

The Contemporary Strategies of Curbing Indiscipline in Public Schools in Zimbabwe

Prince Dzingirai

Educational Psychologist (Allied Health Practitioners Council of Zimbabwe)

Abstract

Globally, indiscipline is a ubiquitous topical threat to learning in educational institutions and peaceful existence in society in general. The contemporary behaviours exhibited by young learners both in the community and at school are so complex and shocking. Communities are enlightened through education and the young learners are the passport and insurance of success. The behaviour of youth in the community determines social development since the youth constitutes the greater population in most countries. Discipline is the fulcrum of education at all learning institutions and in any society. In this study, the causes of indiscipline among young learners are traced from interconnected environmental systems which are the microsystem, the meso-system, the exo-system, and the macro system. This study was conducted in Mbare and Highfields high density suburbs of Harare, the capital city of Zimbabwe. The main objective of this study was to find the causes and alternative strategies of curbing indiscipline in learners at school and in the community. The study found that indiscipline is mainly caused by drugs and substance abuse, peer pressure, teacher-pupil relationship, parenting style, influence of social media, economic challenges and human rights. The strategies of curbing indiscipline are determined by its causation. The bio-ecological theory was used to anchor the study and descriptive research design was used in this study to describe forms of indiscipline. Some of the strategies found in this research include ensuring the use of integrated social structure, providing accessible comprehensive counselling, and using behavioural gateway, sanctioning all indiscipline behaviours, rewarding positive behaviours and offering education.

Keywords: behaviour, contemporary, indiscipline, contemporary, strategies

Introduction

Worldwide, general indiscipline is one of the ubiquitous topical threats to human development in this 21st century. Biblically, discipline was proclaimed by the Creator during creation and there is nothing amiss with putting in place disciplinary measures in the community. Both in the community and at school, the misbehaviour exhibited by learners paralyse the learning and

social environment. Education is a strong force of enlightenment in any community and the discipline of young people is regarded as the passport to success. This view regards education as an investment in the young generation. This is supported by Ali, Dada, Isiaka and Salmon (2014) who opine that young people are both the wealth and pride of a nation. They are the critical resource that ensures community development through inheriting and maintaining community beliefs and values. According to Schlebusch, Makola and Ndlovu (2022), an uneducated society has slow developmental milestones and ultimately lacks developmental brand and vision. This present study acknowledges that discipline is the fulcrum of education at all learning levels and in any society. It teaches an individual to be self-control and to be responsible. Indiscipline affects the academic performance of learners as well as the biopsychosocial setting.

Background to the problem

Indiscipline behaviour is a topical pandemic among the young people. There are so many theories on the causes of indiscipline among the young learners both in the community and at school. Technological development, for example, has caused more harm than good since young learners tend to abuse social media. In addition, the prevalence of drug abuse has increased highlighting accentuating general indiscipline. Research predicts that 40% of youth indiscipline in Africa is due to drug and substance abuse (UNODC, 2021). The World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) states that more than 42 million of healthy life was lost due to drug use in 2017, that is, about 1.3% of the global burden of disease. Zimbabwe has not been spared from the plaque of drug related discipline. Globalisation has proved to have negative significant impact to the behaviour of young people. The wave of using complex drugs in the world over is so alarming. This actually means the use of complex drugs has become a virus which turned the behaviours of young people upside. The spine of indiscipline is the abuse of drugs and chemicals. There emerging use of complex drugs has caused unprecedented complex behaviours among the young learners. For instance, there is a new wave of abusing animal tranquilisers called “*TRANQ*” which is causing skin infections and amputations. When an individual takes this drug, one would start to behave like an animal.

In this study young learners refer to all learners from ten (10) years to twenty (20) years. According to Ofori et al, (2018), there is no single day which passes without the media reporting incidence of indiscipline among the youth in Africa. In Zimbabwe, Wayne Ndlovu, a form four pupil at Founders High school was stabbed to death in a suspected inter-school war turf (*The Chronicle*, 2023, 15 February). This incident illustrated the level of indiscipline in

schools as learners carry dangerous weapons to schools. is the case triggered this current research.

