

**TEACHERS' AND ADMINISTRATORS' PERCEPTIONS ON STUDENT
SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS. A CASE STUDY KATUSO COMMUNITY
SCHOOL IN MAKINDYE DIVISION**

BY

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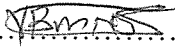
1153-07234-02574

**A RESEARCH DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
WITH ARTS FOR THE PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
NEEDED FOR THE AWARD OF A BACHELORS DEGREE IN EDUCATION OF
KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

AUGUST, 2018

DECLARATION

I NSIIMIRE VIOLLAH, the undersigned hereby declare that the work contained in this research report is my own original work and that has not previously in its entirety or in part submitted to any university for the award of a degree in education

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APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research report has been under my supervision and now ready for submission with my approval.

Signature.......... Date.....*25 September 2018*.....

DR SIMON PETER ONGODIA

0756090112/0772423303

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my most sincere gratitude and heart-felt appreciation firstly, to my almighty God, to whom I owe my life, wisdom, and good faith in all my endeavors. I praise him for enabling me on my academic journey and carry out this research in particular.

I wish to express my sincere gratefulness to my supervisor DR SIMON PETER ONGODIA for her exceedingly incomparable commitment to supervise my dissertation and her guidance. I am very grateful to her for giving me the benefits of her experience and suggestions.

Immeasurable and exceptional gratitude goes to the lecturers in the college of 3ducation open distance and E-learning, Kampala International University who gave me invaluable guidance towards this work.

May the almighty God reward you all

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my guardian Mr Andruga James Moses and Tukamuhebwa Milly who have always been there for me in terms of financial and moral support. For you have made my academic journey at Kampala International University a success

MAY GOD REWARD THEM ABUNDANTLY

TERMS

For the purposes of this proposal, the following descriptions of terms will apply.

‘Suspension’ was used to refer to a disciplinary procedure in which a student is denied entry to the school grounds for a set number of days. According to the Department of Secondary Education EA (2004), suspension “removes the student from the school environment, reduces the opportunity for reinforcement for their behaviour and provides a period of respite between the incident and the resolution process” (p.8). Schools in the US use the term in a similar Way.

‘Exclusion’ is used in the UK to refer to the same disciplinary procedure (Gordon, 2001). ‘Exclusion’ in EA schools refers to the process by which a student is denied entry to a particular school for the remainder of their schooling career. (Department of Secondary Education, 2004). As previously, schools in the US use this term in the same Way. ‘Expulsion’ is interchangeable with ‘exclusion’ when referring to the process as described above.

ABSTRACT

‘Suspension’ is a sanction used by schools in which students who have contravened the rules are not allowed to attend school for a specified number of days. Despite its widespread use, empirical research suggests that suspension is ineffective, punitive, and a predictor of further social problems, such as substance abuse and crime. The report study would use qualitative methods to explore the beliefs of teachers and administrators regarding the rationale for and the impact of suspension in Central Uganda schools. Case studies were conducted on three schools, two of which are currently trialling different programs to assist in both reducing Suspensions and Expulsions and making them more effective. The third schools were selected for its more traditional ways of dealing with students, and would have been identified by District Education Officer (DEO) as a school with a high suspension rate. One-on-one interviews were conducted with teachers from different Learning Areas at each school, Non-teaching staff, the Deputy Principal/headmaster/headmistress in charge of Students welfare and discipline. After analysis of the data, the themes were presented to the participants in focus groups for them to verify or refute. It is hoped that by examining the reasons why school staff suspend students, viable alternatives and suggestions to improve practice may be created that are more well-supported by school staff.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Schools have increasingly reported concerns with disruptive behaviour in class (Dettman, 1972; White, Algozzine, Audette, Marr and Ellis, 2001; Metzler, Biglan, Rusby & Sprague, 2001; Mukuria, 2002; Uchitelle, Bartz & Hillman, 1989). Disruptive behaviour can function as a major impediment to classroom learning (Slee, 1988). In recent times, vandalism, assault, escaping and trespassing, bullying, safety, violence, drugs and weapons/mobile devices use have been uppermost in the problems schools face (White, 2002; Skiba, 2000; Mendez, Knoff & Ferron, 2002). Events such as the fighting, assault, strikes, and bullying of staff and students by students in the Uganda, coupled with the media presenting incidences of school violence and strikes on a regular basis (daily monitor, October 2017; New Vision, 2016; Daily monitor, jul 28 2017), have contributed to schools feeling the need to increase the severity and intensity of their disciplinary practices (Fields, 2002).

In countries such as the US, zero tolerance policies have been adopted in efforts to decrease the prevalence of severe behaviour problems within schools (Skiba, 2000: Skiba & Peterson, 1999; Sughrue, 2003). In the US, mandatory suspension – and, in some cases, expulsion – may be imposed for behaviours such as bringing a weapon to school and gang-related activity (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). In some African states, mandatory suspension has also been implemented for students who show open, ongoing defiance and continued disorderly or disruptive conduct (Sughrue, 2003). Suspension has also been used as a consequence for behaviours such as truancy, lateness, disrespect and non-compliance (Skiba, 2000).

The abolition of corporal punishment has increased the use of suspension as part of standard disciplinary practice and has been the cause of much debate among educationalists, human-rights activists, parents, and the general community (Parker-Jenkins, 1999; Slee, 1992; Seymour, 1992; Johnson, 1992; Hocking & Murphy, 1992). In Uganda, state educators have been encouraged to give more weight to suspension as a behaviour management strategy (Fagil Monday, 2004;

Mwembeshe, 1995). Perhaps as a consequence, suspension has now become a method of choice in dealing with disruptive behaviour (Hyde, 1992), and there has been a steady increase in the use of suspension for both severe and lesser behaviours (Slee, 1992; Schiraldi & Ziedenberg, 2001; Atkins, et al., 2002).

Despite its increasing popularity, suspension is a moderate to strong predictor of students' later disengagement with schooling (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Students who disengage from the school through suspension have been shown to be more likely to become involved in substance abuse and other activities that could lead to juvenile offences (Kilpatrick, 1998). There have also been questions as to the efficacy of suspension in producing behaviour change (Costenbader & Markson, 1998; Partington, 2001; Schiraldi & Ziedenberg, 2001; Kilpatrick, 1998; Atkins, et al., 2002; Bock, Tapscott & Savner, 1998; Vavrus & Cole, 2002). Nonetheless, suspension continues to be used as a sanction for inappropriate behaviour throughout schools in the US, the United Kingdom (UK), and in all African Countries, including East Africa (EA).

By examining the perceptions of teachers and school administrators on suspension, this study aims to examine why suspension continues to be used in schools despite the relative lack of evidence supporting its efficacy as a behaviour management strategy.

Problem statement

Questions about the efficacy of suspension as a behaviour management procedure have prompted much research in recent years. The vast majority of this research has been grounded in the quantitative paradigm (e.g., Schiraldi & Ziedenberg, 2001; Costenbader & Markson, 1998; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002; Wu, Pink, Crain, & Moles, 1982). Data sources within these studies have included school discipline records (Skiba, et al., 2002), students' self-report surveys (Costenbader & Markson, 1998), and teachers' reports on their own disciplinary practices (Wu, et al., 1982).

