

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

FACTORS INFLUENCING DISCIPLINE AT GHANA NATIONAL  
COLLEGE, CAPE COAST, GHANA

CLASS NO.	
ACCESSION NO. 234061	
CAT. CHECKED	FINAL CHECK

BY

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Dissertation Submitted

to the Institute of Educational Planning and Administration of the  
Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, in Partial Fulfilment  
of the Requirement for the Award of Master of Education Degree in  
Educational Administration

FEBURARY 2007

## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

*I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere*

Candidate's Signature



Date 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2007

Name Mercy Mensah

### Supervisor's Declaration

*I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast*

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13-04-2007

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated factors influencing discipline in Ghana National College. It captured the concept of discipline, the forms, causes and remedies to disciplinary problems. The study sought to provide a framework for which senior secondary schools could structure out their own disciplinary codes of conduct and enforce them through which a pattern of values such as respect, obedience, honesty, truthfulness, kindness, punctuality, patriotism, determination and hardwork, courage, concern for others will be inculcated in students.

The study was a descriptive survey. Simple random sampling was employed in selecting a total of 220 respondents; comprising 200 students and 20 teachers for the study. The sample was drawn from a population of 2,500 students and 84 teachers from Ghana National College, Cape Coast. Two sets of questionnaires were used to solicit opinion of respondents on the topic under investigation.

The findings indicate that, respondents differed on the forms, causes and remedies to disciplinary problems in schools, but admitted that discipline is necessary for excellent academic work. On the causes of disciplinary problems, both exogenous and endogenous factors were identified. Some vital recommendations were made based on the research findings. It is imperative that Good conducts exhibited by students should be acknowledged and rewarded accordingly. Enrollment should be kept at levels that will make monitoring effective. Performance appraisal should be used to audit the profession. Parents must collaborate with the school authorities to ensure a positive ethos for academic work. Structures for early detection and monitoring of students' misconducts should be put in place. Guidance and counseling units in the secondary schools should be strengthened.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Undoubtedly, undertaking a study of this magnitude is quite tasky. Though this study was a lonesome task, it would not have been completed successfully without the immeasurable contribution of other people. I therefore wish to recognise the complementary effort of such people.

I am profoundly grateful to Mr. S.K. Atakpa, my principal supervisor who shepherded me through this exercise. His invaluable guidance, accommodating, objective and constructive criticisms which played a leading role in the completion of this work is highly appreciated.

I register my heartfelt gratitude to my dear husband Mr. Seth Gordon Mensah through whom I have come to understand that God's blessings are hidden in human disappointments and sorrows embedded in patiently waiting beyond what the ordinary human strength can endure.

I am also indebted to Emmanuel and Theodore Mensah who have been the only physical motivating factor for my long years of waiting which gave birth to this project.

Benjamin Nii Odjidja deserves a special commendation for his contribution towards the successful completion of this research.

Above all, my highest gratitude goes to the Lord God Almighty who has sustained and anchored me throughout the programme and helped me to overcome my fears through my faith.

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to the Most High God who has been my sustainer and great providence

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page	
DECLARATION	ii	
ABSTRACT	iii	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v	
DEDICATION	vi	
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii	
LIST OF TABLES	ix	
CHAPTER		
ONE	INTRODUCTION	1
	Background of the Study	1
	Statement of the Problem	12
	Purpose of Study	13
	Research Questions	13
	Significance of the Study	13
	Delimitation	14
	Organisation of the Study	15
TWO	LITERATURE REVIEW	16
	The Concept of Discipline	16
	Forms of Indiscipline	18
	Causes of Indiscipline	20
	Teacher-induced Indiscipline	21

	Page
Student-induced indiscipline	22
School-induced Indiscipline	23
Home-Parent-induced Indiscipline	25
Effects of Indiscipline on Teaching and Learning	26
Attempt at Solving Disciplinary Problems	27
Summary of Related Literature	34
<b>THREE</b> <b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>35</b>
Research Design	36
Population	37
Sample	37
Instrument	37
Pilot Testing	38
Procedure for Data Collection	38
Data Analysis	39
<b>FOUR</b> <b>DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION</b>	<b>40</b>
Sex Distribution of the Population	40
Age Distribution of the Population	40
Academic Background of Teachers	41
Acts of Indiscipline	42
Causes of Indiscipline	50
Remedies for School Disciplinary Problems	50

