

INDISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

Western Carolina University

Influencing Action Plan

EDCI 613: TEACHER LEADER

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Introduction

School is a place to foster learning, establishing friendship and develop moral significance for children, teachers and the community. It is safe to say that any negative hindrances will disrupt the entire flow and mission set out by that administrative body. As “teacher leaders” we are expected to make an impression wherever we go, so that we can transform schools into the safe haven that it should be. Unfortunately we live in a real world with real challenges. One such challenge is indiscipline in schools.

I do concur with the article ‘Managing and Handling Indiscipline in Schools’ as it clearly states “indiscipline is a multifaceted phenomenon, regarding its displays and causes, as well as its “meanings” and “functions” in the social, psychosocial and pedagogical fields. Concerning the displays, we believe that major situations are framed in what Amado and Freire (2009) points out as the “first level of indiscipline”: those incidents of “disruptive” nature whose “disturbance” affects the “good classroom functioning”. The incidents that might be framed in the second and third levels, are “conflicts among peers” and “conflicts within teacher-student relationship”, which might be taken on proportions of violence and even delinquency, the latter presents a minor frequency than the former (Amado, 2005).”

As transformative teacher leaders; how do we approach this impeding situation in our schools? We need to have collaboration among ourselves as teachers, first and foremost. We all have to work together to be role models so that students can mirror our attitude. Secondly we need the parents and community involvement and finally the students’ cooperation.

Situational Analysis and Perspective Taking	
<p><u>Specific example(s) to illustrate the situation and the various perspectives</u></p> <p>The current atmosphere in which we operate as teachers is frightening to say the least. Our media houses recently have been reporting an increased number of unfortunate killings carried out by teenagers who have not reached the age to leave school.</p> <p>Few weeks ago an eleven month old baby was fatally shot allegedly by a seventeen year old boy. This alleged person should be in his final year of high school, preparing to move on to university.</p> <p>The most recent alarming incident was one in which a Grade 6 student from Barrett Town All-Age School in St. James was fatally stabbed by his classmate just days after he sat the Grade Six Achievement Test (G.S.A.T). This was disturbing news as it rocked our airwaves and communities.</p>	<p>At my current school, students have to be constantly sent to the guidance counsellor or given time out by the class teacher, as they disrupt the daily activities of their classrooms. This interferes with learning and results in low academic achievements many times.</p> <p><u>A description of the situation / issue from your perspective:</u></p> <p>I am a fervent believer in good discipline as this is how I was raised as a child. I am old-school, I believe that everyone should exercise social graces such as: good morning, please, thank you, excuse me. Also I believe that we must care for the elderly and live loving among each other. These vital social graces have become extinct from our daily routines as society which adversely affects discipline overall.</p>