Research conducted in EA has been concerned primarily with the perceptions of students and their parents on suspension (Partington, 2001). To date, the perceptions of teachers and administrators have been largely ignored. Given that administrators are required to justify all suspension decisions (Department of Secondary Education, 2004), and that teachers are

responsible not only for managing the behaviour of these students on a day-to-day basis, but for referring students for possible suspension, any change in the practices used in EA schools would require the support of these personnel. For this reason, the primary purpose of the proposed study were to examine the perceptions of teachers and administrators in EA with respect to suspension, and to explore themes that may enable EA schools to make better use of this disciplinary practice, with a view to improving outcomes for all parties concerned.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to assess the teachers' and administrators' perceptions towards suspension and expulsion of students.

Objectives of the study

General objective

- The teachers and Administrators belief and their rationale for, and impact of, the suspension of students in schools in central region.

Specific objectives

- The impact teachers and Administrators believe about suspension has on student behavior.
- The perceptions of teachers and Administrators on the use of suspension as a behavior modification tool.
- What teachers and Administrators believe are the students' perceptions on suspension.
- What teachers and Administrators believe are the parents'/community's perceptions on suspension.
- What teachers and administrators believe are the possible alternatives to Suspensions and Expulsions.

Research Questions

Central

The central question that was addressed by this study is:

- What do teachers and Administrators believe was the rationale for, and impact of, the suspension of students in Central schools?

Guiding

Five guiding questions would shape the study. These are:

- What impact do teachers and Administrators believe suspension has on student behaviour? Why?
- What are the perceptions of teachers and Administrators on the use of suspension as a behavior modification tool? Why?
- What do teachers and Administrators believe are the students' perceptions on suspension? Why?
- What do teachers and Administrators believe are the parents'/community's perceptions on suspension? Why?
- What do teachers and administrators believe are the possible alternatives to Suspensions and Expulsions? Why?

Scope of the study

The scope of the study was limited to Katuso Community School Located at Makindye division in Kampala

The study was to assess the perceptions of teachers and administrators towards suspensions and expulsion of students in the above mentioned school to analyses the perceptions of students, parents and communities and establish whether there is an alternative or not and then find the way forward.

The study would cover a period of the year 2015 – 2017. This period is chosen because it's to create the best over view of all the indiscipline the students were engaged in visa vie the suspensions and expulsions that were given. Otherwise many schools may not use the same punishment for the same case crime but they may also have alternative or rather the perceptions of the above parties may vary considerably.

Significance of the study

The proposed research would take a different direction from those conducted previously. By investigating the perceptions of teachers and administrators in regards to how suspension is implemented in their schools and why they believe it is part of the discipline litany available, this research will emphasise the professional knowledge of educators in the context with which they are most familiar. Thus far, no other research located has taken this approach, either overseas or in Uganda.

The findings in this research would give a deeper insight of the perceptions the teachers and administrators have towards suspension and expulsion and why they take such steps.

The results were used by school disciplinary bodies to identify the better alternative to the suspension or expulsion or even both so that considerable punishments are made in case there are options.

The study would add to the existing knowledge of school staff and student on why and what the suspensions do and their impact on behavior

It would also help heads of schools to consider better ways of punishing students other than by suspension or expulsion

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Perspective

As the aim of the proposed research is to understand how teachers and administrators regard the rationale for and the impact of suspension, the study will use a qualitative/interpretive approach. The interpretivist looks to understand the meanings that constitute people's actions (SchEAndt, 1994), and this is at the core of the proposed research. When using this approach, the emphasis is on the "importance of the processes which lie between social structure and behaviour. The central character in these processes is the person...who is active in the construction of social reality" (Reid, 1986, p. 31).

It is anticipated that by utilising this theoretical perspective, relevant themes will emerge that address the central research question and point to possible alternative or improved suspension practices in EA secondary schools.

Current Suspension Policy in Ugandan Schools

The current suspension criteria in EA state schools are outlined in the *Behaviour Management in Schools Policy* (Department of Secondary Education, 2004). Under these guidelines, students can be suspended if they have contravened the school's rules under one of the following categories:

Category 1: Physical assault or intimidation of staff.

Category 2: Verbal abuse or harassment of staff.

Category 3: Physical assault or intimidation of students.

Category 4: Verbal abuse or harassment of students.

Category 5: Wilful offence against property.

Category 6: Violation of school Code of Conduct, behaviour management plan, classroom or school rules.

Category 7: Substance misuse.

Category 8: Illegal substance offences.

Category 9: Other.

The policy also offers a justification for use of this practice in all government schools (Department of Secondary Education, 2004 p. 8):

Suspension can be an effective behaviour management strategy when it is reserved for serious or persistent breaches of the school's code of conduct...Suspension removes the student from the school environment, reduces the opportunity for reinforcement of their behaviour and provides a period of respite between the incident and the resolution process. The processes for imposing a suspension are the same for all students...Suspension provides an opportunity for the student, parents, and school staff to reflect on the incident and behaviour enabling a considered, positive resolution and re-entry plan. Suspension can, however, break down the relationships between the student, parents and school staff unless the resolution process is effectively managed.

The *Behaviour Management in Schools Policy* is part of an ensemble of policies that support its implementation. These are the *Advisory Panel Procedures: School Discipline and Disabilities, Disputes and Complaints Policy and Procedures, Dress Code for Students, Enrolment Policy, Retention and Participation Plan, Students at Educational Risk Policy*, and the *Students at Educational Risk Successful Practice Guidelines* (Department of Secondary Education, 2004).

Background to Secondary School Discipline Policies

The current *Behaviour Management in Schools Policy* in EA evolved from the original 1998 document, and is designed to complement material in the *Making the Difference-Behavior Management in Schools* guidelines and the *Behaviour Management in Schools-Implementation Package*. Prior to this, the Education Department of EA favoured a "Whole-School Approach" to discipline (Hamilton, 1986). This approach developed in response to the abolition of corporal punishment, which occurred in mid-1987 (Hyde, 1992). At that time, educators expressed apprehension over what EAs going to replace corporal punishment to assist in keeping classroom control (Hyde, 1992). Suspension, despite being already in use, schools were to be given greater authority and force (Fagil Monday, 1984) and, as a result, became the most severe sanction schools were able to dispense in response to inappropriate behaviour.

Recently, the Minister of Education and Sports has introduced funding in efforts to combat occurrences of both in-class disruption and behaviours that lead to suspension as part of the *Behaviour Management in Schools* strategy. Based on the Department of Education's 2002 report, lowering class sizes in Ordinary, Advanced levels and providing funding for alternative programs, strategies, and extra staff produced a 22% decrease in Suspensions and Expulsions for the second half of the 2001 school year.

