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SELF DISCIPLINE AND SELF CONTROL: THE HEAD WAY TO SUCCESS

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ABSTRACT

This is an opinion paper. It aimed at chattering a new course in school management through self-discipline. The Nigerian society has observed a lot of acts of indiscipline among our youths especially within the walls of the educational system. Efforts had been made by the Federal Government to stop these acts through posting of soldiers to schools to control student's behaviours. At other time the War Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAIC) was launched, still not much have been achieved. Many of our school children engaged in indisciplinary behaviours such as stealing, rudeness, cheating, hooliganism, willful destruction of properties, gangsterism, violence, alcoholism, smoking, membership of secret cults, destruction of life, watching of pornographic films and acting it out on fellow students in and outside the school system, hence all have become the order of the day. These indisciplinary actions breed societal laxity, moral degeneration and uncaring attitudes. To this end, school administrators, managers and policy makers work out certain rules and regulations as guides in maintaining discipline and ensure achievement of educational goals and objectives in the schools. The efforts are geared towards the production of school leavers who would fulfill their roles and responsibilities in nation building. Such persons among other things must necessarily be disciplined. Today, however, there is alarming cries here and there against indiscipline in our secondary schools. It is common to have newspaper headlines or captions emphasize moral laxity and indiscipline in schools. This study examined self-discipline as a way to success in managing school organization.

Keywords: Self Discipline; Self Control; Way to Success

Introduction

In explaining what discipline is, Uzoma (2020) states that discipline in the best sense is the control of behaviour in the light of purpose. It is the opposite of indiscipline. Law (2019) suggested that discipline, fair, just, self controlled humane, school or society could not emerge without disciplined, just, self controlled humane, school or society and right thinking individuals. Taking a cue from General Olusegun Obasanjo (1977) analysis of a disciplined individual, discipline implies self-repentant in individuals for the welfare of all. Discipline is orderliness. It is a moral and mental adjustment from within. Discipline according to Ige (2013) is when students respect the school authorities to observe the school laws and regulations and to maintain an established standard of behaviour. Consequently, lack of discipline relates to misbehavior in any of these areas.

Discipline can be seen as training that develops character, orderliness, self control and efficiency. It is a conformity to socially approved mode of behaviour. It can be seen as controlled behaviour, that is an enforced compliance or control. It is a systematic method of obtaining obedience and it is based on submission to authority. A student in the school setting is said to be disciplined when he/she can control or exercise influence over a particular character or suggest/dictate his behaviour over self.

Self Discipline and Self Control

Self discipline according to Ige (2013) is when somebody is an embodiment of some socially accepted or desired qualities or norms of behaviours. It is a training that develops character, orderliness, self control and efficiency. It is seen as conformity to socially accepted patterns. It is action or behaviour that is indicative of a readiness and willingness to obey and submit oneself to some orderly conduct as prescribed by group or society and take responsibility for ones action. Uzoma (2012) opines that self discipline is internally formed and it is the best type of discipline and more lasting. Externally imposed discipline tends to be temporal as it may drop off as soon as the force behind the sanction is relaxed. Self discipline breeds self control. It is the discipline that is in a person that develops a self control. Alexander (2012) explains that an individual has self discipline when he can set a goal for himself and then make whatever sacrifices and efforts that are necessary to obtain it. Self control is the ability or the authority or power which one has over oneself. It is the ability for one to say no for what he/she does not like inspite of the persuasion from all angles. It is to develop a life of not allowing negative influences over ones life. It is a control to exercise influence over a character to suggest or dictate the behaviour over self.

In Nigeria, each state is supposed to have its own guideline on the use of punishments as deterrent to the different offences committed by students. Teachers in all schools have resorted to the use of various forms of corrective measures in a bid to enforce and establish discipline. The question everyone asks is: inspite of the numerous corrective measures in use, how come there seems to be an increase in offences students commit? Could it be that effective measures are either being wrongly applied or ignored by teachers?

