

**MANAGING LEARNER BEHAVIOUR IN THE SCHOOL CONTEXT IN  
SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF KALOMO DISTRICT, ZAMBIA**

**BY**

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## AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I, **Rex Chooye Nalubamba**, declare that this dissertation represents my own work and has not previously been submitted by anyone for a degree at the University of Zambia or any other institution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged

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## **ABSTRACT**

Discipline is among the necessary ingredients that play a crucial role in a school system. Disciplinary problems are bound to occur when a learner does not follow the laid down rules and regulations of a school. This study was aimed at establishing how disciplinary committees in schools manage learner behaviour within the school context. The objectives of the study were to: Establish how Disciplinary Committees dealt with acts of indiscipline: Explore the perceptions of head teachers, deputy head teachers, senior teachers, class teachers and learners on indiscipline: Identify strategies used by Disciplinary Committees in handling learner indiscipline in selected secondary schools of Kalomo district of Southern Province, Zambia. A purposive sampling procedure was used to select the head teachers, deputy head teachers, and class teachers, while a random sampling procedure was employed to select the learners who participated in the study. The findings of the study revealed that as regards to how Disciplinary Committees dealt with cases of indiscipline in schools, punishment in the form of manual work, suspension, and transfers were used. However, the penalty depended on the gravity of the offence committed by the learner. Concerning the perceptions of the learners on disciplinary committees, it was found that most learners knew where to report cases of indiscipline in schools. They also perceived these committees as effective enough in combating pupil indiscipline in schools. As regards to the strategies used by disciplinary committees to overcome indiscipline in schools, it was found that sensitisation of the learners proved to be the most effective way of improving pupil behaviour in schools. Furthermore, incorporating guidance and counselling services was yet another important method which the schools employed. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made: (i) The need for schools to clearly state boundaries of acceptable behaviour within schools, (ii) the need for schools to offer moral leadership and education, (iii) the need for schools to respond to cases of indiscipline promptly and firmly to learners who transgress boundaries of acceptable behaviour, (iv) the need for schools to strengthen guidance and counselling services to help learners that have issues of indiscipline, (v) the need for schools to increase sensitisation to learners on the importance to avoid being in indiscipline issues, (vi) the need for schools to regularly update the school rules and regulations and enforce them timely and (vii) the need to engage learners in the formulation of rules and regulations that govern the smooth running of schools.

**Keywords:** Behaviour, learner, disciplinary committee management, perceptions

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this piece of academic work to my late father, His Royal Highness Chief Bright Luu Nalubamba, whose passion for education cannot be over-emphasised. MHSRIP.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

COPYRIGHT DECLARATION.....	i
AUTHOR’S DECLARATION .....	ii
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
DEDICATION.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	vii
LIST OF TABLES .....	xi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xii
LIST OF APPENDICES .....	xiii
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS .....	xiv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .....	1
Overview .....	1
1.1. Background .....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem .....	3
1.3. General Objective.....	4
1.3.1. Specific Objectives.....	4
1.4. Research Questions .....	4
1.5. Significance.....	5
1.6. Limitations.....	5
1.7. Delimitation.....	5
1.8. Theoretical Framework.....	6
1.9. Conceptual Framework.....	6
1.10. Operational Definition of Terms .....	7

1.11. Summary.....	8
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
Overview .....	9
2.1. How Disciplinary Committees deal with acts of Indiscipline in Secondary Schools .....	9
2.2. Perceptions of Head teachers, Deputy Head teachers, Guidance and Counseling teachers, Class teachers and learners on Indiscipline in Secondary Schools.....	12
2.3. Strategies used by Disciplinary Committees to effectively instill discipline in secondary schools .....	14
2.4. Summary.....	17
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY .....	18
Overview .....	18
3.1. Research Design .....	18
3.2. Target Population .....	18
3.3. Sample Size.....	18
3.4. Sampling Procedure .....	19
3.5. Research Instruments .....	19
3.6. Data Collection Procedure.....	19
3.7. Validity .....	20
3.8. Reliability .....	20
3.9. Trustworthiness.....	20
3.10. Data Analysis .....	20
3.11. Ethical Considerations .....	21
3.12. Summary.....	21
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS .....	22
Overview .....	22

4.1.	School Disciplinary Committees in Schools.....	22
4.1.1.	Need for Disciplinary Committees.....	23
4.1.2.	Functioning of Disciplinary Committees .....	24
4.1.3.	Effectiveness of the Disciplinary Committee .....	25
4.1.4.	Levels of teacher involvement in the disciplinary process .....	26
4.1.5.	Teachers’ Involvement in Learner Discipline .....	27
4.1.6.	Types of offences frequently handled by the Disciplinary Committees .....	30
4.1.7.	Disciplinary Committees Responses to Learner Indiscipline.....	31
4.1.8.	Disciplinary Committees incorporation of Guidance and Counselling services .....	33
4.1.9.	Sensitization of learners in the school .....	33
4.1.10.	Firmness of the School Disciplinary Committee .....	34
4.2.	Disciplinary Committees Handling Learner Discipline .....	35
4.2.1.	Reporting Acts of Indiscipline to School Authorities.....	35
4.2.2.	Fairness of School Authorities.....	36
4.2.3.	Sensitization of Learners .....	37
4.2.4.	Punishment of Offenders.....	37
4.2.5.	Effectiveness of Disciplinary Committees.....	38
4.3.	Strategies of handling Learner Indiscipline .....	38
4.4.	Summary.....	42
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS .....		43
Overview .....		43
5.1.	How disciplinary committees dealt with acts of indiscipline in secondary schools.....	43
5.2.	Perception of learners and teachers on discipline in school .....	45
5.3.	Strategies used by disciplinary committee to deal with indiscipline at school .....	47
5.4.	Summary.....	49

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	50
Overview .....	50
6.1. Summary of Thesis.....	50
6.2. Conclusions .....	50
6.3. Recommendations .....	51
6.4. Suggestions for Further Research.....	52
REFERENCES .....	53
APPENDICES .....	58

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 4. 1. Rating of the discipline levels in schools.....	25
Table 4. 2. Position of members of the disciplinary committee - Permanent or not .....	25
Table 4. 3. Data showing whether or not learners would report an act of indiscipline to school authorities.....	35
Table 4. 4. Data showing learners ' awareness of the school authorities to report cases of indiscipline.....	36
Table 4. 5. Learners' perception of fairness by school authorities .....	36
Table 4. 6. Sensitization of learners on school rules.....	37

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. 1. Flow chart showing the management of learner behavior through Disciplinary Committees .....	7
Figure 4. 1. Presence of a functional disciplinary Committee in school) .....	23
Figure 4. 2: Teacher involvement in the disciplinary process .....	26
Figure 4. 3: Teacher absenteeism from school .....	27
Figure 4. 4: Rating of the pupil-teacher relationship in school.....	28
Figure 4. 5: Frequency at which learners were engaged in talks that lead to learner discipline... 29	
Figure 4. 6: Findings on the most frequent cases handled by the disciplinary committee in schools.....	31
Figure 4. 7: Speed with which disciplinary committees responded to cases .....	31
Figure 4. 8: Frequency with which disciplinary committees met to discuss disciplinary cases... 32	
Figure 4. 9: Presence of Guidance and counselling services within the disciplinary committee . 33	
Figure 4. 10: Disciplinary Committees Sensitization of Learners on school rules.....	34
Figure 4. 11: Firmness of the school disciplinary committee.....	34
Figure 4. 12: Strategies focused on enhancing the effectiveness of the Disciplinary Committees .....	39

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix i: Questionnaire for Teachers .....	58
Appendix ii: Questionnaire for Pupils .....	67
Appendix iii: Interview guide for Administrators .....	70

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>DC</b>	Disciplinary Committee
<b>DEBS</b>	District Education Board Secretary
<b>HoD</b>	Head of Department
<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>MoGE</b>	Ministry of General Education
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PEO</b>	Provincial Education Officer
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>UNZA</b>	University of Zambia
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>ZOU</b>	Zimbabwe Open University

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## Overview

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the research problem, general and specific objectives, research questions, and the significance of the study. It also provides the definition of key terms used.

### 1.1. Background

As a universal challenge, acts of indiscipline manifest in various ways. Several cases, particularly in learning institutions, have been reported globally. Agarib (2006) affirms that there is a growing concern regarding indiscipline in schools in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where teaching methods are attributed to some of the major causes of the children's indiscipline. Disciplinary Committees have been established in many schools to curb this vice but to no avail as acts of indiscipline continue to persist. On the other hand, parents are getting anxious and frustrated as they complain of rising incidences of indiscipline and violence in schools despite the presence of school disciplinary management. In the Caribbean states, the problem of pupil indiscipline seems to be no different. Thompson (2009) posits that, in Trinidad and Tobago policy-makers, teachers, parents and the public at large have been struggling to find solutions aimed at mitigating the problem of indiscipline in schools. Similarly, in Uganda, cases of indiscipline have been noted countrywide in both Faith-Based and public schools (Ssekamwa and Lugumba, 2000). Furthermore, a study in Uganda revealed that several schools suffered an alarming deterioration of discipline in the recent past, and the concern is on the role of Disciplinary Committees in inculcating a culture of discipline in schools.

In Zambia, cases of learner indiscipline have not been any different. Disciplinary Committees are claimed to be well established in most schools, but issues relating to learner indiscipline have taken the lead in both print and electronic media.

An article published in the Times of Zambia newspaper (2014), reported about some unruly Grade 12 learners at Mukobeko Secondary School in Kabwe who set defiant rules that scared teachers

from attending classes. According to the article, the learners drafted rebellious rules and displayed them within the school premises. These rules prompted teachers to stay away from classes for fear of being victimised by the learners. One would wonder as to what the school Disciplinary Committee was doing to let the situation reach such an uncontrollable state.

Another example of riotous behaviour by learners in Zambia is what happened to seven learners of Serenje District who in June 2009 were fined by the Magistrate Court over riotous behaviour. The Magistrate Court also extended the payment of the fine to 285 other learners, who were absent from school on the day of the riot. The court ordered each of the learners to pay K120 by June 30, 2009. The seven learners, who appeared in court, were arrested during the riot, which resulted in property worth over K18, 000 being destroyed. In passing judgment, the Magistrate said, “Zambia is a peaceful nation; hence riotous behaviour will not be condoned.” The magistrate further noted that the offence committed by the learners was severe because it was retrogressive to national development. In mitigation, the learners pleaded for leniency and promised they would never indulge themselves in unruly behaviour again. They argued that they were school pupils, some of whom were going to write their final examinations at the end of the year. Some parents of the learners, who attended the judgment, described the ruling as fair and warned their children to desist from misconduct in school (Lusaka Times, 2009).

Issues of enhancing learner discipline in Kalomo District have in recent years been an area of concern. It is one of the thirteen districts of Zambia’s Southern Province which also has the highest number of secondary schools in the country at 106. In line with the Province’s 2017-2021 Strategic Plan, learner discipline is among the values that would help achieve increase in the performance of the province. The theme is “a Province of excellence in learner performance by 2021”. In 2018, Kalomo District was among the districts whose schools were awarded for exceptional performance at grade 12. Leadership and Management is a theme in the Strategic Plan and the Province which has seen the creation of management relationships between schools and the communities (SMART Zambia Institute, 2018). Among the initiatives has been the establishment of Disciplinary Committees in schools or strengthening the existing ones.

Achieving this goal requires greater learner discipline. Kalomo District has in recent years seen more concern towards learner discipline. For example, when in 2018 Namwianga Christian

Secondary School recorded 98% pass rate at grade 12, it was attributed to its focus on pupil discipline and other schools were urged to emulate the school's disciplinary attitude (Zambia Mission, 2018). According to Hamusankwa, (2016) the upgrading of Choonga and Siachitema into secondary schools brought to the fore, the need for the schools to strengthen school-based discipline in order to raise the standards of education and to keep the learners from negative vices. It was further noted that places like Dimbwe resettlement would be considered so that learners are in an environment that would attract attention on education. Extreme cases of indiscipline have in recent years been reported in the region such as the 2017 riot where more than 12 pupils were arrested for protesting that their cellular phones had been confiscated after they sneaked them into school (Dennis, 2017).

Lack of discipline always hinders progress. It has become a custom among Zambian youths to resort to unruly behaviour when aggrieved as a way of expressing their anger. However, it should be noted that problems cannot be resolved by using unruly behaviour; there are better ways of expressing grievances, such as using dialogue. It is, therefore, the responsibility of school administrations through Disciplinary Committees to be proactive in dealing with issues of indiscipline and ensure that acts of violence by learners are dealt with the gravity they deserve.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Globally it has been observed that discipline is a pillar of unity in every country (Mishra, 2012). Discipline enhances attainment of desirable quality education at all levels in learning institutions. In Zambia, despite efforts by institutions of learning in establishing Disciplinary Committees and providing guidance and counselling services that offer an opportunity of guiding learners on morality, indiscipline still remains a big challenge. Further, the Zambian curriculum offers subjects like Religious Education and Civic Education, which are rich in content to ensure that learners are enlightened on acceptable behaviour in society. The Zambian Government has also put in place in-service management pieces of training of School Administrators aimed at equipping them with knowledge and skills of providing an excellent learning environment, behavioural modification of learners and how issues of discipline should be handled in learning institutions (MOE, 1992).

A lot of information on indiscipline in Zambian schools has been brought to the fore through print and social media. Kalomo District is one district in Southern Province of Zambia where issues of learner indiscipline have become an area of concern. While the province is amongst the best

performing at secondary school level, the issues of indiscipline raised in recent years indicate a need to review the success of its education strategic plan of 2016 to 2021. Most of the schools in the district have adopted the practice of having a school Disciplinary Committee. Not much has been done regarding studying learner discipline from the point of view of Disciplinary Committees. The most recent study on learner indiscipline by Kasaro, (2016) was on discipline and learner performance. Thus there appears to be a knowledge gap in the nature of indiscipline in schools and how Disciplinary Committees manage learner behaviour within the school context.

It is against this background that this study sought to establish how Disciplinary Committees manage cases of indiscipline in public and private secondary schools in Kalomo District of Southern Province in Zambia.

### **1.3. General Objective**

The general objective of the study was to investigate the nature of indiscipline in schools and determine how Disciplinary Committees managed learner behaviour within their school context in four selected secondary schools in Kalomo District of Southern Province in Zambia.

#### **1.3.1. Specific Objectives**

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To establish how Disciplinary Committees dealt with acts of indiscipline in selected secondary schools of Kalomo District.
2. To explore the perceptions of head teachers, deputy head teachers, senior teachers, class teachers and learners on Disciplinary Committees handling indiscipline in selected secondary schools in Kalomo District.
3. To identify strategies used by Disciplinary Committees in handling learner indiscipline in selected secondary schools of Kalomo District.