Indiscipline exhibited in schools has affected the quality of education, especially in public schools. This view concurs with Simuforosa and Rosemary (2014) who posit that the period of teaching and learning is reduced as more time is devoted to managing misbehaviour of learners. Education facilitators (teachers) are faced with a mammoth task of trying to control complex deviant behaviours from the learners.

Indiscipline is best defined with three Ds which are disruptions, deviance and disrespectful. The concept of indiscipline has serious consequences on the geo-economics and bio-psychosocial development in the environments. The World Bank (2018) concurs with this view as it concluded that insufficient skills stemming from weak educational outcomes are the key constraints to economic progress and growth. There are so many factors that are causing learners to exhibit complex misbehaviours ranging from environmental, technological, economic and globalisation issues. Indiscipline behaviour is a worldwide canker, which is a threat to the lives of young individuals. Indiscipline is an act of deviating from the norms and values of the society and a school is a miniature society as well. This means that there is no universal definition of indiscipline. Indiscipline is the opposite of discipline and the two are socially constructed entities. Each society has a different perspective and meanings of indiscipline due to different norms and values.

The wave of indiscipline is increasing at an unprecedented speed making it a pandemic that threatens the moral fibre of communities in Zimbabwe. The country is currently grappling with complex cases of indiscipline in schools. Some of the causes of indiscipline are aggravated by lack of parental monitoring and support. According to Kaiser et al. (2017), economic difficulties have forced parents to focus on present financial needs and parents have no time to nurture their children causing children to behave astray. The Zimbabwean economic situation has pushed parents between the rock and the hard surface. Most parents spend their time and effort trying to make ends meet thereby paying less attention to the welfare of their children. Some parents the diaspora have precipitated indiscipline among their young children as they delegate the custody of their children to *would-be indiscipline care givers*.

This study was carried out in the high density suburbs of Mbare and Highfields in the capital city of Harare, Zimbabwe. Some Zimbabweans regard life in Harare to be fast and deviant behaviours as the order of the day. Mbare and Highfield high density suburbs are the oldest

residential areas of Harare characterised with hive of illegal and legal activities as source of income. Wolhuter and Van der Walt (2020) insist that disrespectful, indiscipline, criminal and violent society nurture children alike. In same respect, we cannot expect to find disciplined learners from crime infested and drug ridden density suburbs such as Mbare and Highfields. In that case, schools become the manifestation of community activities leading to complex deviant behaviours such as beating teachers and bullying others, among others. This was confirmed by Mkhize and Shembe (2022) when they narrate that teachers in some schools were threatened, physically harmed, verbally abused, and emotionally and psychologically traumatised by intoxicated learners. The teachers therefore suffer in silence and there is no policy to protect them from hooves of indiscipline.

The learners are becoming more violent and dangerous at school as well as in the community. Community leaders are astonished by the behaviours of the young people. Education facilitators in schools become vulnerable and disheartened by the complex behaviours exhibited by learners (Pretorius, 2014). This further compromises the effectiveness of teaching and learning in schools.

Complex behaviours exhibited by learners clearly indicate that the current education system cannot match the challenges it faces. The indecorous behaviour of learners is a current generational pandemic that needs collective effort.

Children are born without any culture. Culture is then transmitted through primary socialisation and the family is the primary source of culture transmission. Every culture has its own approaches, informed by norms and beliefs crafted by a people of that culture. Discipline is first taught and nurtured at home by primary care-givers. In this regard, Mkhize (2016) and Mbiti (1988) concur that discipline is enshrined within the philosophy of *unhu/ ubuntu* “I am therefore we are” “*munhu munhu nekuda kwevanhu*”. The concept of discipline is therefore a collective picture of the whole community. Indiscipline is a manifestation of the marginalisation of the indigenous culture.

