to led too much waste and inefficiency. Basing on the findings eventually, discipline management had an effect on the overall students’ academic performance. So in this study, it was discovered that discipline management contributes to improve students’ academic performance in ordinary level secondary schools.

Furthermore, when teachers were asked how they would use discipline management as a means to improve students’ academic performance. Respondents from the best performing schools were mostly perceived that providing homework assignment for wrong-doing students (90%), helping students to make right decisions on their academic endeavour (80%) and lastly they notified building rapport among teachers and low achievers students (60%). All respondents from poor performing schools agreed that teachers do not provide extra academic activities to wrong-doing students; they warn on late coming behaviour, and other misbehavior, ensure harmony, security and safe environment for teaching and learning to take place. The implication of this finding under the first research question is that discipline management is perceived by all respondents had led to the improvement of students academic performance.

The idea of emphasizing appropriate conduct, helping low achievers, warning and reprimands among students are supported by McManus (1989) who argued that governing bodies should organize in-service courses to all teachers on how to offer guidance and counseling to make schools employ the services in the administration and management of students’ discipline hence improve students’ achievement. Omari (1995) adds that harsh punishments among students create fear and anxiety among students which in turn accelerate poor performance.

Mishira (2007a) argued that the democratic style of parenting has been found to be very helpful to teaching-learning situation. Here, students receive punishment that is commensurate with the offence committed. Such children are strong willed and ready for success. This finding is in agreement with Theory X with linkage with Canter’s (1976) assertive discipline theory, as Gartrell (1987) suggests that assertive discipline is an extension of McGregor’s assumptions in Theory X which contend that teachers should punish students for having a problem rather helping to resolve that problem.

During interview headmasters and mistresses were asked the same question. According to them, discipline management guides students and staff to make reasonable decision, ability to control class and achieve a desirable goal and mission of school. They added that discipline management is the ability to control the behaviour and the way you live and work in schools whether being a student or a teacher. One headmaster from one of poor performing schools made the following statement:

“...discipline management is the process of deciding...”
the best way to regulate the behaviour of students so as to ensure that the intended objectives of education are achieved; it is the process of enabling or encouraging orderliness and self control in students and teacher...” (20/01/2013)

The quotation indicates that heads of schools were aware with discipline management since the ability to control and prolong good behavioural ethos for academic success was within proper discipline management as a process. This implies that heads of schools were familiar with discipline management which lead to individual self-determined, self-sufficient and self-control to adhere standards since helps both students and teachers in ordinary secondary schools being aware with their responsibilities.

In the same manner, James and Connolly (2000) in Nsubuga (2010) add that leaders are essential and have an impact on the performance of the organization, so being aware of his/her managerial role like discipline management tends to highlight the image of the school and influence academic performance. This current study also agree with Mohapi (2007) in her study conducted in South Africa with a sample of nine educators, she found discipline practices implemented by educators and principals are indeed influenced by their own experiences (knowledge) when they were learners. That means heads of schools should be aware and having knowledge on discipline management skills, this could lead them to make innovative decision hence improving students' behavior and academic performance.

The idea of discipline management as related to educational institutions management could be traced to the theory of McGregor’s Theory Y that provides essential support to management. It assumes confidently that the head of school must be exhibited in the ability, integrity, creativity and motivation of those to whom management goals are committed.

However, data were obtained from school inspectors; they were interviewed to probe their understanding of discipline management in ordinary level secondary schools. One school inspector explained that discipline management is a process of taking care of students' behaviour in schools, like punctuality, cleanliness, association with others and how to be serious in academic related work. Another school inspector gave out the following clarifications:

“...discipline management is the ability to control the behaviour or the way you live and work in schools...” (26/1/2013)

From the voices of school inspectors, it is perhaps important to conclude that familiarity with discipline management in ordinary secondary school among school inspectors leads to move forward in attainment of country educational goal and vision since helps to improve students academically. Neatey and Evans (1961) have, therefore, visualised that inspection round basic instructional improvement through leadership, however, inspectors must be knowledgeable with other variables i.e. discipline management.

This idea is in agreement with Harold and Dickey (1966) who add that being knowledgeable in different matters on school academic improvement is a central concern of school inspectors while Mohanty (2005) argue that school inspectors should be familiar with different aspect like school discipline management since it is the inspecting officers, who critically examine classroom instruction, schools learning atmosphere and academic progress due to their position in the administrative hierarchy. This study discovered that familiarity of discipline management in schools is highly associated with improvement of students’ academic performance.

This finding is in agreement with theory Y, which suggests that the process is more important than the deterministic motivations that come from behaviourism. Theory Y promotes autonomy since looking at the process is more important than trying to predict behaviour. With effort and work focused on the obstacles, educators will be working on the relationship of a spectrum of barriers rather than trying to predict individual behaviour (Tassell, 2005).