A study of the Anambra State Handbook on discipline in post primary institution in the State Secondary Schools states that:

1. Students should show due respect to their teachers
2. No student should use corporal punishment or any form of torture on other students
3. Fighting or bullying among students is prohibited
4. All junior students should show respect to the senior students and senior students should enlighten the junior ones by giving good examples
5. No indecent behaviour between male and female students or among them is allowed.
6. Stealing is a serious offence punishable by suspension or expulsion.
7. Loitering during classes is prohibited
8. Damage to any school property will be paid for from caution fee

9. Smoking and taking of alcoholic drinks or dangerous drugs are strictly prohibited and are punishable by expulsion.
10. All forms of strike, demonstrations and rioting are strictly prohibited and are punishable by expulsion.
11. Boarders leaving the compound must obtain signed exits from the appropriate authorities.
12. At no stage should a student or class or students consider themselves above manual labour.
13. The principal is authorized to expel any who is proved pregnant.

All these indisciplinary characters or actions attract a corporal punishment which serves as corrective measures ranging from inflicting some strokes of cane to expulsion from the school authorities. Also many conferences and seminars are held almost on daily basis on how to stop or control deviant behaviours among students but yet not much have been achieved. Self discipline is the best tool for curbing students deviant behaviour, it is based on permanent educational values, rather than on maintaining order in the school, on training the youths to desire to be acceptable and useful beings, rather than destructive and harmful beings, on training individuals to govern each his own conduct, rather than to be dependent upon government by orders. In self control, orders or rules are largely incidental and secondary. The reason for self discipline and self control is to build up a level of self discipline so that proper habits will be followed without the use of authority; a self control that will provide the appropriate atmosphere for work in the various school locations and situations.

Problems of Self Discipline and Self Control

The problems of self discipline and self control have been a serious concern to many. This lack of self discipline and self control can be caused by several reasons such as: Peer group influence (independency), environmental influence, societal influence, family and church influence, school influence.

(1) **Peer Group Influence**: This includes friends, classmates and people and students meet outside the home. They have influence on the child, which could be positive or negative. A child could be negatively influenced by his peer group which results in exhibiting bad behaviours. The peer group consists of people of the same age brackets, which a child tries to conform with their own norms and ways of life. They imitate and copy from one another. The individual wants to be recognized and valued among his peers and as such can influence or be influenced by the group, it is much stronger in adolescent age. Uzoma (2012) points out that people learn to become deviants when they associate with sub-groups whose norms and values run contrary to those of the primary group, as they observe the attractive characters and liberty exhibited by their group, it becomes an incentive to conform to the standards of that group. The dominant members influence the characters of the group by imposing sanctions and penalties on deviant members. Just

as there are morally behaved groups there is also immorally behaved groups and they both work tirelessly in influencing the lifestyle of its members. The influence of this peer group is inevitable and pushful and so the school, parents and the society should work collaboratively towards monitoring the affairs of these young age in order not to be negatively influenced, which breeds indiscipline and lack of self control.

(2) **Environmental Influence**

The environment in which an individual finds himself has a very high influence over him. This is where a person lives and interacts with the people he finds there. The environment could also be people living in the same area with an individual. The child could be influenced by the characters of the people he relates within the place he is living. One cannot expect a disciplined child from an area that harbours gangsters or hooligans; because it is where a child was born and grew up, a place of his education and association. The environment according to Ikoku (1990) has a very significant influence on the character of a child. The environment a child lives in will automatically dictate the type of life he lives; because a child learns by copying from the people he sees and by imitation.