In the Zimbabwean worldview indiscipline among the young people has a great impact to the developmental aspirations of the country. The pockets of cultural resistance are an influx in the current school environment and this is transferred into the general communities. According to Garagea (2008), if children are not properly taught moral issues, they would graduate into criminal gangs instead of educated citizens who could develop the socio-economic sectors of the country.

There is now a dilemma of coming out with effective ways of curbing learner indiscipline in schools and at home as well as honouring children's rights. The United Nations conventions on the rights of children is clear; therefore, the legal requirements of protecting children's rights has to be respected. Many learners with disruptive behaviour come from troubled homes where there is erosion of a nurturing family structure (Bosman, 2022). Indiscipline in schools affects the learner more than anybody else. Section 53 of the constitution of Zimbabwe concurs with the United Nation conventions and the African Charter on Human Rights. The Zimbabwean government adopted the Education Amendment Act of (2020) which outlaws corporal punishment. In schools, the school head or deputy are authorised to administer moderate corporal punishment to learners. The worrisome level of indiscipline triggered the researcher to carry out this study.

Causal factors of indiscipline in schools

It is generally believed that learners are currently more unruly and less respectful than they used to be during the time when corporal punishment was permitted in schools. Globally, corporal punishment has been outlawed by legislation. Various international organisations have ruled that corporal punishment was not an effective measure of curbing learners' indiscipline in schools and in the community. It was also noted that corporal punishment was a serious human rights abuse. This created controversy among the researchers as they expressed concern about viable alternatives of curbing indiscipline other than resorting to corporal punishment (Meier & Marais, 2010). In other countries like South Africa, cases of indiscipline in schools are at climax as there is high rise incidence of learners being injured and killed within the confines of schools (Nene, 2013). According to Jeloudar, Yunus and Roslan (2011), schools in Malaysia have some disciplinary problems such as petty crimes, bullying, drugs abuse, immoral conduct, dressing, truancy, disrespect for others and maladjustments with the school environment. Discipline in schools is an essential element in the socialisation of children. The level of indiscipline among the youth both at school and out of school has generally disturbed, demoralised and exhausted the caregivers in the community. Nene (2013) indicates that most education facilitators are now vulnerable as they feel incapacitated and helpless in addressing learners' indiscipline in schools. There is a dyadic influence of indiscipline in schools and communities.

Indiscipline as both internal and external locus of control

Indiscipline amongst the youth is attributed to so many factors which can be grouped as both external and internal locus of control. The literature from various contexts connects the causes

of indiscipline to society-based factors, parental style, technological influence, hormonal issues. The school is an institution that inherits and shapes the personalities of learners from home environment. This was supported by Jinot (2018) who argues that the root causes of learners' misbehaviour at school emanate from home. The behaviour of learners at school is therefore a clear reflection of community behaviour. In this regard, the family is the primary socialisation agent for the learner where manners, norms and values of society are inculcated through reward and punishment mechanisms at its disposal. The behaviour and the relationships between learners and adults at home/community tend to spill over to the school. For instance learners, who bully their parents at home, are not moved when the school informs them that it will report them to the parents. Kiwale (2017) asserts that the home environment plays a very big role in influencing the learner's behaviour at school. The school is a miniature community. It reflects the characteristics of the wider community to which it belongs. Criminal activities occurring in the community tend to manifest themselves in learner behaviour at school. Personality and developmental changes at puberty stood out as the main internal factor which triggers indiscipline among the young people. Learners with attention seeking personalities commit offences so that they can receive attention in the process.

Adolescence is a critical transition period between childhood and adulthood, where there is rapid growth and significant changes in the physical, psychological, emotional, intellectual and social domains (Lau & Yuen 2013; Bolu-Steve & Esere, 2017). Peer pressure is very strong and some adolescents may start to engage in activities that are perceived to be contrary to the norms and values of the societies, or what may be considered as normal or typical for society (Bolu-Steve & Esere, 2017; Herington & van de Fliert, 2018).