Context of the Research

Over the past three decades, discipline and student behaviour management have become central issues in the day-to-day running of schools across the globe. In Uganda, increases in youth unemployment (Mwembeshe, 1995: Slee 1995: Hyde and Robson, 1984) and emphases on post-compulsory schooling (Curriculum Council of Uganda, 2001) have created cohorts of students who previously would have left school. Furthermore, the provision of Universal Secondary Education and Universal Tertiary Education payments (government payments to students from disadvantaged families to allow students to participate in post-compulsory schooling) encourage students to continue with their schooling, regardless of their interest or academic aptitude levels (Mwembeshe, 1995). Mwembeshe further commented that:

In the early 1980s, unemployment for the population as a whole rose steeply. For young people in particular, the increase almost unprecedented in the nation's history. Between one in four and one in five young adults in the 15- to 19-year age group became part of a pool of long-term unemployed people. As a consequence, the number of youngsters seeking exemptions from schools in Secondary (who in the early 1970s represented almost six per cent of the secondary aged cohort) dwindled to approximately one per cent in 1983. Teachers who express the view that 'kids have changed' are right in this respect. Students who, in the part, had recognized that schooling had little to offer them and had sought exemptions and left in Years 9 and 10 are now remaining at school (p. 6).

While Mwembeshe (1995) credits these factors primarily with much of the disruptive behaviour encountered by schools, there have been other influences. Changes in the general tone of society have also had an impact. GalloWay, Ball, Comfield and Seyd (1982) state that:

Disruptive behaviour in schools is the inevitable manifestation of increased violence, or at least of increased reporting of violence, in the world as a whole (p. ix).

Kilpatrick (1998) also attributed recent increases in the disruptive behaviour seen in schools to escalating problems of substance abuse, eating disorders, and physical and sexual abuse within the school-age population.

Current social perceptions of the 'troublesome adolescent' also fit well with the above explanations of disruptive behaviour in schools. Recently, there has been much publicity in regards to the frequently-suspended teen being cited as more likely to become involved in criminal behaviour (Kilpatrick 1998: Bagley & Pritchard, 1998: Breunlin, Cimmarusti, Bryant-Edwards, Hetherington, 2002: Skiba and Peterson, 1999: Costenbader and Markson, 1998). In 2003, the Ugandan government implemented a curfew for children entering the capital city's popular nightlife area, which has been received with much controversy (Taylor & Franklin, 2003). Such attitudes towards troublesome youth often overflow into school life (Schiraldi & Ziedenberg, 2001) and schools feel pressure to ensure that disruptive behaviour is dealt with using increasingly stringent penalties – which, under the current policy, translates into using suspension (Fields, 1999).

Empirical Literature

Research in the area of suspension can be divided into four categories: the profiles of suspended students; the efficacy of suspension; students' perceptions on discipline and suspension; and alternatives to suspension.

Profiles of Suspended Students. One approach researchers have taken is to identify the types of students who are more likely to be suspended in order to identify any salient patterns or anomalies. Consistently, researchers have established that ethnicity, age (early adolescence), socio-economic standing, and academic ability have some bearing on suspension rates (Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba, Michael, Nardo & Peterson, 2002; Partington, 1998; Gordon, 2001; Mendez, Knoff & Ferron, 2002; Hayden & Lawrence, 1995). These findings are consistent with those reported by the Department of Secondary Education in EA, which has resulted in the implementation both of the aforementioned programs and of strategies that target Indigenous and

other alienated groups in efforts to improve student retention and participation (Department of Secondary Education, 2004).

Much of the research completed in the US has suggested that African-American students are disproportionately represented in suspension statistics (Skiba, Michael, Nardo & Peterson, 2002), as are those who receive free lunches, which is indicative of low socio-economic status (Mendez, Knoff & Ferron, 2002). Again, researchers have primarily used quantitative data collection and analysis methods in these studies, including as indices frequency counts from school disciplinary records (Skiba et al, 2002), academic performance on standardised tests (Mendez, Knoff & Ferron, 2002), and responses to school discipline surveys (Mendez and Knoff, 2003). Mendez, Knoff and Ferron (2002) did, however, include interviews in their study and used these data to support conclusions drawn on the basis of the quantitative data.

In Australia, Partington (1998) examined the narratives of Indigenous students who had been disciplined with the purpose of discerning whether or not the understandings of the students and the management issues of the teachers were at odds and could account for the over-representation of Indigenous students in disciplinary practices. Through interviewing the students and studying three cases in-depth (interviewing both the students and teachers concerned), Partington concluded that cultural differences between the teachers and students may contribute to the disproportionate number of Indigenous students who are suspended.

The Efficacy of Suspension. As mentioned previously, research to date has not supported the efficacy of suspension as a behaviour management procedure (Schiraldi & Ziedenberg, 2001; Kilpatrick, 1998; Costenbader & Markson, 1997; Vavrus & Cole, 2002). The purpose of suspension, especially in the US, is to provide a sanction for major disciplinary problems, such as the use of weapons, drug abuse, and gang fighting (Sughrue, 2003). Research has revealed, however, that suspension is being applied most often for lesser infractions, such as lack of punctuality, non-compliance, and disrespect (Skiba, 2000). Indeed, suspension has become the most commonly used sanction for inappropriate behaviour (Skiba & Knesting, 2002) since the inception of zero tolerance policies (Brooks, Schiraldi, & Ziedenberg, 2000).

Despite the increase in the use of suspension, research has as yet not been able to establish whether this sanction is serving as a punishment for all students – that is, that it is actually

reducing the frequency of the behaviours it supposedly sanctions. Atkins et al. (2002) found that suspension proved to be an ineffective punishment in curtailing inappropriate behaviour. Other research has also suggested the possibility of undesirable side-effects from Suspensions and Expulsions, including higher rates of dropping out of school, drug abuse, and delinquency in targeted students (Kilpatrick, 1998; Schiraldi & Ziedenberg, 2001).

Students' Perceptions on Discipline and Suspension. Examining students' perceptions on classroom management and suspension practices may provide insights into how such sanctions affect them and their behaviour. Researchers have used these beliefs as a starting point when discussing the efficacy of suspension and discipline practices (Partington, 2001; Gordon, 2001; Coslin, 1997; Lewis, 2001).

Some research has suggested that students are more likely to accept discipline and feel that they are being treated fairly if they have a positive relationship with their teachers (Partington, 2001; Wu et al., 1982; Bru, Stephens & Torsheim, 2002; Partington, 1998). Students suspended for successions of minor infractions (i.e., in which teachers referred on the basis of a 'cumulative' effect) have reported feeling 'singled out' and seeing Suspensions and Expulsions as unjust (Vavrus & Cole, 2002). Further to this, in one study conducted by Costenbader and Markson (1998), students reported being "angry at the person who sent [them] to suspension" and "happy to get out of the situation" (p 76). As far as the actual suspension as concerned, responses included "(It's) a good excuse to stay at home" and "It's just a vacation." (p. 76). Responses such as these suggest that suspension is not having the effects it is anticipated to have on many students. By implication, these results again call into question the efficacy of suspension as a behaviour management strategy.

Alternatives to Suspension. Strategies aimed at reducing out of school Suspensions and Expulsions are of particular interest to the proposed study. The success of these approaches appears to be dependent on a number of factors, including parental involvement and school willingness to explore and accept alternatives as fair consequences for misconduct (Breunlin, Cimmarusti, Bryant-EdEArds, & Hetherington, 2002). The most common alternatives to out of school suspension utilised by schools in Uganda tend to be less severe variations of the isolation theme, for example, in-school suspension, detention, and time-out rooms (Morgan-D'Atrio,

Northup, LaFleur and Spera, 1995). As isolation procedures, these still hinge on withdrawing students from learning environments, which can in turn place their academic development at risk (Hallam & Castle, 2004).