(3) Societal Influence

The society has much influence on a child, for example the Nigeria society is full of inefficiencies and thwarted values. There is a lot of corruption which seems to have been institutionalized and the youth see it as normal. In a society where consumption of alcohol, hard and dangerous drugs are not seen as anything and the adults consumes them openly and even buy from open markets or at the neighbourhood cannot produce morally behaved youths. The media houses also provide a venues for indiscipline through the type of programmes they exhibit; no challenging programmes for the young minds. The entertainment provided contains a lot of violence and so they socialize the children into violence. When the media houses focus on discipline, school age youths will internalize disciplined behaviours. Ike (1990) maintains that in a situation where people do not have opportunities to achieve their goals as a result of the relative deprivation they perceive in the society, they may react through aggressive, seeking rebellions or revolutionary forms of activities designed to upturn the social system. The society therefore, has an influence in the lives of the youth through what they see and observe in the society.

(4) The Family and the Church

These two go hand in hand with each other. The family is the first meeting place of a child and has

learnt some attitudes that remains with him through life, attitude to others and for general living. The family and the church present to the child various norms, values, practices and skill to learn and use. The level of moral, financial support and other training provided the child from the family and church affects his general attitude to self discipline. Inadequate care and attention by parents either through neglect or as a result of broken homes or single parenthood negatively affects the child. The social orientation of the family normally goes down to the children e.g. alcoholism, drug consumption, promiscuity, stealing, ostentation etc. Uzoma (2012). The way of life of the family and especially the relationship of both parents, children and other members of the family affects the child, where there is constant quarrelling and fighting that affect the child psychologically and may lead to day-dreaming, truancy and escapist tendencies which cause indiscipline in the child. Parents aspirations and high expectations for their children may lead them into frustration that can cause indiscipline. Moreso, over-pampering of children by some parents will spoil the child and can lead to indiscipline.

(5) School

Poor school environment does not encourage discipline, a dirty environment littered with papers, cellophane bags, empty packs of food and other wastes cannot encourage effective and efficient teaching and learning, inadequate facilities can also cause indiscipline in the school because the students will not fellow what they did not understand and as such could not comprehend and understand the lesson. The school teachers can also contribute to indiscipline by the type of life and character they show case at the school premises. The teachers method of teaching, inappropriate record keeping, incomplete note of lesson, failure in giving the students continuous assessment test and examination as and when due, teachers quarrelling with colleagues in the presence of students, absenteeism, rudeness, examination malpractice indecent relationship with the student deviant behaviours among the students etc, could lead to indiscipline and breed lack of self control. This inappropriate and indecent relationships between the teachers and the students has led to organization of many conferences and seminars on the issue of indecent sexual relationship in the school. Ndu (2002) observed that some members of the staff engage in sexual relationships with their students and even ask for sex or money in exchange for a score in an examination. This is very bad and encourages indiscipline and lack of self control. The youth learns and sees it as the easiest way to acquire wealth and get what he/she wants.

The school authorities are not left out, not caring for the students welfare, use of lapidated building e.g. hostels and classrooms, insufficient learning materials and facilities become the order of the day at schools. At times school rules are too vague and difficult to maintain; double standard and favouritism are seen in the school system. Some students are more favoured than the others. All these indisciplinary characters are seen and recorded by the students which breeds indiscipline among the students.

Implications of Lack of Self Discipline and Self Control

Lack of self discipline and self control among students is very disastrous. Where a student lacks self discipline can lead to withdrawal from his academic pursuit. A student that is expelled from school due to one bad character or the other can make him a drop out. This harpers the child's future because he may not be able to face his future again. It could also lead to unwanted pregnancies among the girls, some students have caused the untimely deaths of their parents due to desperation and frustration; leaving the younger ones at the mercy of fate.

Lack of self control leads to untimely death through contamination of deadly diseases like HIV and AIDS, STDS and other dangerous diseases. These diseases when contacted may be uneasy to cure and can lead to death. There is also destruction of essential Government properties and school properties caused by students' unrest/ these destroyed properties may not be able to replaced easily living, the masses or other students handicapped of such essential properties.

Again, involvement of students into indisciplinary actions like taking of dangerous drugs, alcoholism, smoking of cigarettes, womanizing, prostitution etc make them wayward and non-effective in the society where they found themselves.