In America, studies revealed that young people are involved in criminal activities and use of dangerous substances that have a significant impact on their health (Boyd, 2015; Parks, 2013). Studies in China also show that adolescents are engaging in risky behaviour such as substance abuse, vandalism, gang violence, and theft (Lu et al., 2013; Pyrooz & Decker 2012; Cheung, 2014; Chui & Chan, 2013). A study conducted in Kenya indicated deviance of adolescents in high school in the form of dropping out of school, the destruction of property, injury, and poor academic performance (Aute, 2019). Stressful life circumstances, including exposure to violence, mental and physical health problems, substance abuse, poor housing conditions, and crime, can diminish parental self-efficacy and capacity (Crnic & Ross, 2017). Socio-economic conditions and high levels of toxic stress within a family may influence parenting through their

effects on mental health and differential access to resources, and ensuring children's survival in such circumstances becomes a major challenge for parents (Roubinov & Boyce, 2017).

Schlebusch, Makola, and Ndlovu (2022) lament the reality that learners are now out of control and disrespectful to themselves, teachers, school administrators, parents, and society at large. According to Kourkoutas and Wolhuter (2013), the largest obstacle in dealing with learner indiscipline concerns in developing countries such as Zimbabwe, is centring on how to control the unexpected behaviours. In some case schools in the high density of Mbare and Highfield, there was a critical worrisome level of indiscipline.

Theoretical framework

The bioecological theory was used to anchor the study. The chief proponent of this theory is Bronfenbrenner (2006). The complex indiscipline behaviour exhibited by learners within school premises and in the community was dissected with an intention of coming up with the alternative of curbing such behaviours. This theory opines that behaviour is as a result of complex process involving a system of dyadic interactions between the individual and the surrounding environmental. According to Schlebusch, Makola and Ndlovu (2022), the theory of Bronfenbrenner's bioecological has four interconnected environmental systems which are the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem. The microsystem is the immediate environment which directly influences an individual to exhibit complex indiscipline behaviour. A microsystem is characterised with the learners' primary socialisation membrane such as the family, peers, teachers or caregivers. The mesosystem consists of the dynamic interactions between the different elements of a person's microsystem. The exosystem consists of the factors beyond the person that have an impact on the person such as the parent's employment status and the environment. The macrosystem is the wider system of society which embodies a set of ideological beliefs, values, and norms, as reflected in the cultural, religious, and socioeconomic organisation of society (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017). The use of Bronfenbrenner's theory helps to connect the factors which spike learners to be undisciplined and the causal factors can then guide the study towards effective strategies of curbing indiscipline among the learners. Mkhize and Shembe (2022) posit that the environment surround the learners has an impact to learners and the solution of indiscipline comes from same environment.

Aim of the Study

To find the causes and alternative strategies of curbing indiscipline in learners in schools and in communities of Mbare and Highfield in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Methodology

The descriptive research design was used in this study to describe forms of indiscipline exhibited by learners both in public schools and in the community. According to McCombes (2022), descriptive research design aims to describe a population in the study or the phenomenon accurately and systematically. It can be used to answer the what, where, when and the how questions. Teachers, ancillary school staff, guardians and learners were used as target population of the study. Data was analysed using the thematic analysis in which data was transcribed into themes.

Population and setting

This study included teachers, guardians, learners and significant leaders in the community in Highfield and Mbare high density suburbs. The convenience and purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants who reside in Mbare and Highfield high suburbs. The principle of data saturation was used in gathering the data from the participants

Research findings and discussions

The causes help to come up with best strategies of curbing indiscipline among the learners both in school and the community. The causes of indiscipline are interlinked. The research came up with the following themes extracted from the data presented as the causes of indiscipline.

- i) Influence of social media
- ii) Economic challenges
- iii) Human rights
- iv) Drug and substance abuse
- v) Parenting style
- vi) Experimentation
- vii) Environmental and peer pressure
- viii) Teacher –learner relationship

The strategy of curbing indiscipline among the learners at school and in the community is best determined with the causal factor of indiscipline. In this study, indiscipline is precipitated by the micro (individual and immediate stimuli), meso (communal), macro (societal, environment and spiritual systems).