### **1.4. Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How do Disciplinary Committees deal with acts of indiscipline in selected Secondary Schools of Kalomo District?

2. What are the perceptions of head teachers, deputy head teachers, senior teachers, class teachers and learners on indiscipline in selected secondary schools in Kalomo District?
3. What strategies are used by Disciplinary Committees in handling learner indiscipline in selected public and private secondary schools of Kalomo District?

### **1.5. Significance**

It is hoped that the findings of the study may provide information that may be useful to Disciplinary Committees in the management of indiscipline cases in secondary schools. It is also hoped that the findings of the study may be helpful to the policymakers and educational administrators in coming up with strategies that may be implemented in secondary schools to enhance the operation of Disciplinary Committees to fight the escalating rate of indiscipline in secondary schools.

### **1.6. Limitations**

The limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methodology that impact or influence the interpretation of the findings of the research. They are the constraints on generalisability, applications to practice, and/or utility of findings that are the result of the ways in which the researcher initially chose to design the study or the method used to establish internal and external validity of the effect of unanticipated challenges that emerged during the investigation (James and Murnan, 2004). The use of questionnaires as a tool for data collection for this study appeared to be a challenge as some participants might have given incorrect responses for fear of being identified or victimised and this could have compromised data processing. This study would have been more representative if more schools were included in the sample. Therefore, the study findings may not be generalised to other schools in other parts of the country.

### **1.7. Delimitation**

Delimitations are those characteristics that limit the scope and define the boundaries of the study. The delimitations are in the researcher's control. Delimiting factors include the choice of objectives, the research questions, variables of interest, theoretical perspectives that the researcher adopted (as opposed to what could have been adopted), and the population the researcher chooses to investigate (Simon, 2011). This study only focused on the selected secondary schools in Kalomo district. Further, it only focused on the head teachers, deputy head teachers, senior teachers, class teachers and learners in the selected schools of Kalomo District of Southern Province, Zambia.

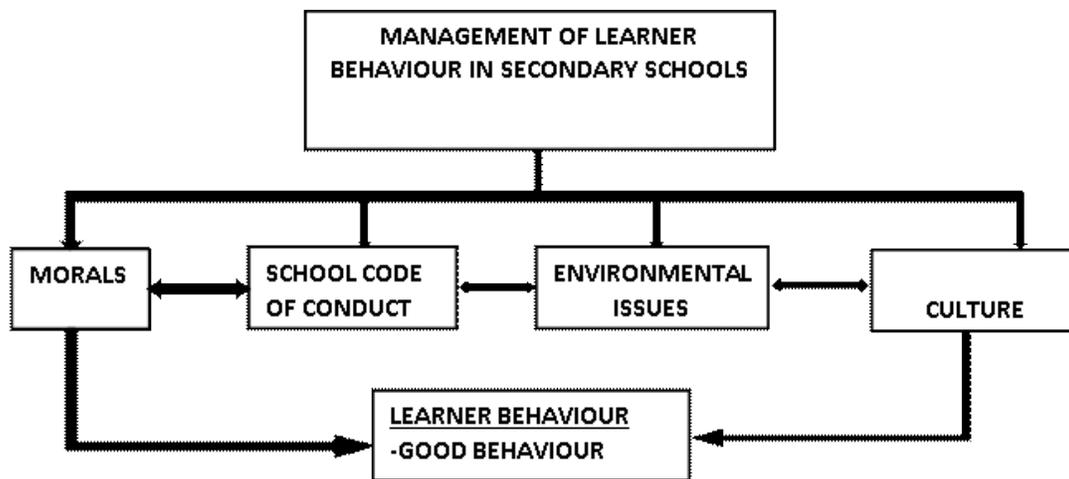
## **1.8. Theoretical Framework**

The study was guided by the Social Control Theory which was propounded by Hirschi (1969). This theory contends that all people, from the time they are born, are basically bad apples that must be controlled by-laws, rules and regulations in order to keep society in check. It goes on to maintain that those who have a weak bond to societal controls end up participating in deviant or criminal behaviour. People follow the rules and regulations because of 'social bond'. Social bond, as insightfully observed by Hirschi (1969) is a sense of belonging or social ties that make one comply with the rules and regulations. Moreover, a deficit in social bonds results in the liberation from rules and regulations, while tightly bound individuals hold their aberrant behaviour at bay (Hirschi, 1969). Rules and regulations may connote different meanings for different people. Some people may perceive rules and regulation as an infringement on their freedom while others may see them as liberating. However, they may perceive school rules and regulations aim to maintain order. School rules and regulations represent important control mechanisms to which learners conform. According to the theory, human beings normally respond to four social bonds to conventional society: attachment to others, commitment to conformity, involvement in conventional activities, and belief in the value or legitimacy of convention. These four elements of social bond may determine how learners behave in school. Social Control Theory has been used by scholars to study how school rules and regulations are followed or not followed as they are administered by the school's Disciplinary Committee. Jenkins (1997) and Stewart (2003), for example, have concentrated on the school as an important mechanism of social control. Of notable significance is the school's ability, through the Disciplinary Committee, to control an individual's behaviour regardless of other significant background factor's influences. The execution of school rules and regulations by the school's Disciplinary Committee may determine its effectiveness or ineffectiveness. As such, school rules and regulations are important arenas for reducing or curbing indiscipline or misbehaviour by learners through delinquency prevention programmes. It is against this background that the theory was relevant to the research topic.

## **1.9. Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework of the study presents the interrelationship between independent and dependent variables in the study that influences students' discipline and how Disciplinary Committees manage learner behaviour in secondary schools.

The principal criterion to measure a functional and performing disciplinary committee is an orderly and proper school which has a high degree of discipline among its learners. The degree of discipline among the learners and effectiveness of the disciplinary committee is determined by the interplay of the various school factors that influence it, and this includes morals, code of conduct in schools, environmental issues and the cultural background. This discipline enhances orderliness and creates a conducive learning environment that can improve the learners' performance.



*Source Field data*

**Figure 1. 1. Flow chart showing the management of learner behavior through Disciplinary Committees**

### 1.10. Operational Definition of Terms

**Control** - The power or authority to direct, order or manage.

**Deviance** - Describes actions or behaviours that violate accepted rules and regulations.

**Deviant** - Different in moral or social standards from what is considered normal or acceptable.

**Discipline** - Control aimed at producing obedience to rules. It can also be said to be the readiness or willingness of an individual to demonstrate quality and socially acceptable behaviour for authority, high sense of responsibility, love for orderliness, eagerness to discharge duties with accuracy and efficiency.

**Disciplinary Committee** - A group or board of school management administrators entrusted with a responsibility of enforcing discipline.

**Indiscipline** - Disorderliness or absence of discipline.

**Norms:** Specific behavioural standards, or customary rules of conduct in society.

### **1.11. Summary**

The chapter started by presenting the background to the study which discussed the effectiveness of disciplinary committees in selected public and private secondary schools focusing on Kalomo District in Zambia. The chapter discussed the research problem under investigation and the purpose of the study, the research objectives, research questions and significance of the study. Limitations and delimitations of the study have also been presented in this chapter. The next chapter discusses the literature reviewed for the proposed research.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Overview**

This chapter reviews the relevant literature for the proposed study. Kombo and Tromp (2006) define the literature review as the written materials that the researcher has consulted to understand and investigate the research problem. This material consulted includes books, journals, dissertations, magazines and other sources that have relevance to the research.

This literature review is organised under the following themes emerging from the study research questions: how Disciplinary Committees deal with acts of indiscipline in public and private secondary schools; perceptions of school Disciplinary Committees, learners and teachers on barriers to an effective mechanism of instilling learner discipline in public and private secondary schools; and strategies used by school Disciplinary Committees in handling learner indiscipline in public and private selected secondary schools. A conclusion of the chapter is finally given.

### **2.1. How Disciplinary Committees deal with acts of Indiscipline in Secondary Schools**

Acts of indiscipline among learners in schools have been repeatedly noted in Zambia and elsewhere. These acts have become an issue in learning institutions. Disciplinary Committees have become tools usually adopted to combat this vice. Kochhar (2001) upholds that indiscipline is conceptualised as behaviour that breaches rules and regulations of a school, and later undermines its effectiveness. Therefore, it takes discipline to blend and advance development at both personal and the national level.

Various forms of pupil indiscipline cases are increasingly reported all-round the globe. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2009) reports on the frequency of individual pupil misbehaviour amongst secondary school learners in England, Italy, Japan, Russia, Scotland and the USA. According to the report, problems of indiscipline include absenteeism, arriving late at school, skipping class periods, violating dress code, classroom disturbances, cheating, vandalism, theft and inflicting physical injuries on other students. In order to curb indiscipline in secondary schools, Disciplinary Committees in schools established enforced school regulations on dress code, absenteeism, skipping class period, vandalism, theft and other

acts of indiscipline. Those found wanting were subjected to corporal punishment, suspension and complete dismissal from school, depending on the nature of indiscipline committed.

In the same vein, in America, Clarke (2002) reported a number of pupil indiscipline cases which included violence on teachers and other learners found in possession of controlled substances such as alcohol, robbery, engaging in habitual profanity, vulgarity, making terrorist threats against the school authority. It was also found that schools resorted to the establishment of Disciplinary Committees which worked hand in hand with the state police. Through this collaboration, severe cases of indiscipline like the assault of fellow students, members of staff, use of drugs which were not allowed by the law and many others were reported to the police.

Many educators in Africa, felt that the introduction of laws which discouraged corporal punishment in schools led to the collapse of discipline in many schools Joubert and Prinsloo (1999). For example, the discipline at a senior secondary school in Mpumalanga Province Maakana (2009) leaves much to be desired. Learners came to school late or never turned up for school at all. They left the school at will. Educators had to wait for learners to begin with their daily business. It is evident that discipline has seriously collapsed in this school. An educator at this school notes, "There is nothing I can do. Corporal punishment is abolished, and a jail term awaits any teacher who dares apply it." The educator felt that corporal punishment was the only means of maintaining discipline in the school. This situation may prompt one to say that this state of affairs may be the order of the day in many South African schools, at a time when education needs to be seriously improved.

Furthermore, Disciplinary Committees in South Africa have punitive measures aimed at curbing indiscipline in schools. The educators that were interviewed mentioned that the schools had some punitive measures in place in order to maintain discipline without using corporal punishment. They contend that they do punish learners when their behaviour becomes unacceptable. Learners are given minor tasks to do. For example, they scrub the classrooms, cut grass, pick up litter and clean classroom windows. Punishment is used sparingly only after several warnings and reprimands have been explored but to no avail.

In Zambia, there has been growing outcry by teachers, parents and other members of the community over indiscipline by learners in schools. However, indiscipline has been dealt with to some degree in Zambia. For instance, Mugala (2008) in a newspaper article entitled “*Disciplinary cases prevent 14 pupils from writing Grade 12 exams*”, (Post newspaper Education supplement 8th November, 2008. Page 2-) in a case that involved 13 boys from Mpika Boys Secondary School and one from Kasama-states that “...it was resolved that the 14 pupils will not sit for the Examinations Council of Zambia exams because they were facing disciplinary cases, said Provincial Education Officer.” He said although it was a difficult decision to make, it was the only way of discouraging indiscipline and serious behaviour in schools and supporting the decisions made by the Disciplinary Committees, so that there is stability in schools and learners can concentrate on learning”. Furthermore, 21 Grade learners at Mungwi Technical High School were suspended for allegedly assaulting Grade 10 learners at the school, and the Provincial Education Officer said the learners were given forced transfers and were made to repeat Grade 11 wherever they went. The above statements clearly indicate some of the ways in which Disciplinary Committees dealt with indiscipline cases in some parts of Zambia.

A study was done by Kasaro (2016) in Petauke District in Zambia and showed that pupils who indulged themselves in mischief performed badly in all types of assessments. While schools aimed at producing learners who could pass examinations, using the prescribed methods of teaching, learners saw this as a way of depriving them of their rights and freedom hence the resistance which translated into misbehaviour. As such, what the learners did in schools did not conform to school rules which in turn derailed the system of teaching and learning. The common acts of indiscipline that were found were non-observance of time and failure to follow school rules which led to poor coverage of topics and poor understanding of concepts by learners. Consequently, learners who were well behaved performed better than those who were badly behaved. The poor results attained by learners who were badly behaved further confirmed that they were to blame for their poor performance. The school managements resorted to enforcing school rules so that indiscipline could reduce at the schools. Despite the fact that this study mainly concentrated on how indiscipline affects academic performance, it also shows that school managements have a critical role to play in curbing indiscipline in schools. Furthermore, this study was only done in Petauke District;

henceforth this study was undertaken to investigate how disciplinary committees managed learner behaviour in Kalomo District of Zambia.

## **2.2. Perceptions of Head teachers, Deputy Head teachers, Guidance and Counseling teachers, Class teachers and learners on Indiscipline in Secondary Schools**

The perception of learners and other teachers with regard to how indiscipline is handled has posed a significant reason why indiscipline persists in most schools. In Jamaica, for example, learners in most schools have a negative perception towards school rules and regulations provided by the Ministry of Education aimed at enhancing the quality of education. This negative attitude may be attributed to the different backgrounds of the learners. Some learners come from places where acts of indiscipline are rampant and done freely on the streets. These find it hard to accept that coming late for classes, absenteeism, drinking alcohol at school, physical assault of fellow students and other acts are grave offences that need correction (Griffin, 1994). Rahul (2011) also observed that most learners, who went on strike, resorted to copying and cheating in examinations, insulted their teachers, tore away pages from the library books, wrote dirty things on the walls and practised violence as a result of their negative perception of what discipline entails.

In Malaysia, acts of indiscipline in schools are also evident and are ranked as a major problem among learners in primary and secondary schools. Most learners involved in such acts were not dealt with accordingly by the Disciplinary Committees in their respective schools because their parents bribed influential members of the Disciplinary Committees and their cases suddenly died as other members of staff who wanted to proceed with the cases were threatened with unemployment (Azizi, 2009). The resilience of relevant school authorities or Disciplinary Committees in handling indiscipline has made some teachers to also engage themselves in helping some learners who are viewed to be 'sacred cows' cheat in termly assessments and in some cases, during national examinations. This has continued to be a growing concern and problem as the negative mind-set of pupils, and some teacher tends to encourage indiscipline. For example, in the United States of America, 20 pupils were asked to explain what could make them engage in indiscipline. Their response showed that they believed Disciplinary Committees at their respective schools didn't have acceptable or just procedures when dealing with cases of indiscipline. The learners went on to say that punishment was given in biased ways and those learners coming from

rich families or their parents had high positions in government, were mostly exempted from indiscipline charges despite being found wanting.