Lastly, there will not be effective teaching and learning in an indisciplined environment. Effective and efficient teaching and learning can only be possible in a disciplined environment. Teaching takes internalization and comprehension from well behaved students. One needs self control to delay gratifications of the self and pursue more lasting values which will provide more effective for those desires.

Remedies

Alexander (2012) stated that Adolescents normally try to conform to the demands of their groups and subgroup inorder to be accepted or liked. In an attempt to conform, they may acquire certain habits which are detrimental to their future. It therefore becomes necessary that students should be enlightened with the need for self discipline and self control which can help in attaining the expected goals. Indiscipline among students can be characterized by the negative influences of peer groups which try to dominate the family influence. Students should put much efforts in avoiding the negative influence of their friends over their lives. They should always listen to their parents and teachers advices more than that of their peers.

The primary function of the educational system is to teach and mould the character of the young, such that they become loyal and useful citizens of the nation. The teacher is the most important function in the formal education system, so any effort to improve discipline in the education system must start with the teachers; the school administrators are not left behind. Efforts should be made to impact discipline in students. The impartation of discipline in students is a combined work of both the parents, teachers, school administrators and the society at large gearing towards producing well behaved youths that will add in the nation's building and development. Ike (1990) observed that inspite of all corrective measures adopted by teachers and school administrators in curbing students indisciplinary behaviours, records have that indiscipline among students is in an increase in the school. He observed that independency is the main reason for the indiscipline among youths of school age because they want to be independent of their parents or teachers and therefore their peers get more significant. This alarming situation makes Ike (1990) to lament that:

> "Rudeness is pervasive in our society... Disrespect for elders and constituted authority is the reason for our lawlessness, religion bigotry which has nothing to do with Godliness is such a bane of the society that rioting and violence have spilled over from the society to our schools system ... The children... cheat at examination to acquire certificate at all costs.

Therefore, the youths should not be given the opportunity of having their ways always; they should be taught from their early age the need for obedience and respect for both parents and teachers. Obedience in the area of family rules and school rules and regulations. This will go a long way in helping them develop "fear" and obedience to authorities.

In addition, the school should provide wholesome clubs and activities to occupy the minds and time of students and keep them off from indisciplinary acts. E.g. science clubs, music and dramatic societies, young farmers club, debating society, literary society etc. This will occupy them instead of forming their own mischievous clubs. Religious groups and churches should organize groups and societies in the school to help students in exhibiting religious characters worth emulating. E.g. Scripture Union (S.U), Catholic Students' Association, Muslim Student^ Fellowship, Evangelical Fellowship in Anglican Communion (EFAC), Students Christian Movement (SCM) etc. Social cultural clubs can be provided also e.g. Boys Scouts and Girls Guides, the Man- O War, the cultural society, students' union, dance group etc.

Uzoma (2012) aptly observed that "in activities makes students susceptible to propaganda... so variations in learning activities and provision of facilities is important in motivating students to higher aspiration. There is also need for effective counseling and guidance services. Student should be counseled and guided always. Monitoring of their academic performance and activities. in the school by the teachers, parents and school administrators is very crucial.

These will not only strengthen their academic performances but will also occupy their minds and keep them busy. The need of the learners should also be considered and sought for by parents, teachers and the school administrators they should provide the learners needs adequately. Moreso, there is need for effective role models and relevant academic programmes for students. These should be done through collaborative efforts and effective communicate in order to inculcate the spirit of self discipline in students.

Conclusion

It is therefore most pertinent that students should try and bear the hardship of inculcating in themselves a self disciplined and self controlled life which is internally built, last long and cannot be susceptible to negative characters which immorally behaved students exhibit in school. Self discipline and self control are the best of all corrective measures which solve the disease of indiscipline among the students inorder to obtain and achieve realistic expectations which is the core reason of going to school. Above all the fear of God is the beginning of all wisdom: so the word of God which is sharper than two edged sword should be a watch dog in the lives of all students inorder to have self-discipline and self-control for the attainment of life expectations.

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