Furthermore, parents were interviewed on the same question, one parent from poor performing school perceived that:

“...If we want to improve students’ academic performance in our schools, we should not ignore about developing skills of managing our students’ behaviour since good behaviour encourages study morals...that highly contribute in improving students’ achievement...” (28/01/2013)

Another parent who was a school board member responded that, a directed, self-disciplined students to their parents, teachers and community members should have better progress in their studies since they would be assisted with their teachers and parents in all academic matters which can easily lead into academic performance improvement.

Building on these and previous results, interventions can be developed to maximize students' success while reducing disruptive behaviour. Such interventions are currently used with success, typically focusing on academic related topics such as study skills (Morakinyo (2003) and Asikhia (2010). The current finding from the survey do support and extend. d Kiumi et al. (2009) study on relationship between principals' management approaches and students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Nyandarua and Laikipia districts, in Kenya, with 261 participants. Kiumi and colleagues found that
students’ discipline is critical to the attainment of positive school outcomes since it depends on whether the principal— as the chief executive of the school—enlists the support of teachers and parents in discipline management. The findings suggest that discipline management was the most powerful predictor of good behavioural ethos and hence academic successes.

Question 2: What perceptions do some selected stakeholders hold about discipline management as a means to improve students’ academic performance?

In an attempt to answer this research question, heads of schools, school inspectors, parents, DSEO, discipline masters and mistress and teachers were the key informants. Their responses were presented, analysed and discussed as follow:

The findings from the field portrayed different categories of respondents perceived it as a positive process that continues throughout students’ life in schools. When DSEO was asked what perception he hold on discipline management as a means to improve students’ academic performance in ordinary level secondary schools interviewed, shows to had similar perception on discipline management.

"...I think teachers should use a good method of teaching and learning and find out punishments which assist students academically like writing essay, giving speech before students, individual practical work, extra-curricular activities to related subjects taught in schools since proper discipline management to both teachers and students is a key to academic success...teachers should manage discipline and not providing corporal punishment frequently...since corporal punishment has proved failure because has been used for long time ago..." (3/01/2013)

The findings revealed that teachers should adhere to their professional ethics by employing innovative in teaching and managing students’ discipline rather than basing on outdated techniques. This is in agreement with Manase’s (1975) argument that teachers’ concern is genuine because they are accountable to the society at large. He also adds that when much of their teaching time is taken by trying to settle (problematic) cases, poor performance is inevitable. Oyetunyi (2006) argues that the head teacher and his subordinates should be the individual to initiate and facilitate discipline management action that assist learner academically.

This finds suggests Theory X in view of students by assertive discipline, Canters (1976) also asserts that teachers should act assertively right away in dealing with a behavior by punishing unacceptable behaviors and providing reinforcement for acceptable in order to have successful outcomes (academic success). Base on findings portrayed from the field, it implies that DSEO perceived academically related punishments and good methods of teaching as a discipline management mechanism could help to improve students’ academic performance rather than corporal punishment which has proved failure.

Heads of schools were interviewed to probe their perception on discipline management as a means to improve students’ academic performance. Their responses were presented, analysed and discussed: During interview, one headmaster from one of best performing school located in semi urban area had the following perception:

"...as a headmaster I abide by the principle that without discipline students cannot succeed since discipline is vital within a person (students) conduct in class work and beyond to prepare them for responsible adults..." (28/01/2013)

In line with previous interviewed heads of school, another head of school from poor performing school located in rural areas responded that:

"...my perception is that teachers and parents should fulfil their responsibilities; they should help students to understand the aim and goal of being at school that help to make proper decision...that is all about discipline management...parents also must be in front line to follow-up academic success of their children who among of them (students) are dodger and indiscipline students..." (1/01/2013)

In addition, head of school from best performing school located in semi-urban areas claimed that:

"...discipline management is the core for academic excellence, thus schools should ensure that workers, parents, governing bodies and other agencies are involved at a maximum level to bring conducive atmosphere at school so as to improve academic standard at our school..." (3/01/2013)

Another head of school from poor performing school located in semi-urban areas admitted that discipline management cut-across varied matters ranging from teachers, students to parents; however, it is clear that there are still some challenges in improving academic success as it needs one to go beyond discipline management.

From the findings in this study, three (75%) of heads of schools interviewed, shows to had similar perception on discipline management as a means to improve academic performance among students. This finding implies that heads of schools perceived discipline management
positively to be used as a means to improve students’ academic performance with appropriate efforts as a continual process. This finding is similar to that of Nsubuga (2010) who found that in Uganda unless head teachers are well equipped with knowledge and skills in discipline management and leadership, they would not be able to improve students’ performance in secondary schools significantly. This idea is in agreement with Namirembe’s (2005) who argues that the poor performance was attributed partly to poor discipline management at the school level that many secondary schools still lack the necessary performance requirements, not only because of inadequate funds or even poor facilities, but also as a result of poor discipline management.