Other alternatives that aim to keep the students in school include employing social workers to work both with the students and with their families. The latter approach is grounded in holistic approaches which aim not only to manage misconduct and inappropriate behaviour in schools, but also to link disadvantaged families to services that could improve the home-life of the students (Bagley & Pritchard, 1998). Researchers have also investigated improving relationships between teachers and students, particularly in the areas of cultural understanding, relevant curriculum, building rapport and improving classroom management techniques (Partington, 1998; Townsend, 2000; Uchitelle, Bartz & Hillman, 1989). Improving conflict resolution skills has also been examined as a strategy for reducing the need to use out-of-school Suspensions and Expulsions (Garibaldi, Blanchard, & Brooks, 1996).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Design

To maximise richness and accuracy of data, as well as transferability of the findings, case studies were carried out at three different school sites. Case studies allow the researcher to become familiar with the data in its natural setting and fully appreciate the context (Punch, 1998). In regard to this study, a school does not operate as a group of isolated variables: rather, especially in the case of behaviour management and whole-school approaches, all acts impact one another, from the classroom to the administration. Suspension may be an “end of the road” consequence, but the student would have had contact with many people on his/her travels down this road, and each of these contacts could potentially have influenced the behaviour. Similarly, the perceptions of all these people would influence how they related to the student. Finally, the perceptions of these people are likely to have been influenced by the context in which they were formed. Thus, to understand why suspension is used, it is necessary to understand the viewpoint of the school as a whole on such sanctions, and how suspension fits within the context of discipline in that school.

Each school site was approached as a separate case study with the following characteristics, consistent with Punch (1998). The boundaries of the case were defined as the schools themselves and the teaching and Administrators who work there. Even though the wider community (such as parents) have some influence on how schools operate and students are obviously central to the school environment, only teachers’ and administrators’ beliefs were examined throughout this study. This boundary was created for two reasons. Firstly, there is a dearth of research in the area of teachers’ and administrators’ perceptions on suspension and secondly, to assist in creating finite boundaries to make the research manageable.

Each case is about the perceptions of teachers and administrators within that particular school. All phenomena that either influence or reflect these perceptions were examined, such as each school’s behaviour management policy, classroom management policies, alternatives to suspension, and allocation of staff to pastoral care.

In order to preserve the unity of the case, data from each school was analysed with the unique context of the school in mind, including location, socio-economic factors, and rates of suspension and alternative programs.

Multiple sources of data were accessed, not the least of which involved interviewing staff with different duties at the school, from classroom teachers to principal/headmaster/headmistress. In addition, school records pertaining to suspension rates, socio-economic standing, and general discipline records were collected in order to gain an overall perspective of the suspension and behaviour management in the school.

Secondary schools were chosen because the majority of students who are suspended are in the early years of secondary school (Skiba et al., 2002; Kilpatrick, 1998; Partington, 1998).

Settings

The Central Education Districts each have secondary schools that are piloting programs concerning suspension. These schools implemented programs that are regarded as innovative and, as such, can be considered special cases.

One school in the Wakiso Education District incorporated the aims of restorative justice into its approach to behaviour management. Restorative justice includes techniques such as victim/offender mediation and conferencing. The aim of this approach is to ensure that those who have been most affected by the behaviour have an opportunity to air how they feel. Restorative conferencing has its origins in Buganda tradition and is being used by juvenile justice teams in Kenya for juvenile offenders (Strang, 2001). The program began in the school in 2004, and the perceptions of the teachers and administrators at this school would be insightful, especially regarding any changes in opinion that have been a direct result of this program.

The other school piloting a program to reduce suspension is located in the Mukono Education District. There are a number of schools exploring counselling as an alternative to suspension. The program is called *Saturday Alternatives to Suspension*, and it involved having students attend counselling sessions on Saturdays to deal with the problems that led to the behaviour that caused the suspension. As this program is in its infancy, the perceptions of the staff would be

interesting to examine, especially considering the changes in discipline that have evolved in the school due to the program's implementation.

The third school were selected from either of the two aforementioned education districts, and will exhibit high rates of suspension (as identified by the respective District Education Officer). This school did not undergo any major changes in its behaviour management policies or practices, and it served as a direct comparison setting for the other two schools.

Participants

Teachers from different learning areas were interviewed from each site so as to maximise diversity within the samples. It is anticipated that at least five teachers were interviewed, as this hopefully enabled "option" learning areas (Technology and Enterprise, Languages Other Than English, The Arts, Health and Physical Education) to be included as well as the core learning areas. A range of gender balance and experience was sought. Teachers who are team leaders or are involved directly in the pastoral care of students but also carry a teaching role made up the second group of participants. It is anticipated that there were at least two of this type of participant from each school. These people are involved with the students at the basest level – in the classroom – and must contend with disciplining as well.

The representatives from the administration team comprised the final group. These representatives were very much dependent on the structure of the school but it is probable that they could include the Principal/headmaster/headmistress and Deputies. The only stipulation of these participants was that they were delegated the power to suspend students. The perceptions of these people were valuable as they chose the final consequence for the student's behaviour, regardless of the teacher's preferences. They are also primarily responsible for any alternatives to suspension that the school offers.

Data Collection

There were three stages of data collection. The first stage involved gathering data from the case schools regarding the number of Suspensions and Expulsions that have occurred over one school year, the number of students suspended, the number of students who have been suspended more

than once, what they have been suspended for, the socio-economic standing of the school's population, the ethnicity of the students, the alternatives to suspension offered and the school's behaviour management policy (including both sanctions and rewards). How the school operates is a direct product of the perceptions of its staff and thus this information will aid in "painting a picture" of the school.

The second stage consisted interviewing the participants. Previous studies have concentrated on the perceptions of the students and/or the parents (Partington, 2001; Coslin, 1997; Lewis, 2001). As this study aims to develop themes using the knowledge, experience and opinions of those who mete out the consequence on a daily basis and deal with the outcomes, it is imperative to conduct the interviews in such a manner as to encourage truthful replies.

Participants who consent to be interviewed were given the opportunity to view the basic interview schedule prior to the interview in order to have time to consider their responses, with the explanation that this schedule is a guide for the interview and questions may not necessarily be asked in that order. This encouraged more meaningful replies, which, in turn, provided richer data. Spontaneous replies were able to be included by asking clarifying questions. Thus, it was possible to elicit both planned and unplanned responses that aided in gathering meaningful data.

The interviews did not take more than forty-five minutes and permission was sought from each participant to use a tape-recorder to record the interview. The interviews took place at the participant's place of work and at a time that is most suitable for them. The interview itself, although based around the guiding questions, was conducted in a more conversational manner in order to place the participant at ease and to aid rapport.

The type of interview technique that was employed is that of the semi-structured or focused interview (see Appendix A for the starting interview framework). Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell and Alexander (1995) argue that this style of interviewing allows researchers to use both a structured approach as well as a more 'conversational' style in order to answer the research questions. This style of in-depth interviewing ('conversations with a purpose': Burgess, 1984) is appropriate for this study as the purpose is to glean as much information pertaining to the participants' perceptions on Suspensions and Expulsions. The researcher was familiar with

techniques in creating rapport, and was supported by her current employment as a member of the teaching profession.