<p><u>Your position, your role, and your reason for advocating for this issue</u></p> <p>I can safely say that I am one of the very few teachers who still believe in social graces as a necessity for everyone's daily routine. The principal at my school always place the students with behavioral and academic challenges in my class.</p> <p>Reason being that I get positive results at the end of the school year. I would love to share my strategies with other teachers but somewhat it seems as if most persons have given up on discipline. They say they are fighting a losing battle.</p> <p>I am advocating for discipline to be resumed in classrooms and schools overall because this is essential for a sustainable learning environment. All stakeholders will benefit from this project. The long term gain is far exceeding the short term issues we are having.</p> <p>I am very confident that with strong</p>	<p>Students KB Asare (2013) ,Crispin (1966/1968)</p> <p>suggested that “students’ participation in formulation of educational rules have great positive influence on students’ behavior. The rules should be student-centered where great emphasis is placed on the learner and also ensure good interpersonal relationship among teachers and their students. Lecturers have to be rational and judicious in applying punishment because it may only suppress unacceptable behavior.”</p> <p>Policy makers “Education Minister, the Rev. Ronald Thwaites has attributed the cause of rising unruly behaviour among students to the breakdown of home values and the hostility that exist in the communities in which many of them live.”</p> <p>Jamaica-gleaner.com (2013)</p>
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<p>collaboration we can restore safe environments for all.</p> <p>I do support a Professional Learning Community that will support the role of an emerging leader like me.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DuFour, R. (1998). states “Development of PLC action and work plans. Action plans are the documentation under which action research and the improvement process is systematically carried out. PLCs identify current student performance across the PLC. PLCs identify a goal or target for improvement of student achievement. Goals or targets align with district goals. PLCs identify strategies to meet goals or targets for improvement. PLCs develop work plans to provide specificity to strategies identified in action plan.” <p><u>A description of the situation / issue from perspectives of all constituents</u></p> <p>Teachers and administrators Principal of Eltham Early Childhood Development Centre states “the undisciplined manner in which students behave in our schools is stifling the education system and threaten to derail any short, medium or long-term goals set by the Ministry of Education.” The Jamaica Star Online, (2012)</p>	<p>Parents</p> <p>Jamica Observer (2010) The matter of school discipline states “I strongly believe that orderly classrooms at all levels of learning are attained partly through the teachers' efforts at managing interaction in a way that reduces the occurrence and the effect of student disruptions.”</p> <p>INVESTIGATION AND RESEARCH</p> <p><u>Current information regarding the issue/How do you know it is a problem?</u></p> <p>With the new academic year set to get underway on September 7, schools are being encouraged to adopt a zero tolerance approach to indiscipline and illegal activities.</p> <p>“We are saying to the parents, administrators and the teachers that whatever is illegal in society is also illegal within the schools and we expect that there should be no cover up to any of these criminal acts that take place in the schools,” said Senior Adviser to the Minister</p>
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<p>of Education, Alphansus Davis.</p> <p>jis.gov.jm(2009)</p> <p>Anderson, S. (2009), gives another example of indiscipline as is stated, “in Jamaica today, violence is increasing so rapidly that the breakdown in discipline in our schools as a result of general social disintegration is a serious case for concern.”</p> <p><u>What would be the ideal outcome/benefits to each constituent group?</u></p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Parents would benefit from discipline in the classroom, as their child will be better able to learn with fewer disruptions. “If discipline isn’t the same as punishment then that definitely rules out spanking. Always keep in mind that you’re aiming to teach your child what behavior is acceptable – not punish him for being bad.” (www.supernanny.co.uk)</p>	<p>Students</p> <p>The Times of India rightfully states, “Self-discipline is something students should aim to achieve. It is not a commodity one can buy from the market. It is a rare quality which one has to inculcate, nurture and cherish from early childhood. Through self-discipline will come concentration which will in turn help a student to scale newer heights of academic excellence. Success will be theirs for the taking who value and practise self-discipline and abide by it at all times.”</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>Teachers will be better able to effectively manage their classrooms once discipline is implemented. “Consistent parent involvement leads to improved communication and relations between parents, teachers, and administrators.</p> <p>Teachers and principals acquire a better understanding of families' cultures and diversity, and they form deeper respect for parents' abilities and time.”</p>