From the data, it was revealed that heads of schools perceived discipline management in secondary schools playing an imperative role for students’ success since discipline management was insisted in secondary schools for the betterment of students’ life. This study concur with Mc Gregor’s theory Y which argues that heads of schools who view at discipline as a process tend to encourage, rewards and reinforce positive results.

According to Okumbe (1998) heads of school that hold theory Y strive to provide intelligent leadership as to maximise potentials from their subordinates. This in turn had positive influence on students’ academic performance. To sum up, based on the findings discussed it could be said that studied heads of schools appeared to have better perception about discipline management as a means to improve students’ academic performance since the process concern with managing students to follow morals, values and set of school laws which are part of their academic success.

Furthermore, when discipline masters and mistresses were also asked what perception they hold on discipline management as a means to improve academic performance. They insisted that discipline management issues should be school-community centred paradigm and not left only to teachers or discipline masters and mistresses (school-centred paradigm) as many parent perceive. During interview one discipline master from one of poor performing schools located in rural area had the following perception:

“...in order to manage discipline in school first of all students must understand its goal and aim...that being to prepare them for their life wellbeing at school and working life later on...However it should be understood that without apt discipline management in schools nothing can be achieved... for that case, academic success of students to large extent depends on self-discipline, self-effort guided with collaboration from both stakeholders...” (2/01/2013)

The implication of this finding under research question two is that on collaboration, information transfer to all stakeholders on the goal and intent of discipline management for better academic achievement perceived highly in a way to improve students’ performance. That means students should be well-inform in all matter concerning discipline that relates to their academic wellbeing. This is in agreements with Okumbe’s (1992) arguments that through communication, the students are likewise informed about their expected behaviour within the educational organisation (school) where the consequences of deviant behaviour are also specified and understood. This is also in line with Gupta (2000) who argues that clarity of thought is the first essential of good communication in organisation since message must be perfectly clear and free from all ambiguities. Basing on the findings, it was discovered that academics and discipline management information can make a dramatic contribution to improve students’ academic performance if it is effectively communicated to key stakeholders.

This finding support McGregor’s theory Y assumptions that discipline masters and mistresses adhering to theory Y believe that students have an innate tendency toward self-direction and commitment to objectives. Discipline masters and mistresses who believe that the average human being does not only accept but also actively seeks responsibility provide their students with a great deal of freedom and autonomy to fulfil their work. This implies that students in both schools were communicated.

During interview, teachers were requested to provide their perceptions on discipline management as a means to improve students’ academic performance. One teacher from best performing school publicised that there should be joint collaboration among stakeholders on students discipline management in order to improve students’ academic performance. Also, there should be a strong application of newly informed knowledge on discipline management and means of changing behaviours especially amongst students and heads of schools (i.e. the non-improving students and underperforming heads of schools). Another teacher from poor performing school located in semi-urban area had the following to say:

“...to me discipline management in school involve positive cooperation to ensure success; cooperation between teachers and parents on checking students’ behaviours at school and outside school area... also the guidance and counselling office in all schools has to be improved and make it strong enough in changing wrong-doing students...however responsibility of teacher to students, parents to students and community to students should be enhanced...by doing that academic performance will be high...” (4/01/2013)

Another respondent teacher who is also an academic
master from best performing school located in semi-urban admitted that:

“…discipline management is a key to academic success, for instance, in this school two years ago students were uncertain increasing fear, anxiety and worries among teachers and non teaching staff due to most of students engaging in alcohol addict and marijuana smoking… but after changes of leadership and imposing cooperation among teachers in managing students discipline students academic performance in general is improving year after year… so discipline management to both teacher and students is in front line...” (6/01/2013)

From teachers’ point of view, the findings imply that academic success is possible if discipline would be managed properly through joint collaboration from all stakeholders help to improve students’ academic performance. It was discovered that extra efforts were made purposely to manage discipline in other problematic schools and results were witnessed on students’ positive academic progress.

The findings of this study is in agreement with that of Kiumi et al. (2009) who also found important implications and lessons on school management in Kenya with respect to managing students’ discipline since their observation revealed inclusiveness, has a positive effect on teachers and parents willingness to support the school in discipline management. In this regard, if he/she applies a democratic and/or inclusive approach, teachers and parents are likely to play a proactive role in nurturing students’ behaviour towards the desired direction and vice versa (Kiumi, 2006). With these results, it implies that teachers employ discipline management in order to improve students’ behaviour and academic performance however; inclusive approach should in forefront for better outcome.