A study done by Maakana (2009) in South Africa captured the views of educators on what is usually a recipe for indiscipline in some schools. He mentioned that having ineffective code of conduct to guide everyone can be a source of it. One of the interviewed educators mentioned that they had a point system on the school policy that was used as a means of maintaining discipline. Points were given for every offence committed and learners accumulate these points. After a certain number of accumulated points, school administrations would call their parents and let them know about it. Another educator remarked by stating that using a point system for offences such as ignorance of class work, making noise and absenteeism helps to see which learner has allocated more points and in that case, a parent of the perpetrator is called so that they can help management in understanding how best the learner can be assisted.

Teachers in South Africa also mentioned involving learners in maintaining discipline. Besides the learners' representative council, which can be given responsibilities to ensure that discipline is maintained in the classrooms, class leaders who are elected by learners in the classrooms are given a role in maintaining discipline which involves ensuring that attendance, behaviour and other classroom matters are in order Maakana (2009).

A study undertaken in Nigeria by Onyechiet *al.*, (2007) found that most teachers were of the view that each and every school should have the school governing body dealing with indiscipline. Every public school was required to establish a governing body that represents the school community. This body plays a significant role in helping the school to maintain discipline. They are invited to the school to deal with matters which are very serious, leading either to suspension or expulsion. They also come to see reports compiled by the principal and decide what actions to take in accordance with the school policy. The findings of the study simply show how important disciplinary committees are in all schools.

In Zambia, the story is no different; Banja (2001) reported that the most spoiled learners involved in indiscipline in most schools in Central Province of Zambia were those who had their parents as

members of staff at the same school. This scenario, in turn, gave rise to negative perceptions by the learners regarding how the school authorities handled indiscipline and consequently made some learners to engage in such acts as a way of trying to imitate their peers who felt they are untouchable.

According to Kasaro (2016) Disciplinary Committees in Petauke District of Zambia were effectively handling learner behaviour in their respective schools. Furthermore, Committees ensured that those who are found wanting were dealt with accordingly so as to serve as a lesson to other learners. The study also found that most teachers and the Disciplinary Committees believed more in counselling services than in punitive measures, though these were used sometimes in order to maintain discipline. School managements pointed out that they were more concerned with considering the causes of problems that learners had or the causes of their misbehaviour. Educators added that they were concerned with the development of the character of the learner as well as his or her rehabilitation Kasaro (2016).

### **2.3. Strategies used by Disciplinary Committees to effectively instill discipline in secondary schools**

In the United States of America, educators observed that their own self-discipline is the key to effective discipline in the school. Amongst others, this is because the educators are role models for the learners. This is in accordance with the well-known social-cognitive theory of learning (stressing the role of observational learning) of the distinguished Albert Bandura (Van Niekerk, 1996).

Kruger (1996), who did a study in Singapore emphasised that even learners with appropriate abilities who are appointed in leadership positions, still need training so that they can perform their tasks effectively. Naidoo and Potterton (1994) also declared that positive behaviour could be developed if educators respect their learners and have positive human relations. They stated that empathetic educators are those who are respectful to their learners and create an atmosphere in the classroom which allows learners to be actively involved, thus stimulating problem-solving.

Kruger (1996) again mentions that learners in leadership positions should be seen as junior leaders who are an important part of the school management and have a meaningful role to play. Thorough

preparation for classroom activities on behalf of educators is an essential part of maintaining discipline in the classroom. It stands to reason that a well-prepared educator will have strategies and enough work to present to learners in the classroom. Educators view this as a very important aspect of maintaining discipline without the use of corporal punishment.

In another study, Jinot (2020) reveals that one of the strategies that can help to curb pupils' indiscipline is the engagement of educators in disciplining learners. Most of the teachers (71.5%) were of the opinion that more commitment on their part can improve discipline in a school while (24.5%) did not agree. The views of the majority of the respondents are consistent with the findings of Oliver, Wehby and Reschly (2011) which indicate that teachers need to change their own attitudes to their participation in the successful management of learner indiscipline as a whole. Further, Jinot (2020) argues that having a strong leadership by the school administrators helps to curb cases of learner indiscipline in schools. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Mukuria (2002) and Carolyn (2011) who are advocating that strong leadership from school Head teachers always helps to reduce the disciplinary problems in the school environment.

Van Niekerk (1996) found that the school policies of schools and codes of conduct clearly indicate expected behaviour. Moreover, offences are categorised and points allocated according to their severity. In the interviews, that were done, it was revealed that educators pointed out that the system of allocating points for unacceptable behaviour helps them significantly in maintaining discipline in the school without using corporal punishment. After learners have accumulated a certain number of points, parents are invited to come to school for an interview with either the principal, vice-principal or disciplinary committee to see how best they can help the learner.

In substantiating the educator's views, Haasbrook (1998) maintains that schools which are seen to follow effective disciplinary strategies are characterised by having a set of rules or Code of Conduct which also displays the consequences of disobeying them. In accordance, Lund (1996) postulates that rules are necessary in a school setting because they are guidelines which direct the principal, educators, parents as well as learners. Furthermore, these rules provide a framework which allows harmony, discipline and order to be maintained as well as ensuring that effective teaching is upheld. Lund (1996) points out that to enable all members of the school community to

behave correctly, a behavioural policy has to be developed. Smith (1985) agrees that for learners to understand what is expected of them a statement of rules or Code of Conduct must be developed. The development of the school policy involves educators, parents and learners. Educators view this as the major reason why learners obey the rules of the school willingly. All the above have to give inputs towards the development of the school policy with regard to the Code of Conduct of the learners. Parents, educators and learners in the school governing body consult those they represent for inputs, and these are finalised by the school governing body.

In Nigeria, the situation of learner indiscipline cases is not different from the rest of the world. However, Onyechiet *al.* (2007) identified some of the ways that Disciplinary Committees have used to curb this vice. The nature of deviant behaviours frequently exhibited by secondary school learners included walking around in class, noise-making, sleeping in class, pinching, aggression, vandalism, pilfering, lies, truancy, tardiness, irresponsibility, cheating, immorality and use of drugs. Cultism and examination malpractice have sternly been emphasised to be illegal, and those found wanting were bound to be given stiff punishment, suspended or dismissed completely from school. This has been done by reminding the learners some of the rules and regulations of the school at assemblies and lessons in subjects like Religious Education and Civic Education.

In South Africa, Disciplinary Committees involved parents in maintaining discipline in schools. In substantiating the above remark, Wheldall (1992) is of the opinion that parents should be contacted as early as possible when things begin to go wrong with their children at school. By in cooperating them, parents can ensure that learners' behaviour is acceptable. Parents can also ensure that learners complete their homework on time (Blandford, 1998). Accordingly, Kruger (2009) noted that by involving parents, it's likely that they will ensure that the values, direction and the character of the community are established and maintained at school. Not only does parental involvement improve pupil attendance, but it also helps eliminate problems related to learning and behaviour (Kruger, 2009). Communication between parents and educators should be continually maintained because a team effort in the education of learners is essential. Smith (1985) also concludes that if parents don't involve themselves in disciplining their children, any programme related to behavioural change that the school may embark upon cannot be effective.

In Kenya, Simatwa (2007) conducted a study that focused on the management of learner discipline. The findings of this study revealed various cases of indiscipline which included noise-making, lateness for classes, indecency, drug abuse, rioting and possession of inflammable substances. However, the Ministry of Education in Kenya has taken a step to sensitise learners in schools where such acts are evident. Learners have been sensitised on the dangers of engaging themselves in such acts.

In 1960-70s, indiscipline cases were also rampant in most secondary schools in Lusaka District. Learners during that period resorted to burning tyres along the Great East Road, especially those from Munali Boys Secondary School. School authorities made sure the culprits were dealt with accordingly by subjecting them to punishment and suspension in extreme cases. When school authorities failed to calm angry pupils during riots, the police assisted (Shana, 1974).

#### **2.4. Summary**

The review has presented how Disciplinary Committees in some parts of the world deal with acts of indiscipline in secondary schools. Efforts have been undertaken such as punishing learners who are found with cases of indiscipline. However, indiscipline among learners seems to be moving to another level rather than reducing as observed in the media. Furthermore, the views presented have shown that the perception of learners and other teachers is negative with regards to how indiscipline cases are handled by Disciplinary Committees in some secondary schools around the globe. This negative perception gives a warrant of further research in an effort to try and understand why indiscipline continues to persist despite efforts of Disciplinary Committees. Further, despite the measures put in place by Disciplinary Committees to curb indiscipline in schools, the problem still persists in most schools. Thus, this study aimed at finding solutions to this problem and fill in the gap of knowledge on the already existing studies.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **Overview**

This chapter discusses the methodology which was employed in gathering the necessary data for the study. It describes the research design, population size, sampling techniques, and research instruments and data collection procedures. The chapter ends with an explanation of the data analysis technique which was used in the study.

### **3.1. Research Design**

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) define a research design as a comprehensive plan for executing a systematic exploration of the study under investigation. It is a plan that a researcher has for the study, which includes the methods used, the type of data to be gathered, the choice of the research setting, respondents and data collection tools. This study used a descriptive survey design to investigate how Disciplinary Committees manage learner behaviour (indiscipline) in selected four secondary schools in Kalomo District of Southern Province of Zambia.

Descriptive design is a strategy appropriate for obtaining the exact information concerning the status of a phenomenon. Gall *et al.*, (2003) contend that a descriptive survey is the most appropriate when the purpose of the study is to provide a detailed description of the phenomenon.

### **3.2. Target Population**

The population is the number of people living in a given area. Newman (2006) describes the target population as the concretely specified large group of many cases from which a researcher draws a sample and to which results from the sample are generalised. In this case, the study targeted a population comprised of four secondary schools, namely; Kalomo Secondary School, Kalomo Primary and Secondary School, Mwaata Day Secondary School and Namianga Secondary Mission School in Kalomo district.

### **3.3. Sample Size**

A sample is a small amount of anything that you can try or examine. Bless and Smith (1995) defines sample as a subset of elements taken from a population which is considered to be representative of the population. The sample for this study comprised 141 participants consisting

of one head teacher, two deputy head teachers, 11 heads of departments, two senior teachers, 26 class teachers and 99 learners.

### **3.4. Sampling Procedure**

According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), sampling is a process by which a certain portion of a given population is selected for study. Further, Orodho & Kombo (2002) define sampling as a process or criteria that the researcher puts across to gather people, places or things to study.

This study employed simple random and purposive sampling procedures to select the participants for the study. Simple random sampling was used to select pupils and teachers who participated in the study. According to Moore *et al.* (2006), simple random sample (SRS) of size “n” consists of “n” individuals from the population chosen in such a way that every set of “n” individuals has an equal chance to be part of the study sample. Purposive sampling was used to select head teachers and deputy head teachers by virtue of their positions. Newby (2010) defines purposive sampling as a non-random sampling which has a specific purpose aligned to the goals of the investigation.

### **3.5. Research Instruments**

The main research tools used for data collection were questionnaires, interview schedules and focus group discussions.

### **3.6. Data Collection Procedure**

In the data collection process, the research instruments were prepared and a pilot study was conducted in order to test the reliability and validity of the research instruments. Wiersma and Jur (2005) posit that it is necessary that a research instrument is piloted as a way of determining validity and reliability.

Before the process of data collection, the researcher first sought permission from the Directorate of Research and Postgraduate Studies at the University of Zambia to conduct the study. Once permission was granted, the researcher sought for further permission from the District Education Board Secretary of Kalomo District to conduct the research. Furthermore, the researcher sought permission from the Head teachers of secondary schools from which the study was conducted. After that, the researcher visited the schools and collected the necessary data for the study.

Before the commencement of data collection, the importance of the study was explained to the participants. Interviews were conducted with the school head teachers and the disciplinary committee members, while data from teachers and learners were collected through questionnaires which were administered by the researcher.

### **3.7. Validity**

Face validity was used to test the degree to which the research instruments appropriately measured the study variables. The questionnaire and interview guide were subjected to scrutiny by two education officials from the provincial office of the Ministry of General Education and four head teachers who were not part of the study.

### **3.8. Reliability**

Cronbach's Alpha was applied to measure the reliability of the study variables. Higher reliability was recognised for alpha values closer to 1. The items with highest reliability ranged from 0.755 to 0.960. Lower items were dropped under factor analysis.

### **3.9. Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness was achieved by ensuring credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability of the findings. Triangulation was used (questionnaires and interviews) to achieve credibility. The findings of the study can be applied to other educational institutions, thus transferable. Confirmability was achieved by ensuring that the findings were solely based on the data provided by the respondents without any bias. The aspect of dependability was achieved in the successful completion of the study with recommendations for future research.

### **3.10. Data Analysis**

Miles and Huberman (1994) define data analysis as the process of systematically searching and arranging the raw data with the aim of increasing ones understanding of the data. This study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches of data collection and analysis. The qualitative data that was collected through interviews was analysed using thematic analysis which is a process of arranging responses according to various themes in relation to the research questions. The quantitative data that was collected through the questionnaires was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 21) to generate descriptive statistics.

### **3.11. Ethical Considerations**

It is always paramount to obtain consent from participants, whether young or old, before an interview can be carried out. Since this study incorporated some qualitative aspects of data collection, this aspect could not be overlooked. Creswell (2009) argues that qualitative studies involve specific interaction with participants at their own natural setting as such ethical issues are likely to come up during the collection of data and the publication of findings. This position emphasises the researcher-respondent relationship which Tracy (2013) described as dependent on creating and cultivating trust with participants who respect norms reciprocity and meditatively considers ethical issues. Therefore, letters expressing the purpose of the study, benefits and risks were explained in detail to the participants before the commencement of data collection. Participants were assured of the confidentiality of the information obtained from them and that at any time during the process, they were free to withdraw from the interviews without any penalty.

### **3.12. Summary**

The chapter presented the methodology that was used in the study. The study employed a descriptive survey design in assessing how Disciplinary Committees managed learner behaviour in selected secondary schools of Kalomo District of Zambia.

The sample for this study comprised 141 participants consisting of one head teacher, two deputy head teachers, 11 heads of departments, two senior teachers, 26 class teachers and 99 learners.

The data was gathered through semi-structured interviews and semi-structured questionnaires which were administered to the respondents. The collected data were analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative data were analysed thematically to obtain in-depth information from the participants, while quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20) to generate descriptive statistics.

## CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

### Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the study which sought to investigate how disciplinary committees in secondary schools managed learner behaviour within the school context. The study findings are presented in line with the study's objectives and themes emerging from the study findings focusing on Kalomo District of Southern Province in Zambia. The objectives of the study were to establish how disciplinary committees dealt with acts of indiscipline; explore the perceptions of the head teachers, deputy head teachers, senior teachers, heads of departments and class/subject teacher and learners; and identify strategies that could be used by disciplinary committees in handling learner's indiscipline

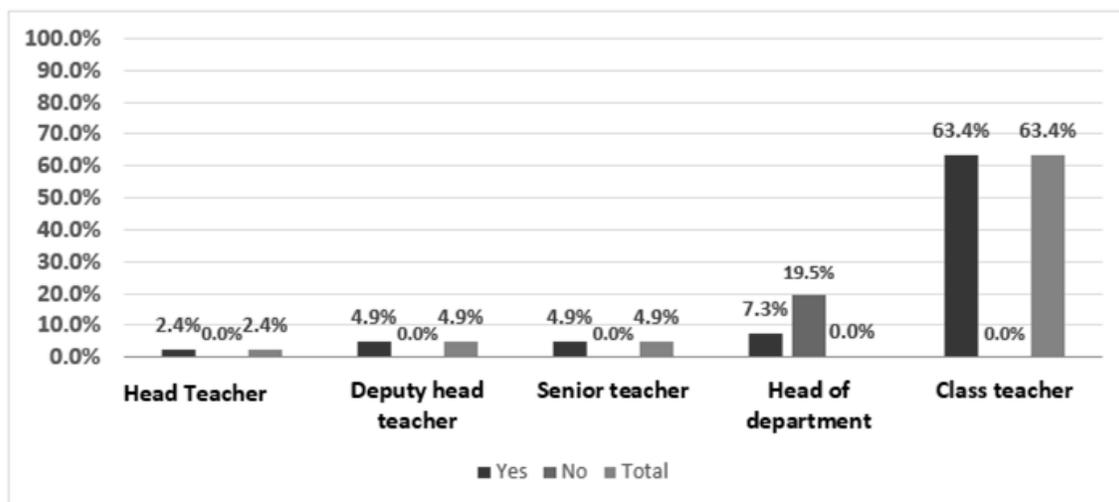
### 4.1. School Disciplinary Committees in Schools

The first study objective was to establish how Disciplinary Committees dealt with acts of indiscipline in selected secondary schools of Kalomo District. The research question was:

*How do Disciplinary Committees deal with acts of indiscipline in selected Secondary Schools of Kalomo District?*

To gather information on this variable, data was collected from the head teachers, deputy head teachers, senior teachers, heads of departments and class/subject teachers. The rationale was that Disciplinary Committees were put in place to play protective, enforcement and remedial roles as regards conduct of learners that was not in harmony with the school rules and was regarded as indiscipline. Themes emerged to account for this objective.

The study found that Disciplinary Committees dealt with school discipline by being active in related matters. In this regard, the schools investigated had to indicate how actively the Disciplinary Committees attended to matters of learner indiscipline. The responses on this variable were as indicated in Figure 4.1.



*Source Field data*

**Figure 4. 1. Presence of a functional disciplinary Committee in school)**

Figure 4.1. shows that out of the total participants, 26 (63.4%) of the teachers; 2 (4.9%) deputy head teachers; 2 (4.9%) senior teachers; and one head teacher, representing 2.4%, all agreed that their respective schools had a functional disciplinary committee.

In dealing with matters of learner discipline, it was found that Disciplinary Committees were organised in a structure linked to the school administration, teachers, learners and parents. Of the total study, 40 (97.6%) participants indicated that the deputy head teacher chaired the committee, while one participant accounting for 2.4% of the total participants indicated that a selected teacher chaired the committee. It was further found that a wider membership of the Disciplinary Committee enhanced fairness in handling learner matters of discipline.

**4.1.1. Need for Disciplinary Committees**

The first theme was that there was a significant need for schools Disciplinary Committees as all participants (100%) agreed that there was a dire need for a disciplinary committee in school. The reasons advanced for this affirmation were that Disciplinary Committees regulated school disciplinary measures to ensure they were fairly applied among the learners; to prevent indiscipline from escalating; to preside over disciplinary matters in an impartial manner and to make appropriate disciplinary measures to school administrators. In this regard, various participants gave reasons as follows.

A head teacher from school 'A' said:

*There is definitely a need for a disciplinary committee in school because they help in making objective recommendations that can help in the administration of discipline in school in a fair and proper manner following the laid down procedures.*

Teacher 'A' at school 'B' had this to say:

*Yes, I feel most pupils are undisciplined, and if left alone, issues of indiscipline will reach escalating levels. Learner behaviour should be closely monitored. I feel learner discipline should not be left in the hands of one person. Thus a committee should be constituted to allow for diverse views in dealing with offending learners.*

Teacher 'B' at school 'C' argued thus:

*There's need to have a disciplinary committee to critically look into learner discipline and ensure that discipline is maintained among the learners. The committee will also adjudicate over disciplinary cases. Learners will abide by the set school rules and regulations.*

Head of department 'A' at school 'B' contributing to this issue reported as follows:

*Because learners come from different family backgrounds, they have different challenges because of their earlier life orientation. The committee brings sanity to the learning environment. Suffice to mention that a well-disciplined society is the product of good morals, excellence and uprightness. The final result is improved learner performance and character growth.*

#### **4.1.2. Functioning of Disciplinary Committees**

One theme that emerged on the variable of how school Disciplinary Committees dealt with learner indiscipline was the extent to which indiscipline was inherent at the school. It was held that in most schools the best way of the Disciplinary Committees dealing with indiscipline was by being ultimately fair. What emerged on this variable is shown in Table 4.1.

**Table 4. 1. Rating of the discipline levels in schools**

<i>Position of participant</i>	<i>Rating</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>Bad</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	
Deputy head teacher	-	1 (2.4%)		1 (2.4%)
Senior teacher	-	-	2 (4.9%)	2 (4.9%)
Head of department	1 (2.4%)	2 (4.9%)	8 (19.5%)	11 (26.8%)
Class teacher	7 (17.1%)	8 (19.5%)	11 (26.8%)	26 (63.4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>8 (19.5%)</b>	<b>11 (26.8%)</b>	<b>22 (53.7%)</b>	<b>41 (100.0%)</b>

As depicted in Table 4.1, more than half of the participants, 22 (53.7%) indicated that it was fair. Of these, 11 (26.8%) were class teachers, and 8 (19.5%) were heads of departments. Generally, from the above data, it is evident that the rate of discipline levels in the schools under study was fair.

#### **4.1.3. Effectiveness of the Disciplinary Committee**

This theme entails that to effectively deal with indiscipline, the Disciplinary Committees were better off not having permanent members. Thus to avoid neutralising its effectiveness, a Disciplinary Committee needed members to rotate on a regular, but stable basis. Such as annually. Certain members were however retained by virtue of their position. For example Deputy Head Teachers. In this regard, participants were required to indicate whether they were permanent members of the school disciplinary committee. Their reactions were as shown in Table 4.2.

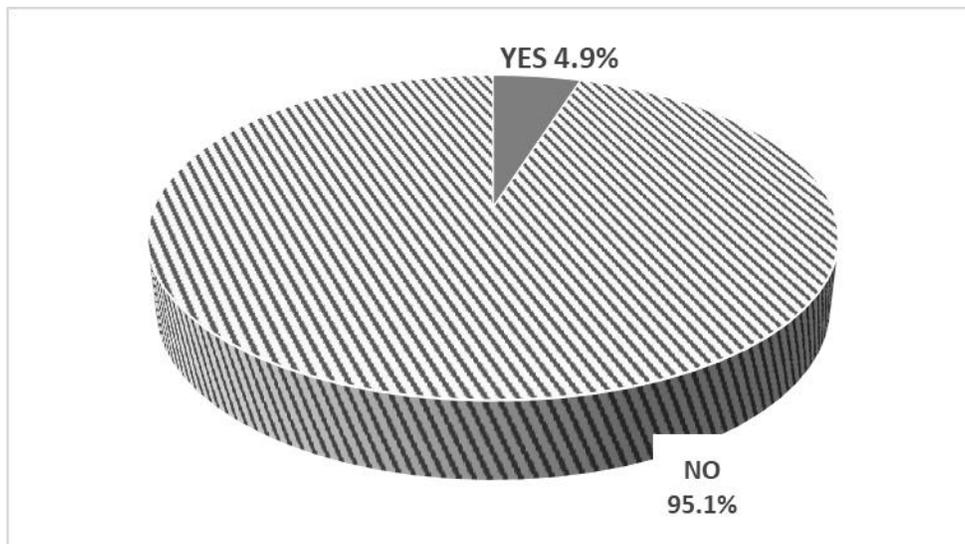
**Table 4. 2. Position of members of the disciplinary committee - Permanent or not**

<i>Position of participant</i>	<i>Response</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	
Deputy head teacher	2 (4.9%)	-	2 (4.9%)
Senior teacher	2 (4.9%)	-	2 (4.9%)
Head of department	3 (7.3%)	8 (19.5%)	11 (26.8%)
Class teacher	3 (7.3%)	23 (56.1%)	26 (63.4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>10 (24.4%)</b>	<b>31 (75.6%)</b>	<b>41 (100.0%)</b>

Statistics from the above Table 4.2 shows that most of the participants, 31 (75.6%) indicated that they were not permanent members of the school disciplinary committee, while 10 (24.4%) said they were. More class teachers, 23 (56.1%) were more likely not to be a permanent member of the disciplinary committee than the senior teachers.

#### 4.1.4. Levels of teacher involvement in the disciplinary process

A theme arose from the participants to indicate that Disciplinary Committees dealt with learner indiscipline basing on how much teachers were involved in the day-to-day disciplinary procedures. Participants were asked to say whether schools should involve all teachers in the day to day learner discipline process. Reactions to this issue were as illustrated in Figure 4.2.



*Source Field data*

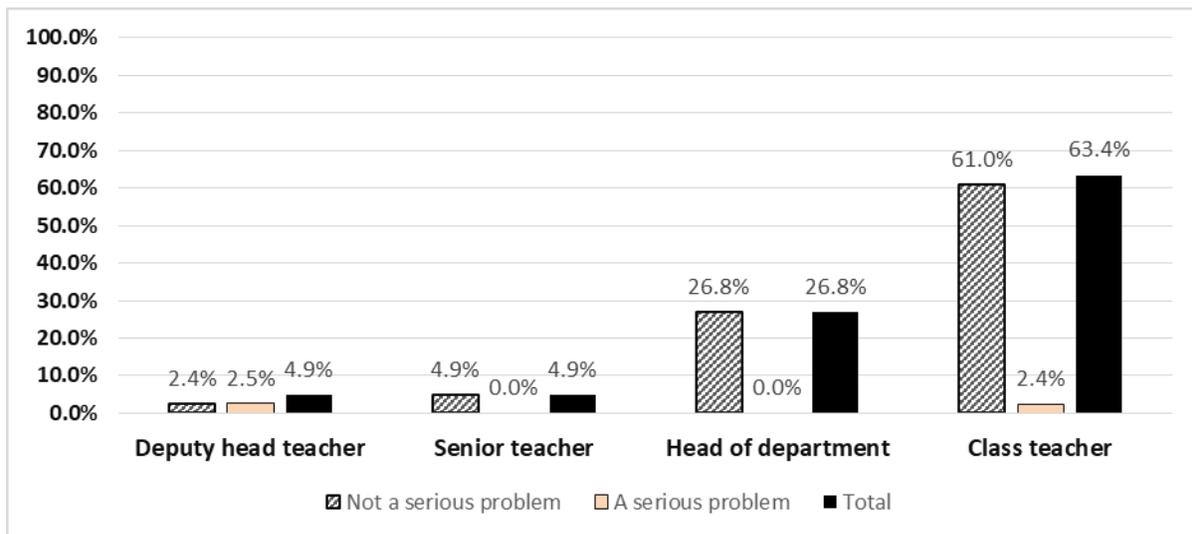
#### Figure 4.2: Teacher involvement in the disciplinary process

Figure 4.2 generally shows that the majority of the participants, 39 (95.1%) were of the view that not all teachers should be involved in the day to day processes of disciplinary committee functions. Only 2 (4.9%) agreed to the notion. Participants were further asked to indicate if there was any role that an individual teacher could play in disciplining the learners. Study findings revealed that all the participants who participated in the study were all in agreement with the idea but that there were limits to teacher involvement

It was acknowledged that teachers by nature were disciplinarians in the school and applied a level of discipline in the classroom and other encounters with learners in the school. However, when it comes to involvement in the Disciplinary Committee, it was found unnecessary to continually involve teachers. The rationale was that teachers could be assessed in terms of how they were dealing with learners and any unfairness by the teachers would be recognised and dealt with by the Disciplinary Committee. Without such an approach, some teachers were likely to treat learners unfairly or apply wrong methods of discipline. Having a Disciplinary Committee meant that there were high-level disciplinary cases that did not require the involvement of teachers on account of confidentiality and other rights of learners.

#### 4.1.5. Teachers’ Involvement in Learner Discipline

An important finding of the study revealed that Disciplinary Committees operated on the basis of how teachers attended work and interacted with learners. This in itself was found to have a bearing on learner discipline. It was indicated that learners had no particular excuse for being indiscipline if the teachers were not in school, for whatever reason. It was incumbent upon the learners to maintain good discipline at all times. The study findings on this variable were as shown in Figure 4.3.



Source: Field data

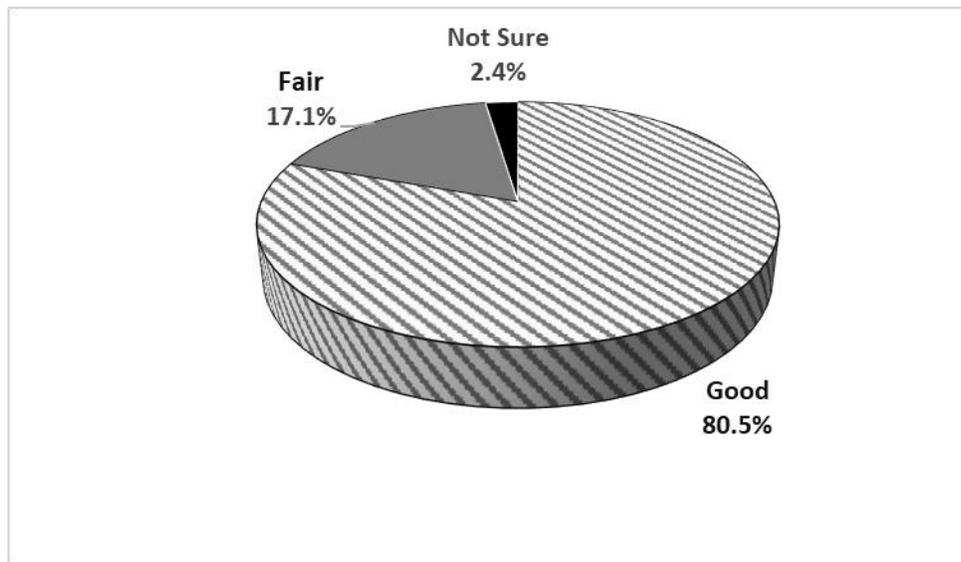
**Figure 4.3: Teacher absenteeism from school**

As can be seen from figure 4.3 the majority of the study participants 39 (95.1%) indicated that it was not a severe problem whereas 2 (4.9%) said it was a serious problem if teachers were absent

from work. From the above information, it could be stated that teacher absenteeism was not an issue in the schools under study.