Influence of social media and peer pressure

The participants indicated the causes of indiscipline among the young learners in schools. This was shown by their verbatim statements below:

Participant 1: “Social media is determining and influences the behaviour of young people.”

Participant 2: “Technology has brought more harm than good to our culture and the abuse of technological gadgets such as mobile phones is seen as the fashion among the young people in public schools.”

Participant 3: “Young people imitate the behaviour which they saw on the social media.”

Indiscipline cases, in which young people view themselves as best decision makers, are as a result of peer pressure

The study found that social media is wreaking havoc on the moral values of learners. It was noted that young learners emulate the behaviours of individuals such as actors on the social media. The study found that, when the young learners are misbehaving, they would be viewing their actions as being legendary. This means some learners behave unknowingly. Social media is a subset of technology hence younger learners both at school and in the community observe the behaviour of characters on the social media. These young learners tend to emulate the behaviour of characters they see on social media. For instance learners might watch violent behaviour or pornographic movies. This influence misbehaviours such as bullying and prostitution or committing sexual crimes such as rape. The behaviour learnt from the social media is so complex which warrant complex behavioural approaches.

Economic challenges, parenting and environmental influence

The study found that the current hard economic challenges faced by the youth in their daily experiences are forcing them to initiate counter economic behavioural strategies such as vandalism, stealing and abusing drugs. It was established that learners sell items which they had vandalised to raise money to buy drugs. This concurs with WHO (2020) which explains that most young learners are key players of drug and substance abuse. The current study established that young learners abuse drugs as a counter quick relief to the hard economy. Drug abuse is against the accepted moral code since the behaviour exhibited by an individual who is intoxicated with drugs can negatively affect the psychological nature of an individual thereby delaying and destroying development.

The study also found that high unemployment rate has caused almost everyone to venture into hustling behaviours and young learners are exposed to immoral behaviours such as child prostitution, sexual abuse behaviours, glorified suicides, and serious crimes such as robbery, among others, as people hustle to make ends meet in their communities. On the parental side, unemployment has forced some parents to go to neighbouring countries looking for greener

pastures (employment opportunities) leaving their children alone or with strangers. This could expose younger learners to unrestricted environments leading them to behave against the norms and values of the community. Parents who leave their children with strangers have no direct guidance in the upbringing of their children and leave total responsibility to the school.

The following extracts from the participants are in support for the above views:

Participant 4: “Lack of adequate food has precipitated young learners to engage in criminal activities such as vandalism”.

Participant 5: “Unemployment in the communities has caused most individuals to survive on illegal activities which young learners emulate and later exhibit at school”.

Participant 6: ‘Lack of guidance due to parental exodus to neighbouring countries to look for employment leaving their children under the care of strangers’

Participant 7: ‘The collaboration between young learners and the community youth committing crimes is a product of drugs and substance abuse’

Participant 8: ‘Corruption is the main cause of indiscipline in schools’

The research established that some parents tend to spend little or no time with their children hence there is a lack of guidance and monitoring of behaviours. Ultimately, lack of parental guidance led to complex behavioural problems such as bullying, truancy and *blue tothing*, among others. In this research *blue tothing* is extracting blood of an intoxicated peer and inject other peers so that they also get drugged. This act is very dangerous as it exposes young learners to diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

The indiscipline of younger learners is the collective indiscipline of the whole community. This concurs with Mkhize et al. (2016) who state that behaviour is a product of the *ubuntu* philosophy which articulates that *I’m because of others*. This concurs with the theory of Bronfenbrenner in which all the surrounding system can be affected by the behaviour of an individual. Lack of proper parenting, therefore, has a strong influence on the behaviour of learners. It was found that some negative labels given to young learners at school and in the community led to self-fulfilling prophecy which later attracted them to join criminal gangsters in their communities. Greer and Reiner (2014) argue that labelling is the process of normalising a deviant act.