At the conclusion of the interviews at a school, each participants was given a written transcript of their interview and was invited to make any changes they deem to be necessary.

The third stage of data collection was data analysis and themes emerged. It was intended that a focus group interview was to take place at each site to confirm or refute these themes. Those who had participated in the one-on-one interviews were invited to take part. The raw data itself will not be discussed, but any other information that is revealed during these sessions will also form part of the final analysis.

Data Analysis

As the purpose of this study is to develop themes regarding the perceptions of school staff, it is necessary to choose the most suitable methods of data analysis to ensure that the data is treated thoroughly and the conclusions drawn can be substantiated. Miles and Huberman (1994) developed a model of data analysis (Figure 1) that assists the researcher by providing a visual reference as to how data can be tackled.

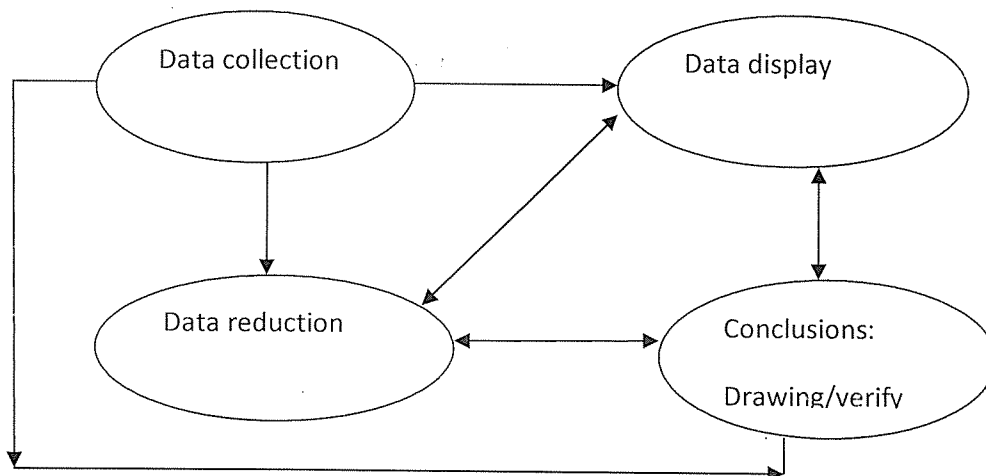


Figure 1: Components of Data Analysis: Interactive Model

From: Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 12)

This model presents analysis as a continuous, iterative process involving four phases that constantly impact upon each other and are carried out simultaneously. These four phases were integral to this study and their application is outlined as follows:

Data collection: As described in the previous section, data for this study was collected by examining the school's suspension statistics; building a profile of the behaviour management at the schools through examining their processes, procedures and alternatives to suspension; and interviewing those who participate in the teaching, pastoral care or disciplinary roles.

Data display: When dealing with the "numbers" data of Suspensions and Expulsions from schools, tables were constructed to facilitate cross-case analysis and, at a glance, to be able to determine the policies and practices regarding behaviour management that a school employs. This assisted in profiling the school and gave context to the perceptions of the practitioners employed by the school.

Interview data and school's behaviour management policies were transcribed firstly into a Word document with margins down either side for future analysis. Inductive coding techniques were employed, aimed at discovering the codes from within the data itself. The reasoning behind not creating a database of codes prior to analysis is to eliminate as much researcher bias as possible. As the researcher currently works with at-risk students, it can be assumed that some bias and preconceptions may infiltrate the process, so taking precautions is logical.

Coding: Codes were written in the left hand margin and memos in the right, in different colours, so as to aid the visual representation of the data. Further into the analysis, these codes were displayed without the transcripts in order to group together like-phenomenon and begin to advance the analysis conceptually to the level where themes can be crystallised. Visual displays such as matrices, concept maps and spread sheets assisted in formulating the concepts as connections are made. Continually re-displaying the data visually assisted in a stronger, more meaningful analysis.

Conclusions – drawing/verifying: As the displays of the data are constantly being refined, it was possible to begin to draw conclusions. These conclusions were verified by looking back at earlier stages of the data analysis, including the raw data, and confirming the significance of the suppositions.

During each of these stages, especially as data was being coded, the researcher checked for consistency by taking random pages of the transcripts or policies and re-coding them. In addition, the central and guiding questions were always displayed so as to reiterate the focus of the study and prevent the analysis from straying.

Limitations and Delimitations

Given that three schools were considered, the themes that emerged from this study were likely to be transferable to other schools and contexts. Thus, it was expected that schools experiencing similar circumstances were able to make their own comparisons. In addition, despite two of the schools being chosen specifically for their piloting of innovative programs, the intention of the study was to compare the beliefs discovered at each school to determine any patterns and themes that may emerge. Therefore, this study could be appropriately described as a preliminary look at teachers' and administrators' beliefs about suspension in the Ugandan context, with a view to further research in this area.

In regards to the selection of the participants, it is possible that, by having those self-select, those who volunteered had strong opinions about suspension. This can be seen both as strength and a weakness of the study. By having representatives of both ends of the spectrum in regards to suspension, all the issues were hopefully raised and this added to the richness of the data. However, it could also be that only those who were strongly for or strongly against volunteer at any one case study school. If strong polarisation occurs, the principal/headmaster/headmistress was approached to identify other possible participants who may hold less extreme positions.

Ethical Considerations

Confidentiality was assured to all participants. All transcripts, notes and audiotapes were stored in a lockable cabinet at the researcher's home. Names of schools were disguised, as names of participants.

Preliminary contact had already been made with both the Mukono and Wakiso District Education Offices. Permission was sought from individual principal/headmaster/headmistress, firstly via email and then a follow-up phone call. The researcher sought to find schools she already had contacts with in order to facilitate access.

When the principal/headmaster/headmistress had consented, permission was sought to address a staff meeting or other gathering to explain the research and ask for volunteer participants. These volunteers were contacted either via email or phone and interview times were finalised.

Consent was obtained from all participants in writing. Each participant received a letter outlining the research and a consent form for their records, as well as the consent form that the researcher will keep.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

In this chapter, raw data from the questionnaire is analyzed and interpreted using Microsoft Excel to come up with the final results of the study.

The study was carried out at Buziga Islamic institute, St. Pius S.S.S and Katuuso Community School in Makindye division. Our sample size was 50 where only 86% of the sample respondents positively and a non-response rate of 0.14.

Analysis of the data

The table below represents the demographic factors of the respondent which includes sex, age, education level and marital status.

Table 1 Demographic factors of the respondent

	Frequency	Percentage frequency
Sex of the respondent		
• Male	23	54.76
• female	19	45.24
Total	42	100
Age of the respondent		
• 20-30 years	16	38.10
• 31-40 years	12	28.57
• 41-50 years	12	28.57
• 51 and above	02	4.76
Total	42	100.00
Marital status		
• Single	17	40.48

• Married	14	33.33
• Widowed	08	19.05
• Divorced	03	7.14
Total	42	100
Level of education		
• Diploma	15	35.71
• Post graduate	08	19.05
• Degree	19	45.24
• Others	00	0
Total	42	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

From the table above, 54.76% of the respondents were male and 45.24% were female.