On the aspect of pupil-teacher relationship, it was found that it was good and that Disciplinary Committees could rely on this cordial relationship in their operations to enhance school discipline.

Figure 4.4. below shows the perceptions of the respondents regarding the relationship between learners and teachers.

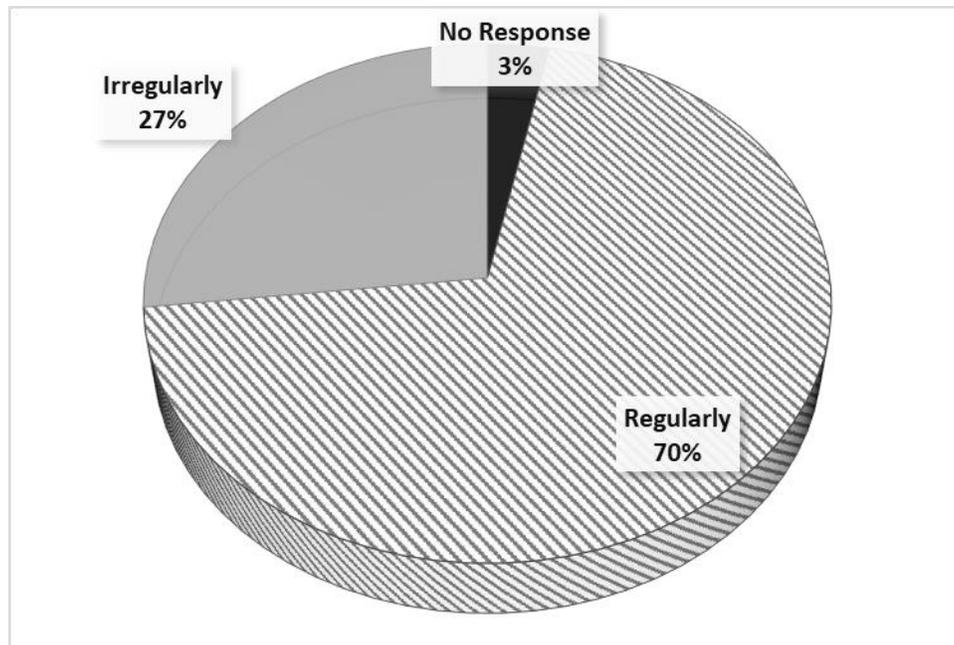


*Source: Field data*

**Figure 4.4: Rating of the pupil-teacher relationship in school**

As can be seen from the Figure 4.4, the majority of the participants, 33 (80.5%) were of the view that it was “good”, while 7 (17.1%) indicated that it was “fair”. However, one of the participants, representing 2.4% of the total participants, was not sure. Generally, the finding from the study points to the fact that the pupil-teacher relationship in schools was cordial.

It was further established that teachers had capacity to deal with learners on lighter matters of discipline within established learner groups such as classes, clubs and other gatherings. Some teachers were of the view that the schools were big and if all disciplinary matters were left to the disciplinary committee, then certain cases may not be attended to resulting into more significant problems in school. Of significance was that teachers could conduct talks with learners that would enhance discipline. The study findings in this regard are as depicted in figure 4.5.



*Source: Field data*

**Figure 4.5: Frequency at which learners were engaged in talks that lead to learner discipline**

As indicated in Figure 4.5 the majority, 29 (70.0%) of the participants indicated that they regularly held talks with the learners whereas 11 (26.8%) said they irregularly held talks with the learners on the subject. Further, the study showed that one of the participants (3.2%) did not respond to this question.

The respondents in the interviews gave their perceptions regarding the aspect of teacher-learner interaction. The interactions were seen as promoting rapport between teachers and learners which impacted them positively. In this respect, Teacher ‘A’ at school ‘A’ had this to say:

*I see learners interact with the teachers easily to air their problems, and I have noticed a change in the lifestyle of learners from bad to good through these interactions.*

It was further established that the Disciplinary Committees could rely on a positive teacher-learner relationship on account that teachers played a significant role to counsel learners in their capacity as ‘parents’ at school level. On this point, Teacher ‘B’ at school ‘C’ was of the view that;

*We are the parents to these children. Each teacher is in contact with learners that they meet in small groups. Counselling learners in small groups is more*

*effective than in large groups. The disciplinary committee cannot handle all cases, including minor ones like noise making. In this respect, individual teachers can come in.*

The role of teachers was cardinal for assisting the Disciplinary Committees bear a lighter burden. This was established in the sense that the cordial relationship between teachers and learners had a long-term effect and that teachers were in actual contact with the learners for longer periods of time. On this point, Teacher ‘C’ at school ‘C’ revealed the following:

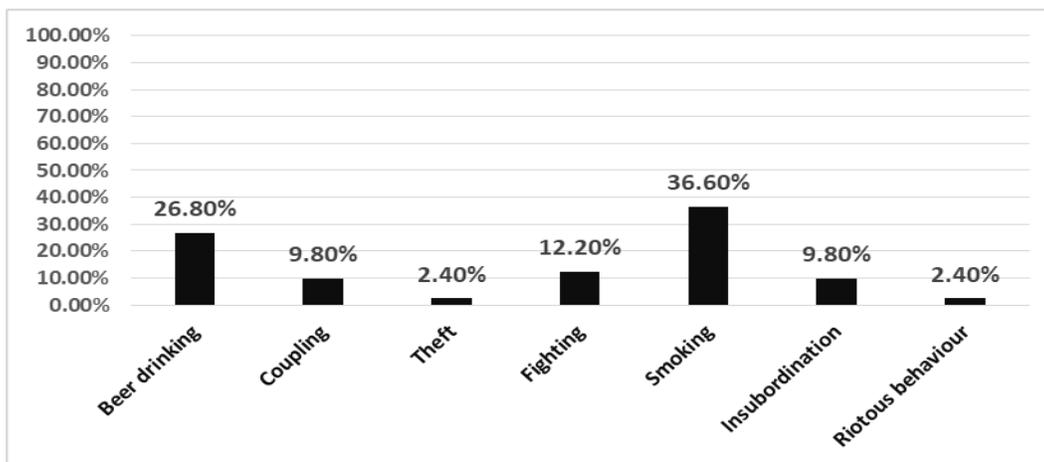
*There is a good rapport between the teachers and some learners. The teacher is not there just to teach a subject but also to help learners to be responsible citizens. This happens when individual teachers interact with learners in school.*

Further, Teacher ‘D’ at school ‘B’ responded thus:

*Each teacher has a responsibility to ensure all the learners directly or indirectly under his/her control behaves in a manner that does not breach classroom or school rules.*

#### **4.1.6. Types of offences frequently handled by the Disciplinary Committees**

How disciplinary committees dealt with learner indiscipline was assessed in terms of what types of offences were prominent at its disposal.



*Source Field data*

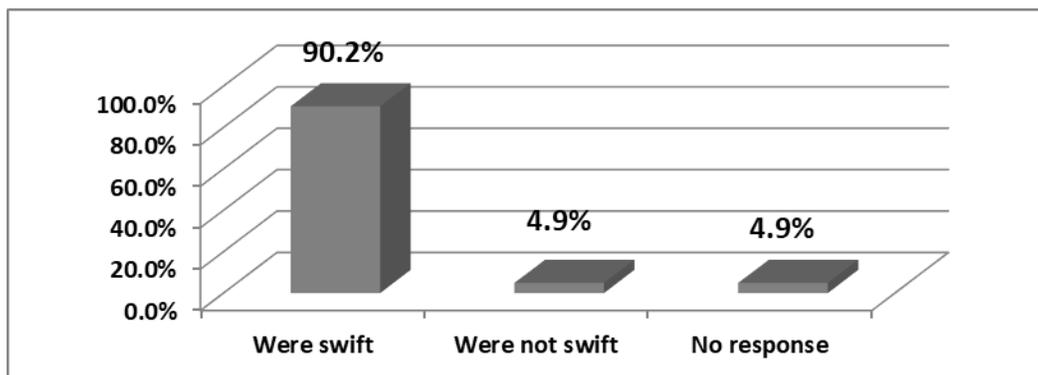
**Figure 4.6: Findings on the most frequent cases handled by the disciplinary committee in schools**

Figure 4.6. shows the findings on the most frequent cases handled by the disciplinary committee in schools. It can be seen that the most frequent cases handled by the school disciplinary committees in the schools that participated in the study were smoking, 15 (36.6%) and beer drinking, 11 (26.8%). Others were fighting, five (12.2%); insubordination, four (9.8%); coupling, 4 (9.8%); riotous behaviour, one (2.4%); and theft, one (2.4%), in that order. While these were the major and regular issues for the Disciplinary Committees, there were other cases such as going out of school boundary, absconding classes, absenteeism, improper dressing, and late coming. These were addressed by the Disciplinary committees on account of their frequency on in relation to other offences. These were assessed according to levels of occurrence as shown in Figure 4.6.

It was expected that the Disciplinary Committees in schools would deal with more serious offences in order to validate the roles of teachers and parents in dealing with other issues. It was also necessary that the committees dealt with fewer cases in order to avoid making its responsibilities weightier. It was found that the disciplinary committees dealt with fewer, but greater cases of learner indiscipline including smoking, drinking, insubordination, coupling, fighting, coupling, theft and riotous behaviour.

**4.1.7. Disciplinary Committees Responses to Learner Indiscipline**

The findings of the study brought out a theme that swiftness of responding to disciplinary cases was important for determining the Disciplinary Committee’s operations.

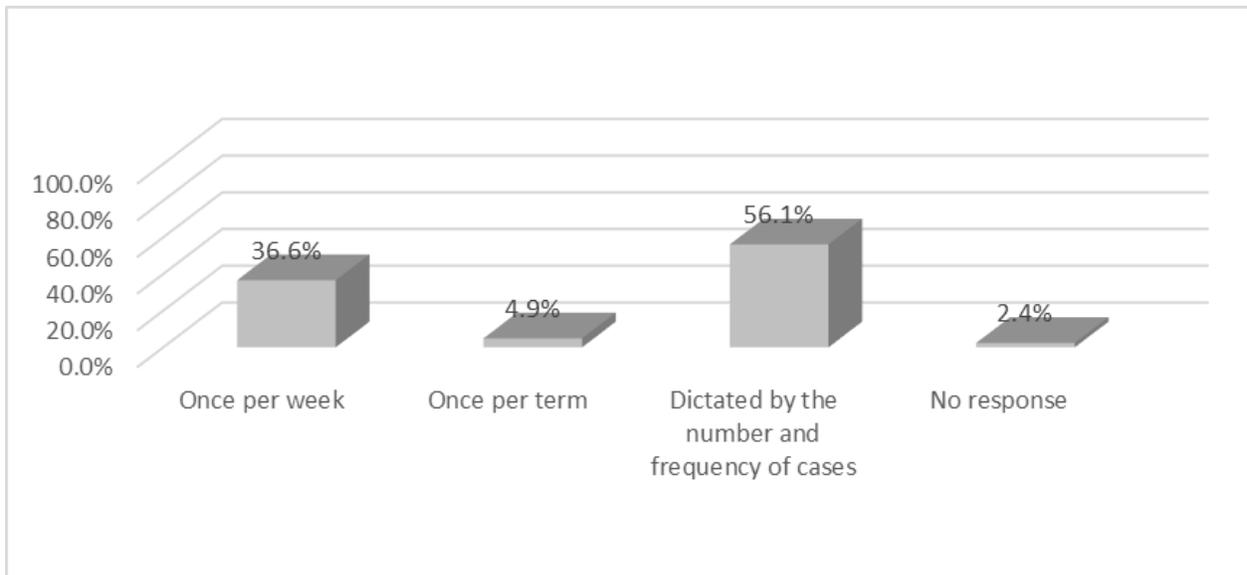


*Source: Field Data*

**Figure 4.7: Speed with which disciplinary committees responded to cases**

In terms of how swift committees were in responding to cases of indiscipline in schools, study findings were as illustrated in Figure 4.7. Figure 4.7 shows that the majority, 37 (90.2%) of the participants reported that they were swift, while 2 (4.9%) of them said the committee was not swift and 2 (4.9%) did not respond to the question.

In terms of how often committees met to hear cases of learners, the responses were as shown in Figure 4.8.



*Source: Field data*

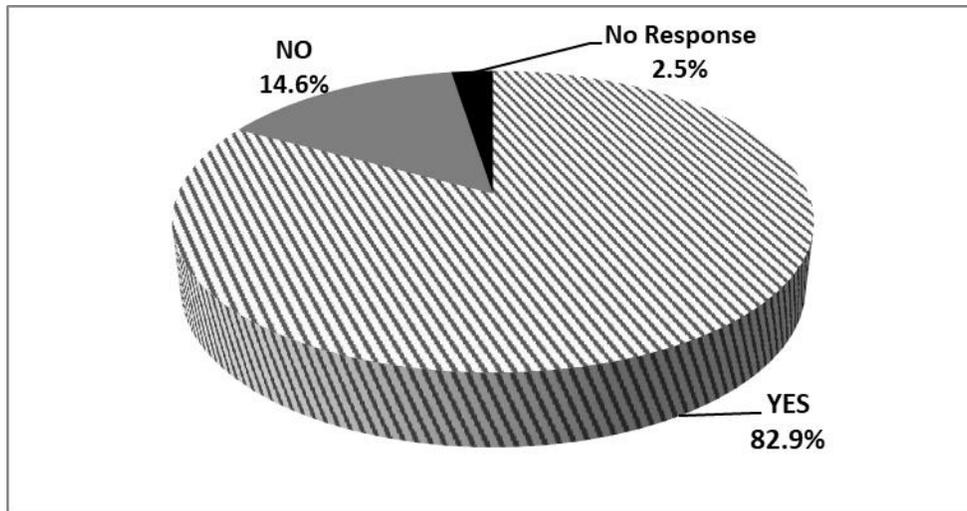
**Figure 4.8: Frequency with which disciplinary committees met to discuss disciplinary cases**

As demonstrated in Figure 4.8, most of the participants, 23 (56.1%) indicated that the disciplinary committee met to hear cases as dictated by the number and frequency of the cases. This was followed by those whose response was “once per week”, and represented 15 (36.6%) of the total participants.

The study found that Disciplinary Committees dealt with learner indiscipline by being responding to calls for addressing related issues in a quick manner. This meant that the Disciplinary Committees were able to meet and address disciplinary matters in a timely manner and did not drag cases for unnecessarily too long.