The other notable causes of indiscipline by young learners include the issues of broken homes due to death, divorce, violence and infidelity. These issues could lead to unexpected behaviours as young learner may lack control and copy some of the behaviours of the adults affected by

such issues. The learners would therefore be influenced to develop bad morals in the community.

Psychologically, it is known that the environment shapes behaviour. In this case, communities in Mbare and Highfields are associated with undisciplined characters of all ages. Corruption and poor moral values as displayed in Mbare and Highfields may influence the learners to misbehave. This means indiscipline of learners who resides in these areas is precipitated by a lack of proper role models who could influence them to emulate good behaviour. Young learners who grow in such environments are therefore prone to learn criminal behaviour, which is an element of indiscipline.

Human rights

The issue of children's rights has brought more harm than good in schools and communities. The issue of labelling sanctions given to young learners who misbehave as child abuse has caused high indiscipline both at school and in the community. The study found that children in school currently have all the rights yet teachers have none. Learners are becoming boastful while teachers are now vulnerable. This has caused young learners to bully teachers, propose love to teachers, sexually harass teacher and carry dangerous weapons to school. It is therefore difficult to discipline learners since any measure that could inflict pain on learners is against the law and regarded as child abuse (Constitution of Zimbabwe, 2013). The complex behaviours exhibited by learners clearly reflect that they do not fear anything since they are overprotected by the law. The study established that learners are becoming boastful of their rights to an extent of directly telling education facilitators and the community elders of these rights. This has caused education facilitators to be vulnerable hence they opt to ignore and do not offer behavioural remedy to learners. The above supposition indicates that young learners misbehave because they know their rights more than their responsibilities. The following statement was echoed by one of the participants:

Participant 3: "The over-elaboration of children's rights without responsibility has led young learners to misbehave".

Drug and substance abuse

Drug and substance abuse is a topical threat to human behaviour especially the youth. This study found that abusing drugs and substance is regarded as a 21st century fashion among young learners. Makumbe and Dzingirayi (2022) also established that the abuse of drugs and chemicals has always exposed the youth to deviant behaviours such as unhealthy sexual acts, cyber-bullying, cyber-porno, suicidal behaviour, experimentation, parental bullying and even

murder. It is therefore understood that most young learners misbehave under the influence of drugs. In agreement with the above views, one of the participants expressed that:

Participant 6: “The abuse of drugs is the key cause of indiscipline amongst the learners in public schools”

Teacher–learner relationships

The study found that some teachers’ behaviours triggered indiscipline amongst learners. In this case, teachers behaved in a way which compromised their profession. It was noted that most teachers in public schools were no longer motivated to do their work due to very low remuneration. This supposition indicate that teachers were no longer committed to do their work due to hard economic challenges. This ultimately led teachers to go to work unprepared and when learners realise that they may counter react leading to indiscipline. This means learners’ indiscipline may be due to doubting the competence of their teachers. A less motivated teacher uses teaching methods which lead to boredom among learners.

Imposing school rules without the involvement of learners could also lead to indiscipline behaviour such as bullying, vandalism, gang fights, assaults, extortion, truancy and drug abuse. The economic challenges have also made some teachers to be vulnerable to conniving learners who then make illicit deals that compromise teachers’ control over leaners. The study further found that there were so many teacher related factors which could trigger learners to misbehave some of these were unprofessional dressing of teachers, large teacher-pupil ratio, absenteeism, use of abusive language on learners and having negative attitudes towards learners.