	Page
FIVE	
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND	
RECOMMENDATIONS	65
Summary	65
Summary of Findings	67
Conclusions	72
Recommendations for Practice	74
Recommendations for Further Studies	83
REFERENCES	84
APPENDIX A	
Questionnaire for Students	90
APPENDIX B	
Questionnaire for Teachers	95



## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Age Distribution	40
2	Academic Background of Teachers	41
3	Acts of Indiscipline	42
4	Other Acts of Indiscipline on the Part of Students	46
5	Common Acts of Indiscipline on the Part of Teachers	47
6	Causes of Indiscipline	51
7	Social Causes of Indiscipline	53
8	Remedies for Disciplinary Problems	61

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background to the Study**

This section of the study deals with the background to the study, which sets the tone for the research. The state of discipline in the country and for that matter in the secondary schools is examined. Statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study are also looked at.

Discipline as a “topic” in schools has always featured prominently in any tabled discussion on education amongst connoisseurs of education such as administrators, curriculum experts, teachers, parents and students themselves. It is a highly emotive topic. Media reports of violent incidents in schools make front page headlines and the impression is created of young people out of control. This is so because the school interprets the life of the society as was aptly put by Sir Percy Nunn “A nation’s schools are the organs of life, whose special function is to consolidate its spiritual strength, maintain its historic continuity to secure its past achievement and to guarantee its future for this reason, the school like any other social set up requires rules and regulations, or limits for the effective functional operation of its members”

Lack of discipline in Ghanaian schools is a hydra-headed problem, which has raised eyebrows among parents, teachers, administrators and students because

of the negative repercussions it has on the students' own Code of conduct and the society at large. No one would want to dare the ability of morally deprived educated individuals to assemble as bandits and hoodlums to wreck society's peace and security. It is in the light of this that society considers students' lawlessness, chaos, unjustified demonstrations, sexual misconduct, drug abuse, insurrection, drunkenness' and gross disrespect for the elderly as an imminent threat to social cohesion. Indiscipline has dire consequences for economic activity and national security and therefore deserves to be nipped in the bud before it degenerates into a canker without cure.

The consequences of indiscipline in the society is no longer an idea but a reality. In an interview conducted by Samuel Kyei-Boateng for the Mirror, Nana Kwame Korang (Vice-President, Brong Ahafo Regional House of Chiefs), lamented *currently, our roads are not safe for traveling due to the activities of reckless drivers and armed robbers who inflict on passengers and their victims all forms of pain and humiliation. It has got to the point where honest and hard working people are not safe in their homes because of the menace of armed robbery*

Our towns and cities are inundated with filth and prone to fire and flood because of undisciplined behaviour of indiscriminate disposal of garbage and flouting of building regulations. The increase in white-collar crimes and other corrupt practices in private and government business can be traced to the lack of discipline in the society.

No one can claim immunity against the consequences of an undisciplined society. Perhaps this is why Ghanaians have bemoaned the effrontery with which the youth of late exhibit their repugnant characters irrespective of whose ox is gourd.

Indiscipline in the Ghanaian society has become so endemic and has permeated all spheres of life including the school system and that is why the issue has assumed national prominence. Nana Kwame Korang (Vice President, Brong Ahafo Regional House of Chiefs) counsels, "Something drastic needs to be done as many of the youth in our educational institutions are succumbing to peer pressure and are engaging in occultism, pushing of drugs and resulting to armed robbery and prostitution. Indeed they are being aided in these nefarious activities through the screening of illicit films and footages on television and in the Internet cafés"

So alarming is the issue of indiscipline that the subject is no longer a topic of pastoral sermons on podiums alone but also on political platforms. The vice president of Ghana, Alhaji Aliu Mahama expressed his concern and fear that "the country's survival as an orderly society is under threat. "it seems that we are at the neck-breaking speed to the land of chaos" *the Ghanaian Times* August, Friday 2, 2002 p 1. The hitherto peaceful, safe, orderly and tranquil campuses are gradually transforming into havens of lawlessness, criminal hideouts, disrespectful students and incubators of occultic practitioners, drug addicts and other disruptive practices.