#### 4.1.8. Disciplinary Committees incorporation of Guidance and Counselling services

The study findings brought a theme that Disciplinary Committees dealt learner indiscipline by involving the services of Guidance and Counselling staff in the school. Guidance and counselling services being a department that gives guidance to pupils in schools was found worth having a place on the Disciplinary Committee. The findings of the study were as depicted in Figure 4.9.



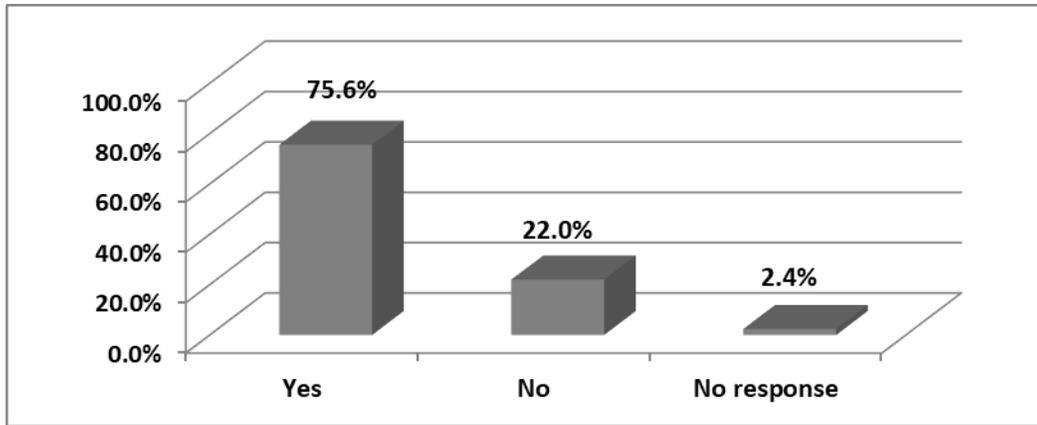
*Source: Field data*

**Figure 4.9: Presence of Guidance and counselling services within the disciplinary committee**

From Figure 4.9 it can be seen that 34 (82.9%) of the participants said “yes” while 6 (14.6%) said “no” and one (2.5%) participant did not respond to the question.

#### 4.1.9. Sensitization of learners in the school

A theme emerged that Disciplinary Committees could deal with learner indiscipline by providing sensitization. It was established that Disciplinary Committees used this approach to address matters of learner indiscipline. Learners needed constant reminders and education on emerging issues that had a bearing on their conduct in school. The findings were as illustrated in Figure 4.10



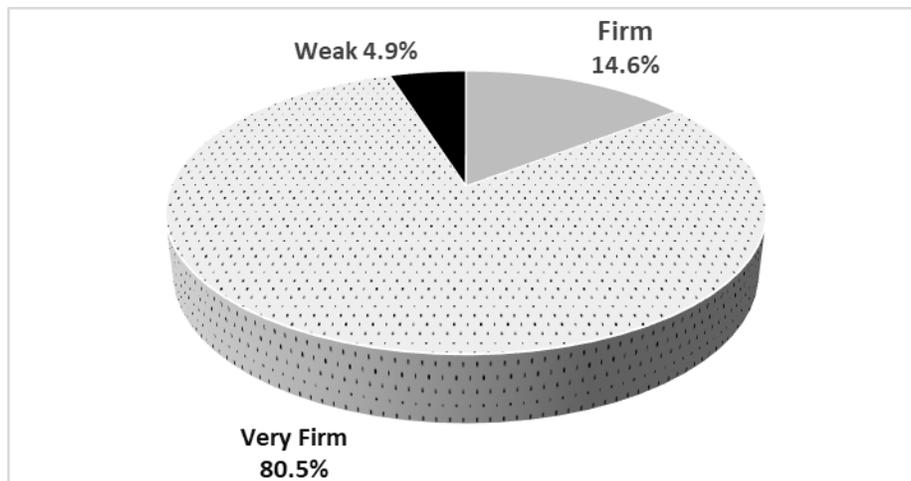
*Source: Field data*

**Figure 4.10: Disciplinary Committees Sensitization of Learners on school rules**

Figure 4.10 reveals that 31 (75.6%) said they did sensitise learners on school rules and the importance of acceptable behaviour, while 9 (22.0%) said they did not. One (2.4%) of the participants did not respond to the question.

#### **4.1.10. Firmness of the School Disciplinary Committee**

Another significant theme that emerged from the study was that the firmness of the Disciplinary Committee was cardinal for determining how it dealt with learner indiscipline. The study participants were asked to indicate how firm the disciplinary committee was at their respective schools. Their reactions were as shown in Figure 4.11.



*Source Field data*

**Figure 4.11: Firmness of the school disciplinary committee**

As can be observed from Figure 4.11, the majority of the participants 33 (80.5%) indicated that the committees were “firm” while 6 (14.6%) said they were “very firm”. However, 2 (4.9%) of the participants were of the view that the committee was weak. The aspect of firmness was affirmed during the interviews whereby the respondents held the perception that using a Disciplinary Committee yielded uncompromised approaches towards learner discipline. In this regard, Head of department ‘A’ at school ‘B’ reported as follows:

*It is difficult to compromise the Disciplinary Committee since by nature of its representation, there is no room for biasness. Thus offenders can be dealt with firmly.*

It can thus be concluded that the School Disciplinary Committees dealt with learner discipline by being firm.

#### **4.2. Disciplinary Committees Handling Learner Discipline**

The second objective of the study was to explore the perceptions of head teachers, deputy head teachers, senior teachers, class teachers and learners on Disciplinary Committees handling indiscipline in selected secondary schools in Kalomo District. The associated research question was as follows:

*What are the perceptions of head teachers, deputy head teachers, senior teachers, class teachers and learners on indiscipline in selected secondary schools in Kalomo District?*

##### **4.2.1. Reporting Acts of Indiscipline to School Authorities**

Learners were asked whether they would report an act of indiscipline to the school authorities. Responses to this variable were as shown in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3. Data showing whether or not learners would report an act of indiscipline to school authorities**

Response	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Yes	38 (38.4%)	51 (51.5%)	89 (89.9%)
No	5 (5.1%)	4 (4.0%)	9 (9.1%)
No response	-	1 (1.0%)	1 (1.0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>43 (43.4%)</b>	<b>56 (56.6%)</b>	<b>99 (100.0%)</b>

As depicted in Table 4.3, the majority of the learners, 89 (89.9%) indicated that they would report an act of indiscipline to school authorities whereas 9 (9.1%) said that they would not do so, while one (1%) of the learners did not respond to this question. This had implications on the effectiveness of the Disciplinary Committee as it would receive actual reports to keep it working.

Data relating to whether learners were aware of the relevant school authorities to report cases of indiscipline is presented in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4. Data showing learners' awareness of the school authorities to report cases of indiscipline**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Gender</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	
Yes	38 (38.4%)	48 (48.5%)	86 (86.9%)
No	4 (4.0%)	8 (8.1%)	12 (12.1%)
No response	1 (1.0%)	-	1 (1.0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>43 (43.4%)</b>	<b>56 (56.6%)</b>	<b>99 (100.0%)</b>

As shown in Table 4.4, the majority of them, 86 (86.9%) said “yes” while 12 (12.1%) said “no”. One learner (1%) did not respond to this question. The implication of this finding was that the learners were aware of the correct reporting channel that would reach the Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committees were therefore more effective with no underhand reporting systems.

#### **4.2.2. Fairness of School Authorities**

Learners were asked to state their perceptions of whether the school authorities were fair in dealing with cases of indiscipline in school. Their reactions were as shown in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5. Learners' perception of fairness by school authorities**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Gender</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	
Yes	39 (39.4%)	54 (54.5%)	93 (93.9%)
No	4 (4.0%)	1 (1.0%)	5 (5.1%)
No response	-	1 (1.0%)	1 (1.0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>43 (43.4%)</b>	<b>56 (56.6%)</b>	<b>99 (100.0%)</b>

Table 4.5 shows that almost all the learners, 93 (93.9%) were of the view that school authorities were fair in their dealings with cases of indiscipline. However, four (4.0%) and one (1.0%) of the learners indicated “no” and “no response” respectively. This implies that the learners were treated appropriately by the school authorities of which the School Disciplinary Committees were.

#### 4.2.3. Sensitization of Learners

Sensitization was a determinant of effectiveness of the Disciplinary Committees. Responses to this variable were as indicated in Table 4.6 below. As can be seen in the table, the majority, 94 (94.9%) of the learners agreed while 4 (4.0%) disagreed and one (1%) learner did not respond to the question.

**Table 4. 6. Sensitization of learners on school rules**

Response	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Yes	40 (40.4%)	54 (54.5%)	94 (94.5%)
No	3 (3.0%)	1 (1.0%)	4 (4.0%)
No response	-	1 (1.0%)	1 (1.0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>43 (43.4%)</b>	<b>56 (56.6%)</b>	<b>99 (100.0%)</b>

Analysis of the findings revealed common themes representing the various categories of respondents in the study. These are presented in turn.

#### 4.2.4. Punishment of Offenders

The respondents acknowledged that it was a good practice to have Disciplinary Committees in schools but not to have them handle all the cases of indiscipline and met punishment. It was found that in practice, Disciplinary Committees could give offenders warnings, and met extreme punishment such as open transfers, manual work and suspending the offenders. Verbal warnings and school based punishments could be given at school by teachers for such offences as truancy, coming late for school and lessons, fighting, improper dressing, and using abusive language. Punishments mainly included manual work. This perception was common among all the respondents in the study.

#### **4.2.5. Effectiveness of Disciplinary Committees**

On this theme, the respondents varied. Among the administrators, it was perceived that Disciplinary Committees were the fairest way of dealing with heinous offences that were contentious. This was so as it involved fair representation of school administrators, teachers, learners, parents and other specialised professionals such as the Guidance and Counselling teachers. The teachers were found indifferent in that they held the confidence to discipline learners according to the school rules. They mainly felt that the Disciplinary Committees could arrive at biased resolutions which would not be in conformity with general expectations. All learners needed to receive the same kind of punishment for similar offences without taking a case by case position as learners could not understand the disparities. Most of the learners were not well aware of how effectively Disciplinary Committees operated at their schools.

In order to establish how disciplinary committees in secondary schools managed learner behaviour within the school context, data was collected from the learners. The study findings are presented in the following section in relation to the emerging themes.

#### **4.3. Strategies of handling Learner Indiscipline**

The third study objective was to identify the strategies used by Disciplinary Committees in handling learner indiscipline in secondary schools of Kalomo District. The research question was stated as follows:

*What strategies are used by Disciplinary Committees in handling learner indiscipline in selected public and private secondary schools of Kalomo District?*

It was justifiable to establish how Disciplinary Committees structured their operations, whether they operated haphazardly or had particular strategies suitable for the district's secondary schools.

Responses from the teachers gave significant indication that there were strategies focused on enhancing the effectiveness of the Disciplinary Committees. This is represented in figure 12 below:

Factors	Frequency of Teachers	Percentage of Teachers	Data Bar
Disciplinary Committees adhered to discipline by school rules	27	93	
Disciplinary Committees were active	25	86	
Disciplinary Committees were fair	24	83	
Disciplinary Committees operate independently	22	76	
Parents are part of the disciplinary committees	21	72	
Teachers are integral disciplinarians at school	19	66	
Disciplinary Committees sensitized learners	18	62	

*Source Field data*

**Figure 4.12: Strategies focused on enhancing the effectiveness of the Disciplinary Committees**

Figure 4.12 shows that the teachers perceived that to be effective, Disciplinary Committees had to adhere to the disciplinary rules of the school (93%); operated actively (86%); were fair (83%); were independent (76%); included parents (72%); teachers were disciplinarians in the school (66%) and the committees sensitised learners (62%).

The study established that Disciplinary Committees focused on enhancing their effectiveness at addressing issues of learner indiscipline. In this regard, the views of some of the respondents from various categories were collected.

The Head teachers indicated that Disciplinary Committees were left to operate independently in order to enhance their effectiveness.

A head teacher from school ‘A’ said:

*When cases of indiscipline are reported, they are dealt with immediately. There is no segregation in dealing with cases. Further, parents are communicated to if the need arises.*

The Deputy Head teachers spoke from the operational point of view and indicated that teachers do much of the in-school work as regards learner discipline which in turn makes the Disciplinary Committees more effective. A Deputy Head Teacher from School ‘B’ said:

*Disciplinary Committee effectiveness can be achieved by encouraging teachers to take up the responsibility of looking after the children lovingly. When learners are shown love and concern, they tend to change behaviour faster than when treated harshly.*

Teachers in separate interviews revealed the following as presented in the subsequent paragraphs. Some of the major findings were as follows:

Teacher “A from school “B” thus reported:

*There is a need for parents to be part of the disciplinary committee. If not, at least once in a week, a parent representative should sit in the disciplinary committee meeting so that even parents should understand offences committed by their children and counsel them from home.*

Teacher “B” from school “C” said the following:

*People in the committee must be of good reputation. Cases before the committee must be handled in a fair manner regardless of the offender’s relationship to a member of staff. Officers of the committee must declare interest when handling cases of their relatives. Further, there must be consistence in the punishment given to the offenders.*

Teacher “C” from school “A” was of the view that;

*The disciplinary committee chairperson should be active and ensure that when a case of indiscipline has been brought to the attention of a Disciplinary Committee, a hearing should take place soonest. The other issue is on school rules. I feel these should be updated regularly to suit the contemporary trends of indiscipline among pupils.*

Teacher “D” from school “B” had this to say:

*I feel as a school, several reminders to learners on a regular basis focusing on school rules should be availed to learners especially during assemblies and through class teachers who meet these learners almost on a daily basis. There is a need to avail learners with the code of conduct.*

Teacher ‘E’ from school “C” said the following:

*Teachers need to work hand in hand with the disciplinary committee. Each and every teacher must be a disciplinarian so that learners are able to see teamwork*

*in them. Also, disciplinary cases that are brought to the committee that are beyond the teachers should be reported to the committee other than just overlooking and that cases reported should be handled firmly.*

From the above submissions, the teachers indicated that an effective Disciplinary committee had parental representation; was fair; adhered to school rules; was active; provided sensitisation of learners; and worked hand-in-hand with teachers.

The major findings from the heads of departments were as presented below.

A head of department from school 'C' reported as follows:

*Schools can only have functional disciplinary committees if the schools' central administration does not hold all powers that render the disciplinary committees irrelevant. If disciplinary committees are to be effective, the central administration should work collaboratively with the committee and effect recommendations given for disciplinary action for the cases.*

A head of department from school 'B' had this to say:

*I feel that firstly, disciplinary committees should be meeting more regularly to stay abreast with the committee rules. Secondly, they should not be shielding sensitive offences as they promote recurrent of such behaviour in other pupils. Thirdly, they should avoid "grapevine" talk towards a member who has erred during the deliberations; instead, let them sit and discuss the matter appropriately. Also, the punishment given to offenders should match with the offence committed.*

Further, ahead of department from school 'A' was of the view that;

*There is a need to engage parents and learners in making decisions. The committee should meet frequently and making sure that no offence goes unpunished. Learners should also have easy access to school rules. Further, learners should be sensitised on the importance of following school rules.*

The Heads of Departments submitted that an effective Disciplinary Committee was left to operate without interference from the school central administration; met regularly; kept confidentiality; understood the school rules; and involved learners and parents.