Strategies of curbing indiscipline in schools

It is hard to come out with finest strategies of curbing indiscipline among young learners due to factors such as technological development worldwide. Technology has created a superhighway of communication leading to the globalisation and destruction of physical boundaries. This study found that young learners were mostly influenced to misbehave due to emulating behaviours on the social media. Therefore, in order to control the behaviour of young learners both at school and in the community, there is a need to have supportive disciplinary measures which are embraced by the community leadership as well as enshrined in the law. Communities cannot ignore indiscipline exhibited by young learners because the youth are the light and hope of the future in each and every community. There are many causes of indiscipline and dealing with such behaviour poses many challenges. The following are some of the strategies that can be employed by communities and schools to control the behaviour of young learners:

- i) Using the integrated social structure of curbing discipline. The social structure should involve teachers, community leaders, law enforcement agencies, religious leaders, mental health experts such as psychologists, counsellors and other significant others in the community. This strategy is in line with the Afrocentric philosophy of collectivism which entails that the child belongs to the community not to an individual. The spirit of *ubuntu* is noble in controlling the behaviours of the youth in the community. A well cultured community is a disciplined community. The supportive-preventive structure should be comprehensive, proactive, systematic, nurturing, and liberating. This indicates that there is a need to have participation and complete involvement of all partners in the community.
- ii) The other strategy involves rewarding positive behaviour exhibited by other youth. Young learners who behave well should be rewarded periodically. This would foster competition of behaving well and ultimately it is a way of grooming the youth towards good behaviours.
- iii) To restore discipline in the community, there is a need to have accessible comprehensive counselling centres in the community. These counselling centres should offer services freely without any monetary restrictions.
- iv) Creation of cultural globalisation in which youth collaborate and compare cultural systems taking advantage of technological advancement.
- v) Using behavioural gateway that involves tracking the behaviour of young learners on the internet and make use of internet restrictions such as use of age appropriate internet. For instance, parents and the school could make use of passwords so that learners cannot abuse the internet.
- vi) Adding mental health education as part of emotional guidance since technology is bringing emotional damage to young learners due to what they see on the internet.
- vii) Empowering learners by keeping them busy so that they find it difficult to purchase some drugs from the drug lords.
- viii) Reprimanding learners who misbehave in a respectful way.
- ix) Holding regular parent-teacher association (PTA) meetings in which matters around the behaviour of learners can be discussed using learner-centred approach.
- x) Sanctioning all indiscipline behaviours. There is an alarming level of misbehaviour globally. This means there is a need to be flexible in the interpretation of the law.
- xi) Establishing clear guidelines and rules on indiscipline in schools.
- xii) Using guidance and counselling intervention strategies.

- xiii) Teachers should vary their style of teaching to cater for diverse needs
- xiv) Motivating and encouraging young learners by creating an environment conducive to learning in schools.
- xv) Encouraging psychosocial support to communities and schools. In this case, teachers must avoid labelling learners at all cost. They must ensure they cater for individual differences in schools. Teachers should fine tune their attitudes towards their learners and this can help to shape the behaviour of learners.
- xvi) Creating a collaborative discussion of relevant everyday issues.
- xvii) Learners found in possession of drugs must be referred to counselling and or rehabilitation centres.

Conclusions

In an attempt to address the causes and impact of indiscipline among the youth and learners both at school and in the community, this study established that drug and substance abuse are the chief causes of indiscipline in Mbare and Highfields suburbs of Harare, Zimbabwe. The causes of indiscipline have been explained by the bio-ecological theories such as the micro-systems, meso, exo-system and the macro-system. The research found that these bio-ecological systems determine the best strategies used to curb the contemporary misbehaviour by learners. Some of the strategies include initiation of behavioural gateway, rewarding well behaved learners, involving young learners in community decision-making, motivating and empowering the learners. The study recommends an inter-ministerial task model that can put in place a recipe of strict policies to curb indiscipline. The study predicts that, if the issue of indiscipline is not addressed properly, the youth may revolt against the elders and leaders at macro levels. The young people may end up taking dangerous drugs that can precipitate into cultural conflict.