Records indicate that some where in late 2001, a student of Adisadel college Cape Coast, one Atsu Kudoto in the company of others broke into the police regional armoury at the Regional Police Headquarters in Cape Coast and stole quantities of ammunitions which they attempted to sell but were apprehended. As if that was not enough, in February 18 2002, *The Daily Graphic* report of a student of Ghana National College, by name Selorm Kudwo who jumped from the first floor of the boys dormitory block injuring himself when he was asked to attend prep by his house master. This incident sparked off a demonstration leading to the destruction of the school and teachers' personal properties. So severe was the devastation that the Cape Coast police had to intervene to restore order. The school was subsequently closed down temporarily.

Also, *Daily Graphic* Thursday February 19<sup>th</sup> 2002 edition reported an arrest effected by the Kumasi Police of a number of students of Kumasi Academy for destroying asserts of the school. Their reason was that the headmistress had vetoed and placed injunction on the school's participation in the inter-schools sports festival.

In this state of affairs both the students and the teachers cannot discharge their duties (teaching and learning), as expected, thereby trouncing the very purpose for which schools were established (i.e. to train the youth to discharge their duties of citizenship properly and as aptly reiterated by Bowman (1983) that "classroom is a dramatic arena first and a setting of intellectual discourse, second, it is also a human arena where in the inter-personal dealings of students and

instructors –many of them emotional, subtle and symbolic-strongly affect morale, motivation and learning” (p.9)

While this state of affairs is causing a lot of consternation among the top echelons of the society, it appears the students just enjoy being disobedient defiant and obdurate. The case of indiscipline cannot therefore be adjourned.

The question marks are still hanging on the root causes. Some sections of the society have bewailed the wholesale and indiscriminate importation, publishing and screening of morally wrong films, magazines, songs, radio programmes and newspapers by our print and electronic media houses as contributing significantly to the surge in disciplinary problems in our second cycle institutions.

Drug abuse, copying of foreign culture, poverty, get-rich-quick attitude on the part of Ghanaians especially the youth as well as peer pressure at the school and also screening of pornographic films with criminal background on television and the internet are major contributing factors to indiscipline in the Ghanaian society . . . Nana Kwame Korang (Vice-President, Brong Ahafo Regional House of Chiefs).

Others lay the blame on the doorsteps of irresponsible parenting

Indiscipline with its attendant social and criminal activities are on the increase because parents do not have time to bring their children up the way they should. Husbands who have the

upper-hand in inculcating discipline in their children leave this onerous responsibility to their wives who cannot discharge the duty single-handedly Mr Frank Adjapong (Contractor, Sunyani)

Yet still, there are others who apportion the blame to the teachers and educational authorities for their inept attitude and laxity towards the enforcement of school rules and regulations thereby opening the floodgates for unacceptable behaviours in the school

Other observers blame historical antecedents as being responsible for the current situation of indiscipline

I attribute the high incidence of indiscipline that has permeated the Ghanaian society to the 1981 revolution that empowered the junior ranks of the military to subject their senior officers to all sorts of maltreatment including assaults and the shaving of hairs with broken bottles Today, most of the children who saw and were encouraged by the atrocities the junior officers meted out to their colleagues have grown up to be stubborn and are committing all sorts of crimes including drug abuse, armed robberies, reckless driving on our roads, disrespect for authority and the use of foul language Mr Kwame Twumasi-Awuah (Municipal Chief Executive, Sunyani)

To remedy the situation and bring back sanity, dismissal, spanking, responsible parenting, censoring of exotic films, laws on dressing, harsher punishment for indisciplined conducts etc have been recommended. The diversity in the views espoused by commentators on the issue points to one direction; that the issue of the meaning of discipline lacks consensus among stakeholders. The reasons are obvious.

Discipline is a moral and an ethical issue, which are subject to a society's norms, values, religion and philosophy of life. For this reason an action that is considered wrong in one society may not hold for all other societies. An American juvenile could tag an action by his father as "stupid" without any indignation from his father. In most Ghanaian communities, such an affront would have been met with swift condemnation and retribution ranging from the child having to render an unqualified apology to the father or in an extreme case, offer some bottle of schnapps to appease the father.

The evolution of societal norms on discipline has left many confused about the correct meaning of discipline. Society has used "discipline" and "punishment" interchangeably for years and this equation of discipline with punishment appears to be the nucleus of the debate.