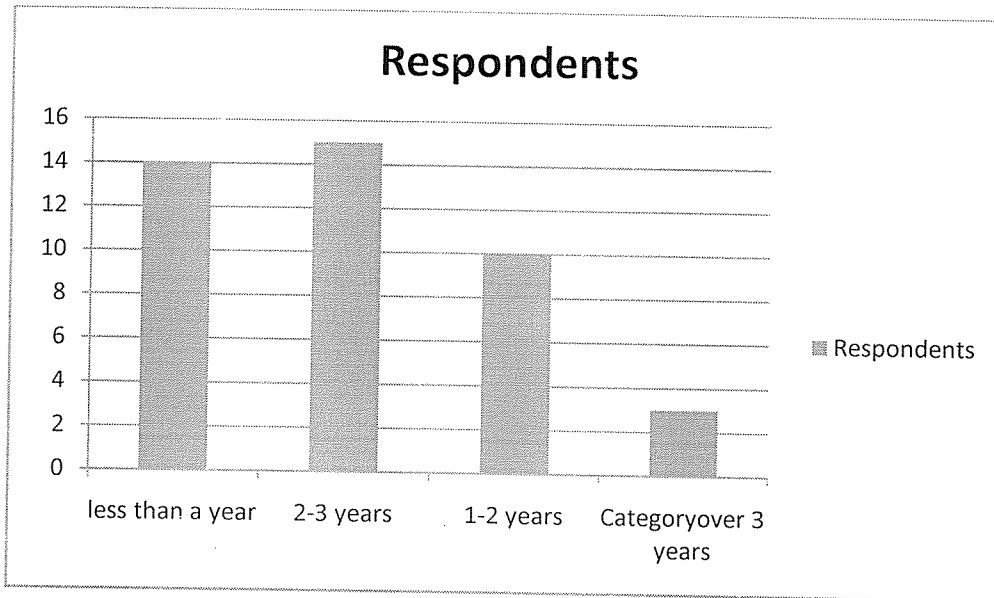
From the data collected, 38.10% are between 20-30 years of age, followed by 28.57% between 31-40 years, 28.57% and 4.76% between the age of 41-50 years and 51 and above respectively.

From the data collected, 17 out of 42 of the respondents are single, followed by 14 who are married and lastly 8 and 3 are widowed and divorced respectively.

From the table, 35.71% of the respondents pursued diplomas, followed by 45.24% who pursued post graduates and lastly 19.05% who pursued degrees in education.

Figure 2 Duration worked in school

The figure below shows the duration respondents worked in the school.

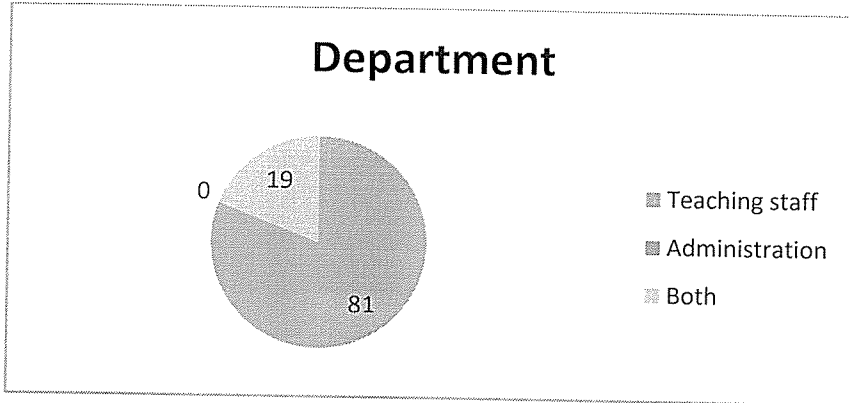


Source: Fieldwork, 2018

From the figure above, 14 out of 42 of the respondents had spent less than a year, 15 out of 42 had spent 2-3 years, 10 out of 42 had spent 1-2 years and lastly 3 out of 42 had spent so far 3 years in the school.

Figure 3 Department

The pie chart represents the different departments and how many of the respondents belonged to each department



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

From the figure 2 above, the biggest percentage of the respondents was teaching staff and the rest were from the administration. None of the respondents belonged to both departments.

Research question 1: what is the impact/ teachers and administrators belief about suspension and expulsion on student behavior?

Here the researcher wanted to find out the impact/ beliefs of teachers and administrators on suspensions and expulsions. In this case, impacts are categorized as impact 1,2,3,4 and 5.

Impact 1: Suspension leads to good behavior of the punished behavior.

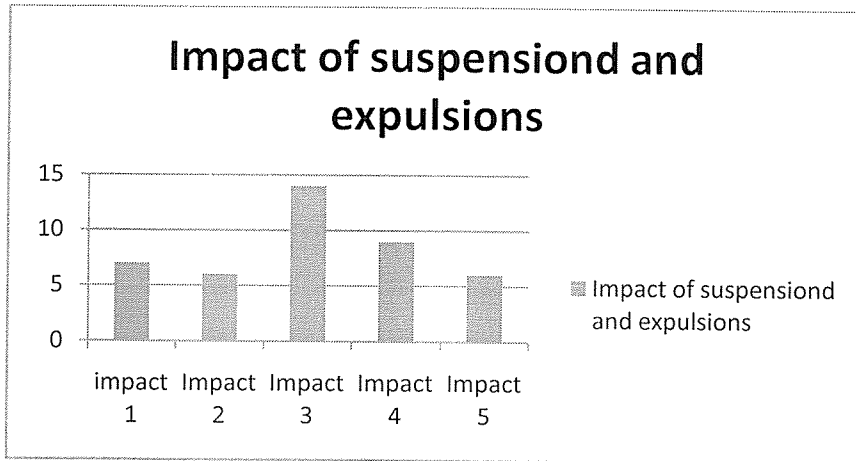
Impact 2: Suspensions and expulsions worsen a student's behavior

Impact 3: Teachers are hated for making such decision.

Impact 4: Suspensions have a positive impact on student general behavior

Impact 5: The student's reputation is built positively due to suspensions and expulsions.

Figure 4 the graph below shows the impact of suspensions and expulsions as seen by teachers and administrators



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

From the figure above, impact 3 which is teachers are hated for making such decisions is the highest with 14 out of 42 respondents. This is followed by impact 4, that is 9 out of 42 said suspensions and expulsions have a great positive impact on general behavior.

From the figure, 7 out of 42 said suspension leads to good behavior of the punished student. 6 out of 42 said suspensions and expulsion worsen a student's behavior and the school's reputation is built positively.

Research question 2: What are the teachers and administrators perception on suspension and expulsion?

In this section, the researcher looks at teachers and administrators perception on the use of suspension and expulsions as a behavior modification tool.

Table 2 the table represents perceptions of teachers and administrators on suspensions and expulsions

Teachers perception	Frequency	Percentage frequency
Suspension and expulsion are good behavior modifying tools	4	9.52
They justify the wrong the student did	6	14.29
Promotes good social and moral behavior	10	23.81
They allow the rest of the students respect the rules and regulations of the school by example	15	35.71
Promotes enmity between the students punished and the teachers	7	16.67
TOTAL	42	100

Source, Fieldwork 2018

According to the table, 35.75% of the Teachers and administrators believe that suspensions allow the rest of the students to respect rules and regulations by example, 23.81% believe it promotes good moral and social behavior, 16.67% say it promotes enmity between the students punished and the teachers, 14.29% believe it justifies the wrong a student did and lastly 9.52% believe they are behavior modifying tools.