References

- Ali, A.A., Dada, I.T., Isiaka, G.A., & Salmon, S.A. (2014). Types, causes and management of indiscipline acts among secondary school students in Shomolu Local Government Area of Lagos State. *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences*, 8(2), 254-287. <http://www.infinitypress.info/index.php/jsss/article/download/790/379>.
- Aute, D.A. (2019). Secure parental attachment and deviant behaviour among secondary school students in Homabay County-Kenya. *Science Journal of Education* 7: 127–33.

- Bolu-Steve, F.N., & Mary O.E. (2017). Strategies for managing deviant behaviour among school adolescents as expressed by secondary school counsellors in Kwara State, Nigeria. *Inkanyiso: Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 9: 87–98
- Bosman, E.A. (2022). Relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools: A PALAR approach, Unpublished thesis, North West University: South Africa
- Boyd, J.L. (2015). National institute on drug abuse, brains and behaviour. Available online: http://www.livestrong.com/disease_and_conditions (accessed on 25 January 2021).
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2006). Ecological models of human development. *Readings on the Development of Children*, 2(1), 37-43.
- Cheung, N.W.T. (2014). Low self-control and co-occurrence of gambling with substance use and delinquency among Chinese adolescents. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 30, 105–24.
- Chinyakata, R., Roman, N.V., & Donga, G.T. (2022). The contribution of parental factors to adolescents' deviant behaviour in South Africa: Evidence from three rural communities in South Africa. *Social Sciences*, 11, 152. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11040152>.
- Chui, W.H., & Chan, O. (2013). Association between self-control and school bullying behaviours among Macanese adolescents. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 37, 237–42.
- Crnic, K., & Ross, E. (2017). Parenting stress and parental efficacy. In *Parental stress and early child development* (pp. 263–84). New York and Cham: Springer.
- Garagea, K.G (2008). *The crisis of student discipline in Botswana schools: An impact of culturally conflicting disciplinary strategies*. University of Botswana: Gaborone
- Jinot, B.L. (2018). The causes and lack of discipline among secondary school learners in Mauritius. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 9(1), 35-46.
- Kiwale, J.A. (2017). *Factors leading to indiscipline in secondary schools in Siha District Council Tanzania*. Dar es Salaam: Open University of Tanzania.
- Lau, W.W., & Yuen, A.H.K. (2013). Adolescents' risky online behaviours: The influence of gender, religion, and parenting style. *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 29, 2690–96.
- Mbiti, J. (1988). *African religion and philosophy*. London: Heinemann Press.
- Mkhize, T. & Shembe, Z. (2022). Intoxicated in the classroom: Teachers' experiences of teaching drug addicted learners in KwaZulu-Natal township schools, South Africa. *Journal of Research in Innovative Teaching & Learning*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/364302515>
- Mkhize, T.R. (2018). *Resource mobilisation for the sustainability of schools within rural context: Voices of school stakeholders at uMzimkhulu circuit in Harry Gwala District Municipality* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of KwaZulu-Natal

- Ofori, K.N. (2018). Growing Acts of Indiscipline in Ghanaian Schools: Perception of Students and Teachers at Abuakwa South Municipality. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management (IJSRM)*. DOI: 10.18535/ijstrm/v6i12.sh04.
- Ofori, K.N., Tordzro, G., Asamoah, E., & Achiaa, E. (2018). The effects of indiscipline on academic performance of Junior High Schools in the Fanteakwa District of Ghana. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 9(21), 109-117.
- Parks, A.B. (2013). The effects of family structure on juvenile delinquency. Electronic thesis and dissertations. Available online: <http://dc.etsu.edu/etd/2279> (Accessed on 10 July 2021).
- Schlebusch, G. Makola, S. & Ndlovu, M. (2022). Learner indiscipline in public secondary school, *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, 16(1). www.ijicc.net.
- Wolhuter, C.C. & Van der Walt, J.L., (2020). Indiscipline in South African Schools: the parental / community perspective. *KOERS — Bulletin for Christian Scholarship*, 85(1). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.19108/KOERS.85.1.2436>.
- World Bank. (2017). *World development indicators*. Washington DC: The World Bank.