This finding is in line with McGregor’s (1960) theory X and Y as observed by Lue and Byars (1993) that a leaders’ attitude towards his/her co-workers has a bearing on the approach he/she applies to attain the stipulated organizational goals. If school discipline management team attitudes towards stakeholders wide-ranging in managing students’ discipline is likely to improve students’ academic performance and enhance behavioural ethos. The teachers also, were supplied with questionnaires to indicate their perceptions on discipline management at their ordinary secondary schools whether can be used to improve students’ academic performance and their opinions on the state of discipline management in their respective schools. Their responses are summarised in Table 5.

The data displayed in Table 5 revealed that majority of teachers 14 (70%) from best performing schools and majority of teachers 16(80%) from low performing schools strongly agreed that discipline management could be used to improve students’ academic performance in ordinary level secondary schools while only six (30%) of teachers from best performing schools and four (20%) of teachers from poor performing schools slightly agreed. These data give impression that majority 16(80%) and 14(70%) of teachers from both schools perceived that discipline management could be used to improve students’ academic performance in ordinary level secondary schools.

This is in agreement with Yahaya, et al. (2009) study on discipline problems among secondary school students in Johor Bahrui, Malaysia among 90 discipline teachers. They found that in order to improve students’ outcome discipline problems should be dealt with much more effectively if both parties could share the similar and ideal vision which, leads to prolific missions.

**Conclusion**

Base on research findings, it was acknowledged that to large extent discipline management in secondary schools contribute to improve students’ academic success and without it schools suffer from insecurity, chaos, fear,
anxiety and hence poor academic performance. In this context, requirement for students achievement it has become the foremost concern of stakeholders (parents, teachers, heads of schools, students, education officers, school inspectors, school policy makers, educational practitioners and non-governmental organizations). The evidence reveals that good academic performance among students in secondary schools is a contribution of proper discipline management since students always learn and perform better grades in harmonized school environment without disturbances that in turn hinders smooth delivery of teaching and learning process. 

Again, the findings suggest that discipline management is the most powerful predicator of good behavior ethos and if properly managed contribute positive students academic performance. It should be understood that students who frequently misbehave in secondary also fall behind their peers in classroom work performance and finally tend to engaged in rude and harsh behavior.

The result revealed that most of stakeholders' perceived cooperation should be developed on discipline management for positive academic success since both stakeholders had a role to play on managing students being at home, school or public areas. Guidance and counseling, education, setting new students-by-laws, find out punishment which assists students academically, adherence of teachers professional ethics were perceived to improve students’ academic performance since sharing managerial responsibilities among stakeholders enables students to learn in practical ways hence improving academic success.

Since the degree of differences on perceptions was observed, most of stakeholders perceived discipline management in schools as a vital for students’ success and must be insisted in schools for the betterment of students’ life. However, discipline management concern with managing students to follow direction, values and rules of schools which are part of their academic success.

From the findings it was insisted that discipline management issues should be school-community centered paradigm and not left to teacher or discipline masters and mistress only (school-centered paradigm). It was also learnt that everyone (stakeholders) involved or had an insight in educational matters must be responsible for managing discipline if positive academic result will be a hub of teaching and learning process. Effort should be taken to improve students’ academic performance such as teachers training on discipline and academic related matters.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Basing on the findings where discipline management was found to be important means to improve students’ academic performance in ordinary level secondary schools, and the conclusion reached, the following recommendations have been made:-

i. To realize contribution made from discipline management and to improve students’ academic performance, stakeholders must assist ordinary level secondary schools in solving students’ indiscipline problems so as to rid them (students) out of all type of intimidation that may impede teaching and learning (academic performance).

ii. Since almost all selected stakeholders perceived discipline management, it could be used to improve students’ academic performance, social, economic, political, cultural and technological changes and realities. that it could as well be impossible for schools alone to manage discipline. it is therefore strongly recommended that school-community centered paradigm must be employed to manage discipline and hence improve students’ academic performance.

iii. On daily basis new discipline management knowledge keeps emergent and for teachers to be well-informed with new skills they have to undergo continuous training. In this context, it is recommended that the government through partnership with non-governmental institutions, community based organizations and civil society organizations should provide continuous professional training on discipline management and academic related subjects for example, guidance and counseling techniques/skills, competence based education, life skills, examination supervisory skills to teachers especially on cross-cutting issues.

**REFERENCES**


Manase, T. J., Kisaiga E. S. (1978). “Indiscipline: The Case of Students’ Unrest in Our


Thanasegaran G. (2009), Reliability and Validity Issues in Research. Unpublished Compendium, Department of Management & Marketing, Faculty of Economics & Management, University Putra, Malaysia.