Research question 3: What do teachers and administrators believe are the student's perception?

In this section, the researcher seeks to find out what teachers think are is perception of students on suspension and expulsion. As a researcher, the perception was categorized as below;

Perception 1- Students think it's a brutal and malicious action

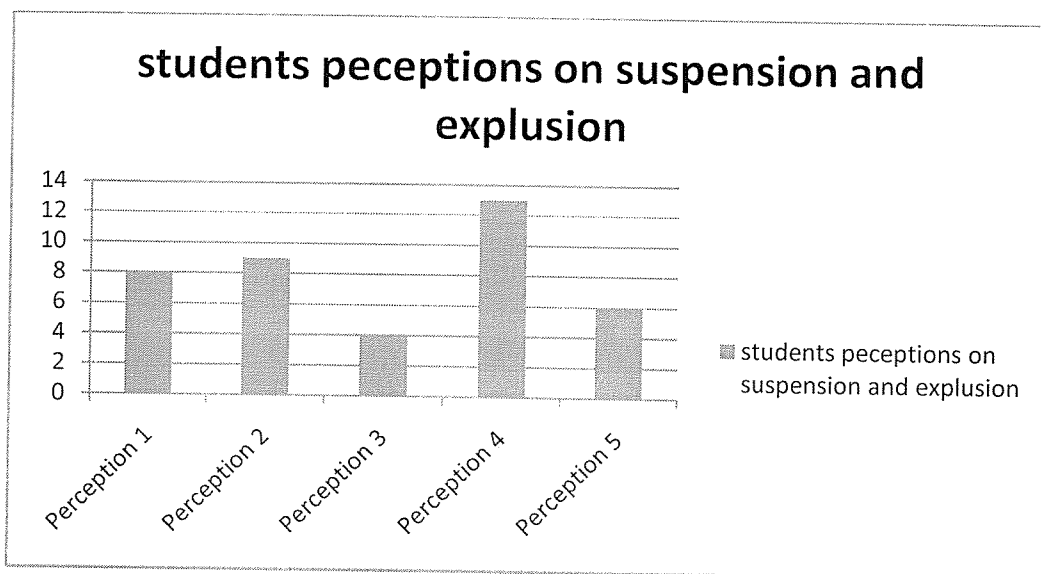
Perception 2- Most students believe it's a way administrator and teachers get back at them

Perception 3- Some students believe they are not being given a fair hearing

Perception 4- Some students believe the school is strict

Perception 5- Some students believe suspensions are better than expulsions

Figure 5 the figure shows students perceptions on suspension and expulsion



Source, Fieldwork 2018

From the figure, 13 out of 42 of the respondents believe students think the school is strict, 11 out of 42 say students think it's a way administrators can get back at them, 8 out of 42 believe it's a brutal and malicious action, 6 of the teachers say students think suspensions are better than expulsions and lastly 4 out of 42 of the respondents believe students are not being given a fair hearing.

Research question 4: What do parents and teachers believe are the parents' perceptions on suspension and expulsion?

This section looks at what teachers and administrators believe are the parent's perceptions on suspension and expulsions.

Table 3 the table represents teachers and administrator’s belief on parents perceptions on suspensions and expulsions

Parent perception	Frequency	Percentage frequency
Some believe the school is strict	10	23.81
They believe it’s the rules and regulations at work hence teachers and administrators have no hand	12	28.57
It creates tension between the school and community	6	14.29
They believe it’s very costly to a parent	9	21.43
Some think such crimes are as a result of influence hence the school should be considerate	5	11.90
TOTAL	42	100.00

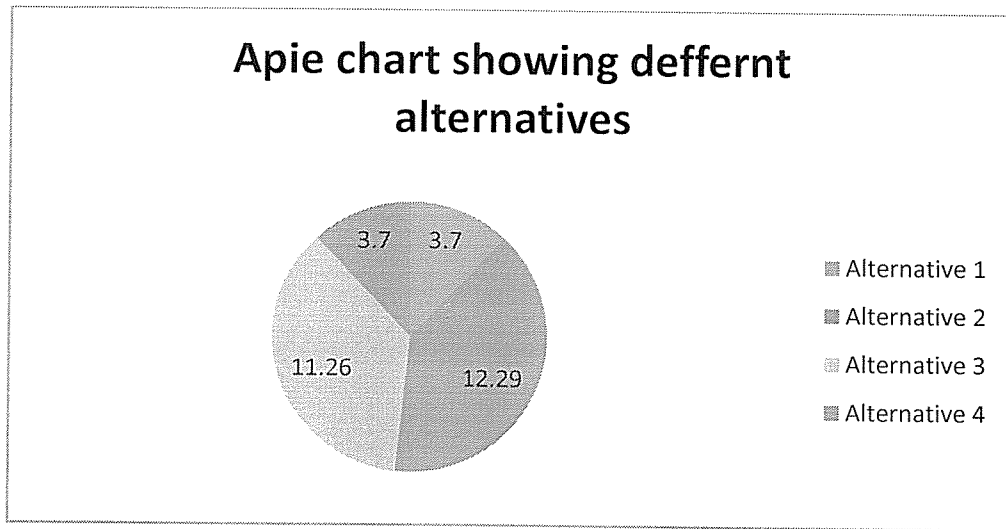
Source, Fieldwork

From the table above, 28.57% of the respondents said most parents believe it’s the rules and regulations hence the teachers and administrators have no hand, 23.81% of the teachers say parents believe the school is so strict, 21.43% of the respondents believe its costly to a parent, 14.29% of the respondents believe it creates tension between the school and community and lastly 11.9% of the teachers believe parents think such crimes are as a result of influence hence the school should be considerate.

Research question 5; what do teachers and administrators believe are the possible alternatives?

Alternatives of suspensions and expulsions as given by the teachers and administrators

Figure 6 the figure represents different alternatives as chosen by teachers and administrators



Source, Fieldwork 2018

In this section, the researcher looks at the different alternatives as given by teachers and administrators categorized as;

Alternative 1- Alternatives can be in form of labor in school compounds i.e. digging, slashing, picking rubbish etc.

Alternative 2- Depends on the degree of discipline

Alternative 3- Expulsions have no alternative while suspensions do

Alternative 4- The punishments are already in the rules and regulations manual hence no alternative

Alternative 5- Depends on age, class and past records of the student

From the figure above, 29% of the respondents believe the other alternative would be in form of labor in school compounds like digging, slashing, picking rubbish, 26% of the respondents said it depends on the age, class and past records of the student, 26% of the teachers and administrators said the punishments are already in the rules and regulations manual hence no

alternatives, 12% of the respondents believe it depends on the degree of discipline and lastly 7% of the teachers believe expulsions have no alternative while suspensions do.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND AREAS OF FURTHER STUDY

Summary of findings

In this section, the researcher summaries whatever was discussed in the analysis following the given objectives and research questions. From the findings, the highest impact of suspensions and expulsions as discussed by the teachers and administrators is that teachers are hated for making such decisions which was (33.33%)14 out of 42 of the respondents and the least impact is suspensions worsen a student's behavior(14.29%). In addition to the findings, the highest percentage (35.71%) of teachers believes that suspensions and expulsions allow students follow rules and regulations of the school by example, based on teachers belief, most of the students believe the school is strict(13out of 42). Part of the findings on parent perceptions is that many believe it's the rules and regulations hence the teachers have no hand with the highest percentage of 28.57%. And lastly, the researcher took time and analyzed the alternatives given as per suspension and expulsion and labor in school compound such as digging, slashing was chosen with the highest percentage of 29%.