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<p>School Community</p> <p>Sheldon, S. B., & Epstein, J. L. (2002) states that “schools that improved the quality of their partnership programs reported fewer students in need of discipline. The results suggest that creating more connections and greater cooperation among the school, family, and community contexts may be one way for schools to improve student behavior and school discipline.”</p> <p>Administrators</p> <p>Schools that actively involve parents and the community tend to establish better reputations in the community.</p> <p>Schools also experience better community support. School programs that encourage and involve parents usually do better and have higher quality programs than programs that do not involve parents. (www.education.com)</p>	<p><u>Existing strategies & programs in place attempting to address the issue? / What is currently being done to deal with this issue?</u></p> <p>Alternative educational centres- Resources and teaching strategies.</p> <p>Establishing a school-wide behaviour support system. Elements of a school-wide system include school rules, teaching appropriate behaviour, intervention plans, positive reinforcement for behaviour, and teaching of social skills. (www.edu.gov)</p> <p>Assisting students in the development of resiliency skills. Resiliency is the ability to “bounce back” from adversity, to overcome the negative influences or risk factors that often stop students from becoming successful.</p> <p>Teachers can help students develop resiliency</p> <p><u>Research-based strategies that successfully address the issue</u></p> <p>Kern and Clemens (2007) states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, simple rules and expectations which are consistently and fairly
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<p>by providing opportunities or using strategies that are supportive. (www.edu.gov)</p> <p>Change from Within Programme. This programme sets up peer-support among principals of the schools participating in the programme.</p> <p>PALS –Peace and Love in Schools (Pals, Jamaica)</p> <p>Institutionalization of Dean of Discipline in Secondary schools (Jis, 2008) Deans of discipline are the officers responsible for the implementation of the policy, but all members of staff ought to be fully conversant with its tenets and enforce them accordingly.</p> <p>Developing administrative procedures and policies for dealing with behavioural concerns.</p> <p>Establishment of parenting commission (Jis, 2008)</p>	<p>applied.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predictability of events and activities through establishing routines, information, cues and signals about forthcoming transitions and changes, as well as for content, duration, and consequences for activities. • Frequent use of praise, both verbal and non-verbal. Teacher praise has demonstrated effects on both those earning it and those nearby. Verbal praise should be specific descriptive. Teachers should try to provide a child with at least four praise There are numerous programmes in the research and literature, including token economies and prize draws to increase appropriate behaviours. Competitions such as the Good Behaviour Game (Barrish, Saunders & Wolf, 1969; Harris & Sherman, 1973; Kleinman & Saigh, 2011; Medland & Stachnik, 1972), noise reduction programmes using feedback systems such as
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<p>the <i>Yakker-Tracker</i>®, and behaviour and transition management using rules, signalling and positive consequences, all represent options.</p> <p>The development of relevant, interesting, and appropriate curriculums.</p> <p>The manner in which you give recognition and understanding of each student as an individual with his or her unique set of characteristics and needs.</p> <p>Your own behavior as a teacher, and characteristics such as those identified by Kounin (1970 – withitness, overlapping – that reduce misbehavior, increase instructional time, and maintain group focus and movement management of students.(teachervision.com)</p> <p>Try to clarify what kinds of behavior are causing concern.</p> <p>Specify what is wrong with that behavior.</p> <p>Decide what action should be taken to address the behavior. -Specify what</p>	<p>behavior you desire from the student.</p> <p>Implement a plan to correct conditions, variables, or circumstances that contribute to the problem behavior (Charles, 1996)</p> <p><u>Likelihood of solving the issue/How do you know that the issue could be solved?</u></p> <p>Indiscipline is a part of our daily routine and we would love to remove it. One of the first ways to solve indiscipline is to establish the acceptable behaviours to your students at the beginning of the school year. Get students to develop rules and consequence chart.</p> <p>The second stage of solving the problems is to bring parents on board with your expectations. Have parents sign a contract to prove they are in agreement with the class guidelines.</p> <p>Teachers may also invite volunteers or other teachers to speak on the matter of discipline and the positive outcomes of good discipline.</p>
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<p>Once all of these steps can be implemented through collaboration of teachers, students, parents and administration. The problem of indiscipline can be and will be solved.</p> <p>ACTIONS/STEPS</p> <p><u>What strategies do you plan to use to remediate the issue?</u></p> <p>Interview with individual students to ascertain what is causing the misbehaviors. Okpilike, F. M. (2010).</p> <p>Meeting with parents or guardians. Okpilike, F. M. (2010).</p> <p>A necessary step in designing and implementing effective violence prevention and reduction strategies is solid evidence and analysis. Leslie, G. (2010) We need serious community involvement to educate citizens about the acceptable norms.</p>	<p><u>Obstacles that must be overcome</u></p> <p>In any culture change there will be opposition. However, this can be conquered.</p> <p>As an emerging teacher leader I have to change the school culture first. Parents must be willing to accept the school's policy on discipline. Students must learn to conform to rules and regulations.</p> <p>All teachers need to be on the same page as it relates to discipline on all aspects from dress-code to peer-relationships, classwork and homework etc. The standard must be maintained.</p> <p>Finally having the support of the administrative body.</p>