#### **4.4. Summary**

Chapter Four covered the presentation of findings from the responses provided by the respondents in the study. It was found that Disciplinary Committees dealt with learner indiscipline as a cardinal component of the schools and involved various stakeholders including parents, administrators, learners and teachers. The respondents perceived Disciplinary Committees positively and learners indicated commitment to dealing officially with their discipline matters. The strategies that the Disciplinary Committees applied were focused on enhancing their effectiveness at addressing learner indiscipline in their schools.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### Overview

This chapter discusses the research findings based on the data collected and interpreted with the help of the objectives of the study and in relation to the reviewed literature.

### 5.1. How disciplinary committees dealt with acts of indiscipline in secondary schools

Learners' discipline as conceived from this study and related literature requires active interventions to prevent an escalation of misbehaviour and to correct and punish wrong behaviour. It is apparent that in the investigated schools, having an active Disciplinary Committee was an important step towards achieving good discipline among learners. As long as there is an organised structure for incorporating a Disciplinary Committee, learner behaviour can be regulated. This further requires a functioning Disciplinary Committee capable of dealing with issues in a timely, impartial manner. To be effective, Disciplinary Committees did not need to have permanent members but to frequently rotate and change members while having a combination of teachers, parents, Guidance teachers, learners and management representatives. Of significance was the finding that teachers could handle regular disciplinary problems at classroom level without necessarily engaging the Disciplinary Committees. As long as teachers and pupils had a cordial relationship, Disciplinary Committees had a lighter burden and could concentrate on weightier disciplinary matters. Of course it was found that Disciplinary Committees need to have regular interactions with learners through sensitisations. The Disciplinary Committees would then be positioned to handle cases such as beer drinking, coupling, theft, fighting, smoking, riotous behaviour and insubordination.

The form of indiscipline revealed in this study are; truancy, coming late for school and lessons, fighting, improper dressing, beer-drinking, using abusive language, coupling, absconding classes, fighting, going out of school boundaries without permission, missing test(s), improper dressing and insubordination, smoking, stealing and abortions. Similar forms of indiscipline were reported by Maphosa and Mammen (2011), Idu and Ojedapo (2011), Simuforosa & Rosemary (2014) and Silva *et al.* (2017) such as noisemaking, non-submission of work for marking, leaving learning materials at home, talking without teacher's permission, teasing other learners, absenteeism, swearing at others and non-completion of given assignments were prevalent in schools

participating in this study whereas truancy, bullying, threatening other learners, theft, verbal attacks on fellow learners, assault on fellow learners, graffiti on classroom and toilet walls, vandalising school property, verbal attacks on teachers, substance abuse, sexual harassment, and indecent assaults on female learners were prevalent major forms of indiscipline.

The study sought to establish how Disciplinary Committees dealt with acts of indiscipline in schools. The study findings revealed that schools mostly give warnings, open transfers, manual work, and at times suspends the offenders. The study findings revealed that schools mostly give warnings, open transfers, manual work, and at times suspends the offenders. Offences in which verbal warnings were given to the offenders included truancy, coming late for school and lessons, fighting, improper dressing, beer-drinking, using abusive language, and coupling. However, in some instances, offences such as beer drinking, coupling, smoking, stealing and abortions attracted open transfers. The study has also shown that smoking, beer drinking, stealing, absconding classes, fighting, going out of school boundaries without permission, missing test(s), improper dressing and insubordination, attracted manual punishment as a penalty for committing such offences. However, Lukman, (2014) asserts that discipline is not necessarily punishment, but punishment is one of the disciplinary measures in school. The measures which are reported in this study are similar to Nakpodia (2010) who stated that Teachers' disciplinary approaches to students' discipline problems in Nigerian secondary schools found that cases of learner indiscipline attracted suspension and/or expulsion. Some of the cases that attract suspension or expulsion include truancy, tardiness, insubordination, disobedience to a teacher, insulting a teacher, talking back, swearing at a teacher, hitting a teacher, cursing or calling other learners bad names, fighting with another learner, inattentiveness in class, going out of school premises without permission, smoking, use of drugs or alcohol, refusal to stay for detention, refusal to clean the grounds as ordered, failure to maintain silence, lack of civility, failure to adhere to time schedules, destruction of school property.

As a way of resolving these problems, the learner is given a hearing prior to suspension or expulsion. Further, parents of the offending learner are invited to the Disciplinary Committee hearing if the sanction of expulsion is expected. In this study, the findings are no different. It revealed that some cases attracted suspension and/or expulsion. This was dependant on the gravity of the offence committed. These findings concur with Harold (2014) who carried out a study of

how best learners can be prevented from riotous behaviour in Arizona, USA. His study findings revealed that learners were likely to desist from unacceptable behaviour when they are aware of the consequences of engaging themselves in acts of indiscipline. Those who were found wanting were punished severely, others suspended or expelled completely so as to send a signal to other learners in the school. Furthermore, the Disciplinary Committee ensured that similar cases were dealt in the same manner, regardless of who committed them.

Clarke (2002) also reported a number of learner indiscipline cases in America which included violence on teachers and other learners, possession of controlled substances such as alcohol, robbery, engaging in habitual profanity, vulgarity, committing school assault to staff and making terrorist threats against the school authority. This study revealed that as a way to control indiscipline in schools, Disciplinary Committees were established in schools which worked hand in hand with the state police. Through this collaboration, severe cases of indiscipline like assault to fellow learners, members of staff, use of drugs which are not allowed by the law and many others were reported to the police. Similar to Clarke (2002) findings this study shows that beer drinking, coupling, smoking, stealing and abortions attracted open transfers. The study has also shown that smoking, beer drinking, stealing, absconding classes, fighting, going out of school boundaries without permission, missing test(s), improper dressing and insubordination, attracted manual punishment as a penalty for committing such offences and police were engaged when it comes to cases of assault and riotous behaviour.

The need for disciplinary committees as established in this study resonates with Du Plessis, (2008) who affirms that using disciplinary committee to promote discipline must continually be practiced if people are to work harmoniously for the achievement of common purpose. The role of disciplinary committee in the administration and management of student discipline has been recognized by the various government policy documents since independence. Infractions that require disciplinary committee include assault, arson, fighting, theft, and vandalism, destruction of school stores, administration blocks, libraries, harassment, riots and rape and loss of lives.

## **5.2. Perception of learners and teachers on discipline in school**

It was conceived that the respondents in their various categories had particular perceptions about Disciplinary Committees at secondary school level. The school pupils had particular understanding of the reporting lines of authority for certain acts of indiscipline. While the learners could not

always go direct to the Disciplinary Committees, they knew what offences to report to the school teachers and the school administration. The aspect of fairness was addressed to show that Disciplinary Committees needed to act in a manner that was impartial as a matter of their effectiveness.

The findings of this study reveal that some indiscipline cases of same were not treated fairly. There was some inconsistency on how similar cases were resolved due to the fact some learner came from well to do families and others were related to Committee Members. This gave the wrong perception to learners and the parents at large toward Disciplinary Committee. These findings of this study were similar to Azizi (2009) and Mestry and Khumalo (2012) findings, where acts of indiscipline in schools are also evident and is ranked as a major problem among learners in primary and secondary schools in Malaysia. It was revealed that most learners involved in such acts were not dealt with accordingly by the Disciplinary Committees in their respective schools because such learners came from families that were seen to be rich and their parents bribed members of the Disciplinary Committees. Their cases were abandoned, and those members of staff who wanted to proceed with such cases were threatened with unemployment Azizi (2009). The resilience of relevant school authorities or Disciplinary Committees in handling indiscipline has made some teachers to also engage themselves in helping some learners who are viewed to be ‘sacred cows’, cheat termly assessments and in some cases, during national examinations. This has continued to be a growing concern and problem. Therefore, we see that some learners have lost trust in reporting cases of indiscipline at their school due to how the Disciplinary Committees responded. The study findings, however, revealed that learners knew where to report cases of indiscipline and that the felt Disciplinary Committees were firm in the way they handled cases of indiscipline.

The study findings further revealed that most teachers assist Disciplinary Committees in handling cases of indiscipline among learners. However, their involvement has limits as they only deal with minor offences. These findings were similar to Garfield (2008) who revealed that the bigger responsibility lies in the hands of the Disciplinary Committees and if they don’t swiftly respond to issues raised it discourages other teachers from helping Clarke (2002) also added that the management in schools could have the full support of the teachers if they swiftly act and handle issues fairly and by so doing they will create an atmosphere where indiscipline will be unpopular among learners. As reported by Clarke (2002), it was also found out that the management in

schools studied could support teachers to handle cases of indiscipline fairly in order to create a good learning environment.

The significant perception is that with Disciplinary Committees in place, schools have enhanced learner discipline. Unlike this study, Gushe (2009) found that despite a working Disciplinary Committee at secondary school level, indiscipline was no different from schools that did not have such committees. It was found that common offences among all schools ranged from small to significant ones. Among the common offences were wilful destruction of property; irregularities in tests and examinations; truancy; possession of dangerous weapons and drugs of abuse such as tobacco and alcohol; smoking; graffiti and littering; stealing, fighting and intimidating others; leaving the school without permission; disobedience; vulgar language, bullying and inflicting bodily pain or harm. Where disciplinary committees existed, they played more of corrective rather than preventive roles.

### **5.3. Strategies used by disciplinary committee to deal with indiscipline at school**

It was necessary to assess what strategies the Disciplinary Committees employed in addressing school indiscipline. As regard to strategies used to overcome the problems of indiscipline in Zambian secondary schools, the study findings showed that suspension, manual work and forced transfer were some of the major ways in which schools tried to enforce discipline in schools. These offered as examples to the other pupils who had not yet committed offences related to pupil indiscipline. Further, there has been vigorous sensitisation in schools given to learners by the school authorities and teachers on the dangers of engaging in indiscipline. The findings of this study on issues of resolving indiscipline among learners were similar to those stated by Simatwa (2007), who conducted a study that focused on the management of learner discipline. It was revealed that among the various common cases of indiscipline included noise-making, coming late for classes, indecency, drug abuse, rioting and possession of inflammable substances. According to Simatwa (2007) to resolve these vices, the Ministry of Education in Kenya has taken a step to sensitize learners in schools on the dangers of engaging themselves in acts of indiscipline. In an effort to prevent and resolve learner discipline problems and ensure efficient functioning of schools, there has to be reasonable disciplinary policies and procedures. These policies and procedures are prominent at the school level as rules and regulations.

Both this study's findings and the global strategies obtained from other researchers in the reviewed literature indicate that most schools use Disciplinary Committees, Department of Guidance and Counselling and teachers to curb cases of indiscipline among learners. This study has further revealed that school administrators and Heads of Department (HOD) play a pivotal role too in curbing indiscipline in secondary schools.

This study reveals that the approach where the Head teacher involves ordinary teachers and the HOD's in managing indiscipline in schools is very effective. Mwaniki (2018) had a similar finding that the Head teacher is responsible for school discipline because the smooth running of a Disciplinary system depends on a well-defined basic policy established by the Head teacher in consultation with members of staff of a school. Mwaniki (2018) further asserts that the Head teacher who fails to consult intensively at different levels and forums with his or her learners, members of staff, guardians, Parents Teachers Associations and School Boards on the establishment and enforcement of school rules and regulations will be promoting indiscipline in the school. This is also observed in this study that collective effort is needed for enforcement of school rules and regulations in order to reduce indiscipline in schools. In addition, Okinda and Ochieng (1997) acknowledge and advise that the successful functioning of an institution is not a one man's show, but it calls for instillation of the spirit of teamwork.

Teachers should equally play a big role in curbing indiscipline among learners in schools because they derive their authority from the *in loco parentis* principle; that is in place of a parent. Teachers are in charge of changing learners' moral development, their self-improvement and adoption of the right set of values. Public education should provide for the desired socialisation of learners and teachers are supposed to lead their learners to good conduct Mores (2018). Therefore, teachers should have high self-esteem to develop the same in their learners. A learner with low self-esteem is prone to misbehave Bradford (2013).

In sharp contrast, however, the literature reviewed has indicated that some of the most effective strategies used globally to curb indiscipline among learners is through the offering of moral leadership and education as well as engaging some learners in the formulation of rules and regulations. The study's findings have not revealed that indiscipline in schools can be curbed by

offering moral leadership and education or engaging learners in the formulation of school rules and regulations either. This gap has been bridged by the reviewed literature.

Moral leadership is providing values or meaning for people to live by, inspiration, to act and motivation to hold oneself accountable. Moral education should be offered in schools because to educate a man in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society. Morality is the generally accepted code of conduct in society or within a sub-group of society (Bull, 1969). Morality is an effort to guide one's conduct by reason while giving equal weight to the interest of each individual who will be affected by one's conduct Rachel's (1993). A morally educated person is one who takes other people's interests seriously into account and begins thinking with an acknowledgement that other people matter Balakrishnan (2009). Moral education (values) helps learners to eliminate the problems associated with indiscipline.

#### **5.4. Summary**

The findings of the study as discussed in this chapter are of significance to research and practice regarding the area of learner discipline and the involvement of Disciplinary Committees at secondary school level. In this regard, it is evident that Disciplinary Committees have a duty to devise measures that will help the students to avoid and shun any engagement whatsoever in the activities of breach of discipline. In collaboration with the entire members of staff, and class teachers specifically, school Disciplinary Committees can execute sensitizations and guidance programmes with the members of the students' body in order to create a common understanding to help them (students) to wean themselves from any breach of discipline committed. Of significance from earlier research and the current research is that Disciplinary Committees will not be a body whose duty will only be to execute punishment when the breach of discipline is committed. It is upon it to enhance good behaviour patterns. It is also incumbent upon the school Disciplinary Committees to execute disciplinary procedures on the students that may engage themselves in any kind of behaviour that is contrary to the provisions of the school rules.

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Overview**

This chapter concludes and makes recommendations based on the research findings.

### **6.1. Summary of Thesis**

In Chapter One, the thesis presented the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, theoretical and conceptual framework and definition of terms. In chapter two, the dissertation reviewed relevant literature on how disciplinary committees deal with acts of indiscipline in public and private secondary schools. Chapter two also looked at perceptions of school Disciplinary Committees, learners and teachers on barriers to an effective mechanism of instilling learner discipline in public and private secondary schools; and strategies used by school Disciplinary Committees in handling learner indiscipline in public and private selected secondary schools. In Chapter three, the thesis presented, the research design, population size, sampling techniques, and research instruments and data collection procedures and the data analysis techniques. Chapter four presented study findings in relation to the objectives. Lastly, chapter five discussed the study findings in relation to studies that were in agreement.