Conclusion

All in all, teachers in most cases are hated for making certain decisions with regard to suspensions and expulsions. In the process, the relationship between teachers and students affect is not good as proven by the study. In addition, many students would prefer being giving an alternative in forms of labor other than suspensions.

AREAS OF FURTHER STUDY

From the research in question, the research seems to have exhausted the objectives leading to the suspensions and expulsion however this has only opened areas for further studies within the same field. The aims of the study won't be met only by ending at these conclusions however they can only be exhausted further is the following areas below have been looked into leading to a better decisions by teachers, good relationships between teachers and students and perhaps giving better options that can fairly replace suspensions and expulsions.

With this in mind, I would like to give future a starting point that will enable them not only build more research topics but to also make this system researchers in secondary schools better and equitable for the teachers, parents and the students them selves.

Below are the four areas from which reaserch topics and questions can be built for further study and also from this very thesis shall a problem statement and literature review be constructed;

- Why are teachers hated for making decisions leading to expulsions and suspensions at school?
- How the relationships between teachers and punished students affect students performances at school.
- Assessing methods of punishments at school that should improve a students' behavior.
- And lastly and not least, fnding alternatives to punish indispline at school as opposed to the usual suspensions and expulsions.

With the above research questions, I would love to wish any latter researcher a complete and wonderful research in respect to the above mission statements. These will make our theses promote a better learning environment and relationships at school that will expontially improve students performances and displine.

With the above, I would love to wish everyone a wonderful moment.

Thanks and best regards.

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Appendix A

Letter to School after initial contact

Dear

Further to our recent conversation, I am writing to further explain the research I were conducting on teachers' and administrators' beliefs about the rationale for and impact of suspension. This research was submitted as a thesis to the Kampala International University Faculty of Education at Kampala Campus.

The title of this research was: "Teachers and Administrators perceptions on student Suspensions and Expulsions."

The research is designed to explore the beliefs of teachers and administrators, especially in light of changes some schools are making to their Behavior Management policies.

The research will take place in three stages. Firstly, I would like to collect data from the school regarding the number of Suspensions and Expulsions that have occurred over one school year, the number of students suspended, the number of students who have been suspended more than once, what students have been suspended for, the socio-economic standing of the school's population, the ethnicity of the students, the alternatives to suspension offered and finally a copy of the school's rules and regulations. This will help me build an accurate picture of the school and will allow me to contextualize the findings.

The second stage will involve one-on-one interviews with volunteers from your staff. In particular, I would like to be able to interview a staff member from at least five of the eight learning areas, pastoral care staff (such as team and/or year leaders), Student Services staff and staff who are able to suspend students (such as the Deputy in charge of Student Services).

As mentioned earlier, I would also like to have the opportunity to interview you.

During the third stage I will invite back interested parties to a focus session where I will present my findings. The participants will then have the opportunity to refute or confirm these as well as give me feedback.

It must be emphasized that no individual or school were directly identified in the publishing stage.

If you have any questions you wish to discuss, my contact details are:

Regards,

Nsiimire Viollah

.....

(Researcher)

(Supervisor)

Appendix B: Letter of consent for participants.

I, _____ have read the accompanying information and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research, understanding that I may withdraw at any time without prejudice.

I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided my or other identifying information is not used.

I agree to have my interviews taken. YES NO (Please circle).

Participant / Authorized representative Date

Appendix C: Questionnaires

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS, STUDENTS AND PARENTS OF KATUSO COMMUNITY SCHOOL SCHOOL,

Dear Respondent,

I am NSIIMIRE VIOLLAH a student of Kampala International University – KIU carrying out study on the teachers’ and administrators’ perceptions on student Suspensions and Expulsions and expulsions. The purpose of the study is to assess the beliefs of teachers and administrators towards suspension and expulsion of students using Katuso Community School located in Makindye as a case study. I therefore kindly request you to spare a few minutes off your busy schedules to fill this questionnaire to enable me accomplish this task. Your honest and sincere responses shall be highly appreciated for academic purposes and shall be treated with utmost confidentiality. I thank you very much for your cooperation.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements about your school by indicating with a tick in the box of your choice. Use the scale below on each of the sections and indicate on the answer sheet next to the number of the corresponding statement the number which best represents your answer.

Apply a tick where applicable using the following key.

Section a: background information on the respondent (please tick in the appropriate box)

- Sex: Male Female
- Age: (a) 20 – 30 years (b) 31 – 40 years
 (c) 41 – 50 years (d) 51 – and above
- marital status
 (a) Single (b) Married

(c) Separated (d) Divorced

- level of Education
 - Diploma (c) Degree
 - Post graduate (d) others Specify.....
- Duration worked in the school
 - Less than a year (c) 1 -2 years
 - 2 – 3 years (d) Over 3 years
- Which department do you belong to:
 - Teaching staff
 - Administrators
 - Both

Section B: Impact of teachers and administrators belief about suspension and Expulsion on student behaviour

SN	
1	Suspension lead to good moral behavior
2	The suspensions and expulsions worsen a student's behavior
3	Teachers and administrators are hated for making such decisions
4	Suspensions and expulsions have a great positive impact on school general behavior
5	The school's reputation is built positively due to suspensions and expulsions

Section C: perceptions of teachers and Administrators on the use of suspension and expulsions as a behaviour modification tool

SN	
1	Suspensions and expulsions are good behavior modifying tools
2	They justify the wrong the student did
3	Promotes good social and moral behavior
4	The allow others to respect the rules and regulations of the school by example
5	Promotes enmity between the students punished and the teachers/administrators

Section D: what teachers and Administrators believe are the students perceptions on suspensions and expulsions

SN	
1	Students think it's a brutal and malicistic action
2	Most students believe it's the way teachers and administrators get back at students whom they hate
3	Some students believe they are being singled out and not given a fair hearing
4	Some students believe the school is so strict
5	Students believe suspensions are better than expulsions

Section E: what teachers and administrators believe are the parents/communities' perceptions on suspensions and expulsion of students

SN	
1	Some believe the school is so strict
2	They think it's the school rules and regulations at work hence teachers and administrators have no hand
3	They believe it's too much of a punishment and there are other ways of punishing an indiscipline
4	It creates tension between the school and the community or parents
5	They believe it's very costly to a parent
6	Some think such crimes that lead to expulsions and suspensions are as a result of influence hence the school should be considerate
7	Suspensions and expulsions affect the parent more than a student

Section F: what teachers and administrators believe are the possible alternatives to suspensions and expulsions.

SN	
1	Alternatives can be in form of labor in school compounds i.e. digging, slashing, picking rubbish etc.
2	Depends on the degree of indiscipline
4	Expulsions have no alternative while suspensions may have
5	The punishments are already in the rules and regulations manual hence no alternatives
7	Depends on the age, class and past records of the student

Thank You for Your Time