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<p><u>Steps to be taken to initiate change</u></p> <p>1. Communicate issue</p> <p>Daily logs are taken of students' unacceptable behaviours. Once a student has more than three logs parents are called in for dialogue about the issues. This policy has been implemented at my school. Being a transformative leader we must communicate change effectively and sincerely. (Shields 2011)</p> <p>2. Create list of expectations and consequences.</p> <p>As a school body a disciplinary committee will be organized to clearly state the policies of the school as it relates to discipline. These policies will become part of the handbook given to parents at the start of their child's acceptance in the school community.</p> <p>As zero-tolerance discipline policies have been instituted at high schools across the country, police officers are employed with increasing frequency to enforce behavior codes and</p>	<p>maintain order, primarily at poorly performing, racially segregated urban schools. Actions that may once have sent students to the detention hall or resulted in their suspension may now introduce them to the criminal justice system. Nolan, K. (2011).</p> <p>3. Develop a behavior management plan</p> <p>In response to public requests to improve the purpose and structure of discipline systems, schools have increased their emphases on "school-wide" positive behavior support. Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (2002).</p> <p>Hence, each school has a mandate to develop a behavior management plan. This can be developed by a committee comprising of all the stakeholders of the school body.</p>
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<p>4. Conduct staff development workshops</p> <p>In any change to a school's culture the staff must give full dedication and cooperation in order for it to be successful. Getting full support from adult learners is one of the key ingredients for success at any level.</p> <p>Study recommends the establishment of staff development workshops to equip educators with skills to embrace supportive, proactive and cooperative disciplinary measures when dealing with learner indiscipline. Maphosa, C. (2011).</p> <p>5. Conduct behaviour management workshops</p> <p>The use of school-based positive behavior support (PBS), an alternative to traditional disciplinary practices that includes databased decision making and team collaboration.</p> <p>Obenchain, K. M., & Taylor, S. S. (2005).</p> <p>Have the staff become familiar with the new policies and ask for their input as the school community confronts the issue of indiscipline.</p>	<p><u>How will you encourage implementation, measure the level of implementation and assess the effect of the change?</u></p> <p>Constant reminders will be done at staff meetings and PTA meetings to encourage collaboration.</p> <p>Flyers will be placed in classrooms and also on the school's notice boards to remind students.</p> <p>Incentives will be given in the form of "class of the week".</p> <p><u>Measuring the level of implementation</u></p> <p>As weekly surveys are conducted the committee will have an idea which class is working together as a team to follow the rules and regulations.</p> <p>More classes will be a part of the good behavior incentive as they realize the importance of being disciplined.</p> <p><u>Assessing the effect of the change</u></p> <p>Each staff meeting feedbacks will be taken on how the discipline policy is progressing.</p> <p>Teachers will get a chance to voice what needs to be changed or worked on. From this data the committee will meet and discuss strategies to</p>
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<p>implement to make the policy a success.</p> <p>The relation between implementing PBIS and student academic and behavioural outcomes, as well as student perceptions of the school environment goes hand in hand. Gietz, C., & McIntosh, K. (2014).</p>	
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Concluding Comments

The problem of indiscipline in schools has persisted over the years. These acts have either been carried out individually by the students or as a group which result to rioting or revolts. There is no doubt that students indiscipline generally militates against effective teaching and learning and production of useful acceptable members of the society. It is therefore, observed that some parents appear to have denied their parental roles or responsibilities towards their children. If the teachers are frustrated and lack motivation in themselves, they are not likely to motivate other to learn or occupy their time in productive education. The Government contributes to indiscipline by not providing adequate facilities/equipment in the school. Community/Society influence contributes to indiscipline among secondary school students due to economic recession. Peer-group influence contributes to indiscipline among students in the form of uncomfortable environment where the students are scared of their parents. Idu, A. P., & Ojedapo, D. O. (2011).

Discipline has to begin in the homes. The sooner parents recognize that the onus of disciplining their children is on their shoulder, the sooner we will see a better society. Students coming to school being informed about the acceptable behavior will be less likely to get into trouble as it relates to the school policies.

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