### **6.2. Conclusions**

From the discussions above, it is possible to conclude that different kinds of disciplinary problems are exhibited in schools. This study concludes that learners' discipline problems have grown into an epidemic in Zambian secondary schools and various disciplinary approaches are employed by the school authorities to curb this trend. It should be noted that a disciplined mind is an asset to any society, and the school is part of the process for training the youth in order to produce a balanced and disciplined citizen.

In terms of how Disciplinary Committees dealt with cases of indiscipline in secondary schools, these included giving verbal warnings, open transfers and suspending or expelling of offenders. The penalty depended on the gravity of the offence.

With regard to the perceptions of the learners and teachers of the Disciplinary Committees, it was found that most learners knew where to report the cases of indiscipline in school. They also perceived these committees to be effective enough in combating learner indiscipline in schools.

However, a few had lost faith in the Disciplinary Committee because of how similar cases were handled differently and also the delay in responding made the learners not to report. Majority of teachers, on the other hand, believed, fighting indiscipline is a collective responsibility and they still could assist the disciplinary committee by handling minor cases. However, when they encountered cases beyond their limits, they reported them to the disciplinary committee of their school.

As regard to strategies used by disciplinary committees to overcome indiscipline in schools, it was found that sensitization of the learners proved to be the most effective way of improving learner behaviour in schools. Furthermore, incorporating guidance and counselling services was yet another important method which the schools employed as it helped in addressing reasons why some learners indulged themselves in acts of indiscipline.

### **6.3. Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. There is a need for schools to clearly state boundaries of acceptable behaviours within schools
2. There is a need to offer moral leadership and education in schools
3. There is a need to respond to cases of indiscipline promptly and firmly to learners who transgress boundaries of acceptable behaviours.
4. There is a need to strengthen the guidance and counselling services in schools to help learners that have issues of indiscipline.
5. There is a need for schools to increase sensitization to learners on the importance to avoid being found in indiscipline issues.
6. There is a need for schools to regularly update school rules and regulations and enforce them timely.
7. There is a need to engage learners in the formulation of rules and regulations that govern schools in the smooth running of schools

#### **6.4. Suggestions for Further Research**

Future studies may consider the role of teachers in learner discipline amidst Disciplinary Committees which may be perceived to have taken up teachers' roles of disciplining learners.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix i: Questionnaire for Teachers**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA  
IN CONJUNCTION WITH ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY  
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS**

**Topic: MANAGING LEARNER BEHAVIOR WITHIN THE SCHOOL CONTEXT: A  
STUDY OF DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEES IN SELECTED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF KALOMO DISTRICT, ZAMBIA**

Dear respondent,

I am a student at the University of Zambia in conjunction with Zimbabwe Open University. I am carrying out scientific research with respect to the above topic. You are part of a randomly selected sample from the entire selected secondary schools in Kalomo district teacher population. I am asking for your assistance to complete this questionnaire in a faithful and truthful manner. The information collected will be treated purely for academic purposes and with utmost confidentiality. Therefore, I request you not to write your name to ensure confidentiality. Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

## **SECTION A: BIO-DATA AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Tick appropriately.

1. What is your sex?  
(a) Male [ ] (b) Female [ ]
  
2. What is your marital status?  
(a) Single [ ]  
(b) Married [ ]  
(c) Divorced [ ]  
(d) Separated [ ]  
(e) Widowed [ ]
  
3. Which is your age group?  
(a) 20 - 25 years [ ]  
(b) 26 – 30 years [ ]  
(c) 31 – 35 years [ ]  
(d) 36 – 40 years [ ]  
(e) 41 – 45 years [ ]  
(f) 46 and above [ ]
  
3. What are your qualifications?  
(a) Primary Teacher’s Certificate [ ]  
(b) Primary Teacher’s Diploma [ ]  
(c) Primary Teacher’s Degree [ ]  
(d) Special Education Degree [ ]  
(e) Secondary Teacher’s Diploma [ ]  
(f) Secondary Teacher’s Degree [ ]  
(g) Master’s Degree [ ]  
(h) Doctoral Degree (PhD) [ ]

4. How long have you been teaching at secondary school level?

- (a) 1-2 years [ ]
- (b) 3-4 years [ ]
- (c) 5-6 years [ ]
- (d) 7-10 years [ ]
- (e) 11- 15 years [ ]
- (f) 16- 20 years [ ]
- (g) Above 21 years [ ]

5. What position do you hold in school?

- (a) Head Teacher [ ]
- (b) Deputy Head teacher [ ]
- (c) Senior Teacher [ ]
- (d) Head of Department [ ]
- (e) Section Head [ ]
- (f) Class / Subject Teacher [ ]

6. Is there need of a Disciplinary Committee at your school?

- Yes [ ]
- No [ ]

7. Give reasonsfor your answer in Q.6

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.....

8. Does the school have a functional Disciplinary Committee?

- (a) Yes [ ]
- (b) No [ ]

9. Who is the Chairperson of the school's Disciplinary Committee?

- (a) Head Teacher [ ]
- (b) Deputy Head Teacher [ ]
- (c) Head of Department [ ]
- (d) A selected Teacher [ ]

10. How do you rate the discipline levels of the pupils at your school?

- (a) Bad [ ]
- (b) Good [ ]
- (c) Not so sure [ ]
- (d) Fair [ ]

**SECTION B: TEACHER ATTRIBUTES TOWARDS SCHOOL'S DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS**

11. In your view, do you think all teachers need to get involved in day to day learner discipline process?

- (a) No [ ]
- (b) Yes [ ]

12. Give reasons for your answer in Q.11

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.....

13. Is there a role that an individual teacher can play in disciplining learners?

- (a) Yes [ ]
- (b) No [ ]

14. Give reasons for your answer in Q.13

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.....  
.....

15. On average, are the teachers punctual for lessons?

(a) Yes [ ]

(b) No [ ]

16. If your answer in Q.13 was (b), what is the main cause that leads the teachers to be late for lessons? Please explain:

.....  
.....

17. Are you punctual as an individual teacher when going to teach lessons to your classes?

(a) Yes [ ]

(b) No [ ]

18. If your answer in Q.17 was (b), what could be the main reason for going late for lessons? Please explain:

.....  
.....

19. How do you rate teacher absenteeism from work at your school?

(a) Not a serious problem [ ]

(b) A serious problem [ ]

20. How do you rate the teacher – pupil relationship at your school?

(a) Good [ ]

(b) Bad [ ]

(c) Fair [ ]

(d) Not so sure [ ]

21. If your answer in Q. 20 was either (a) or (b), give reasons for your answer.

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22. On average, how do the teachers relate to the learners at your school?

(a) In a friendly manner [ ]

(b) Harshly [ ]

(c) Some are friendly while others are not [ ]

23. As a teacher, how often do you engage the learners in talks that enhance learner discipline?

(a) Regularly [ ]

(b) Not regularly [ ]

(c) None at all [ ]

24. If your answer in Q. 23 was (c), give reasons why you do not engage learners in talks that enhances learner discipline.

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**SECTION C: EFFECTIVENESS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SCHOOL**  
**DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE AS THE CORE OF SCHOOL DISCIPLINE**

25. What are the most cases handled by your school's Disciplinary Committee? Tick all that applies to your school?

(a) Beer drinking [ ]

(b) Coupling [ ]

- (c) Theft [    ]
- (d) Fighting [    ]
- (e) Smoking [    ]
- (f) Insubordination [    ]
- (g) Accusations of Satanism [    ]
- (h) Riotous behaviour [    ]
- (i) Any other case(s): .....

26. How firm is the Disciplinary Committee at your school?

- (a) Very firm [    ]
- (b) Firm [    ]
- (c) Weak [    ]

27. For learners who have been found guilty of some offence and depending on the gravity of the offence, how does the DC punish offenders? Please tick all that applies to your school.

- (a) Give warning [    ]
- (b) Give an open transfer [    ]
- (c) Give some manual work to do at school [    ]
- (d) Suspending the offender [    ]
- (e) Expel the offender [    ]
- (f) Giving corporal punishment to the offender [    ]

28. Is the Disciplinary Committee swift or responsive when you report cases of indiscipline at your school?

- (a) Yes [    ]
- (b) No [    ]
- (c) Not always [    ]

29. How often does the Disciplinary Committee meet to hear cases of learners?

- (a) Once per week [    ]

- (b) Once per month [    ]
- (c) Once per term [    ]
- (d) Dictated by the number and frequency of cases [    ]

30. How often does the Disciplinary Committee meet and give talks to the learners on discipline?

- (a) Once per month [    ]
- (b) Fortnightly [    ]
- (c) Once term [    ]
- (d) Once per week [    ]
- (e) None at all [    ]

31. How do you describe your school's Disciplinary Committee?

- (a) Effective [    ]
- (b) Ineffective [    ]

32. Does the Disciplinary Committee at your school incorporate guidance and counseling services in enhancing learner discipline?

- (a) Yes [    ]
- (b) No [    ]

33. Does the Disciplinary Committee at your school take time to sensitize the learners on school rules and appropriate behaviour?

- (a) Yes [    ]
- (b) No [    ]

34. What can be done to enhance the Disciplinary Committee at your school in order to be more effective? Please explain.

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.....

**THE END**

**Thank you for your cooperation and time.**

## Appendix ii: Questionnaire for Pupils

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**  
**IN CONJUNCTION WITH ZIMBABWE UNIVERSITY**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS**

Dear respondent,

You are one of the respondents who have been randomly selected to participate in answering this research study. The exercise is purely for academic purposes. You are therefore kindly requested to freely answer all the questions in this questionnaire for your responses will be treated highly confidential. Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

#### **SECTION A: PERSONAL DETAILS**

1. What is your sex?

- (a) Boy [ ]
- (b) Girl [ ]

2. What is your age group?

- (a) Below 14 years [ ]
- (b) 14 – 16 years [ ]
- (c) 17 – 19 years [ ]
- (d) Above 19 years [ ]

**SECTION A: LEARNERS’S PERCEPTION DETAILS WITH REGARDS TO HOW  
INDISCIPLINE IS HANDLED AT SCHOOL**

3. Would you report an act of indiscipline to school authorities?

(a) Yes [ ]

(b) No [ ]

4. Are you aware of the relevant school authorities you can report issues of indiscipline at your school?

(a) Yes [ ]

(b) No [ ]

5. If your response in question 4 was (a) have you observed how school authorities punish those who commit cases of indiscipline? Please explain.

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5. What are some of the reasons why learners areindisciplined? Tick what is appropriate

(j) Beer drinking [ ]

(k) Coupling [ ]

(l) Theft [ ]

(m)Fighting [ ]

(n) Smoking [ ]

(o) Insubordination [ ]

(p) Accusations of Satanism [ ]

(q) Riotous behaviour [ ]

(r) Lack of commitment to school work [ ]

(s) Teachers not coming to school [ ]



**Appendix iii: Interview guide for Administrators**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

**IN CONJUNCTION WITH ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY**

**DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES**

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE / GUIDE FOR ADMINSTRATORS**

**TITLE:**

**MANAGING LEARNER BEHAVIOUR WITHIN THE SCHOOL CONTEXT: A CASE STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEES IN SELECTED THREE PULIC AND TWO PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF KALOMO DISTRICT.**

**RESEARCHER'S SELF INSTRUCTION**

THE INTERVIEW GUIDE HAS TO BE PHYSICALLY ADMINISTERED ON THE TEACHERS IN THE SELECTED SCHOOLS BY THE RESEARCHER AND GIVE FURTHER CLARIFICATIONS WHERE NEED BE TO THE RESPONDENTS.

1. Does your school have cases of learner indiscipline?  
    (a) Yes [    ]  
    (b) No [    ]
  
2. If your answer to Q 1 is yes what are the common cases of indiscipline. Please explain.  
    .....  
    .....  
    .....  
    .....
  
3. Is there need of a Disciplinary Committee at your school?  
    a) Yes [    ]  
    b) No [    ]
  
4. If your answer in Q.3 was (a) or (b), give a reason why?  
    Please explain:  
    .....  
    .....
  
5. Does the school have a functional Disciplinary Committee?  
    (a) Yes [    ]

(b) No [ ]

6. Who chairs the school's Disciplinary Committee?

(a) Head Teacher [ ]

(b) Deputy Head Teacher [ ]

(c) Head of Department [ ]

(d) A selected Teacher [ ]

(e) Any other:.....

7. How do you rate the discipline levels of the pupils at your school?

(a) Bad [ ]

(b) Good [ ]

(c) Not so sure [ ]

(d) Fair [ ]

8. Are you a permanent member of the Disciplinary Committee at your school?

(a) Yes

(b) No

9. Are you satisfied with the way the Disciplinary Committee in your school is performing its duties in curbing cases of indiscipline?

(a) Yes

(b) No

10. In your view, are all teachers involved in the day to day learner discipline process?

(a) No [ ]

(b) Yes [ ]

11. If your answer in Q10 is no what could be the reason. Please explain.

.....  
.....  
.....

12. Is there a role that an individual teacher can play in disciplining learners?

(a) Yes [    ]

(b) No [    ]

13. If your answer to Q 12 is yes what role do you think they can play? Please explain.

.....  
.....  
.....

14. On average, are the teachers punctual for lessons?

(a) Yes [    ]

(b) No [    ]

15. If your answer in Q.14 is (b), what is the main cause that leads the teachers to be late for lessons? Please explain:

.....  
.....

16. Are you punctual as an individual teacher when going to teach lessons to your classes?

(a) Yes [    ]

(b) No [    ]

17. If your answer in Q.16 is (b), what could be the main reason for going late for lessons? Please explain:

.....  
.....

18. How do you rate teacher absenteeism from work at your school?

(a) Not a serious problem [    ]

(b) A serious problem [    ]

19. How do you rate the teacher – pupil relationship at your school?

- (a) Good [    ]
- (b) Bad [    ]
- (c) Fair [    ]
- (d) Not so sure [    ]

20. If your answer in Q. 16 was either (a) or (b), give a reason for your answer.

.....  
.....

21. On average, how do the teachers relate with the learners at your school?

- (a) In a friendly manner [    ]
- (b) Harshly [    ]
- (c) Some are friendly while others are not [    ]
- (d) Any other:.....

22. As a teacher, how often do you engage the learners in talks that lead to learner discipline?

- (a) Regularly [    ]
- (b) Not regularly [    ]
- (c) None at all [    ]

***THE END***

***Thank you for your cooperation,  
May the good Lord Bless you!!!***