Hoover (1968) sees the word discipline as being derived from the word "disciple", meaning a follower or student of an accepted leader. In early civilization, discipline implied teaching or helping people to grow or achieve their aim. Later, it became associated with blind conformity.



Adesina (1990) describes discipline to mean the “readiness or ability to respect authority and observe conventional or established laws of the society” in a school setting. Adentwi (1991) says discipline is “the prevalence of order within the setting where teaching and learning takes place with the minimum misbehaviour on the part of the teacher and the learner for the purpose of attaining objectives of the school.

The Cambridge International Dictionary (CID) defines discipline as training, which produces obedience or self-control often in the forms of rules and punishment, if these are broken, or the obedience or self-control produced by this training.

The implications of these definitions are

- a) There are short term and long term goals (Adesina-respect, Adentwi-obedience and CID-obedience or self-control) to be achieved
- b) That the short term goal of discipline is to control behavior while explaining what is appropriate behavior on a daily basis. However, the long term goal is to reach self-discipline and to help students take responsibility for their own behavior. This goal of a well-disciplined individual helps create a harmonious society.
- c) Also, it is evident that there is an “authority” and there is a person the student must submit.

In the light of this, whenever there is conflict of interest between the “authority” and the student, then disciplinary problems emerge and to the extent that the subject rebels or disobeys authority and rule, then the individual is said to

be indisciplined. In the School situation, the "authority" refers to the teachers and school administrators while the "subjects" are the students who are to submit to the rules and regulations to create a conducive atmosphere devoid of pandemonium for teaching and learning to take place. For the purpose of this research, the definitions of the Cambridge International dictionary will be adopted to augment the other definitions.

All groups of people in a country have certain moral trademarks which differentiate them from other groups. These include beliefs, art, morals, customs, knowledge and any other capabilities and habits required by people as an ethnic group. These constitute the culture of the people. These peculiar traits are transmitted to succeeding generations through the home and the larger society, and more especially through formal and informal education in the nation's schools.

In Ghana, there has always existed a succinct code of conduct for young people. Respect and obedience to parents and elders constitute the life-lessons for this informal education at home. In the past, these desired qualities were inculcated in the children through careful oral instructions by the parents and the practical life of the elders.

Children who dared any deviation from the accepted code of behaviour were subjected to all forms of corrective measures, such as scolding, corporal punishment, public ridicule and in serious cases, expulsion from the community. The whole society joined in the training of the child. The distinctive mark of the Ghanaian society was therefore clearly seen in the proverbial respect for age and

family obligation, obedience and good behavior, which culminated in a happy, well defined, and harmonious communal life

The communal spirit with which the Ghanaian child was socialized is astutely cloaked in words of wisdom such as

- a) "An apprentice doesn't know about masterhood but a master knows about apprenticeship"
- b) "If you refuse an advice of an elder you will walk until sunset"
- c) "Until the rotten tooth is pulled out, the mouth must chew with caution"
- d) "The cock belongs to one person, but when it crows, it wakes the whole village"

Thus, taboos sanctions and puberty rites succeeded in molding the morals of the youth

Time was in this country when the youth could be counted on to vacate their seats for the elderly, help them with their luggage, stop any tomfoolery when the elderly show up and greet them as a symbol of respect. At present, all these have become evasive and memories of past glories

Today, it appears the Ghanaian society has lost its clout on discipline and our colonial rulers cannot be completely absolved of their role in the current state of affairs. As the Europeans pitched their strength against each other for fame and place in history, the need to have colonies to supply badly needed industrial raw materials and precious metals became crucial. This dire need saw Europeans descend on Africa which had these resources in abundance.

This scramble for Africa saw the arrival of the Portuguese, Dutch, British, and the Danes into Ghana with their cultures. They immediately waged a psychological warfare on the culture of the indigenes in the country so that they could rule them for long and exploit their resource.

Traditional African culture which ensured discipline and proper behavior was condemned as absurd, superstitious and pagan. This verbal assault on the Ghanaian culture marked the beginning of a break down in traditional virtues. Though formal education, a hybrid Ghanaian was produced who appeared to be consigned to live between two worlds – His African past and European future. A state of identity crisis in which he was completely detached from the traditions of his people and yet could not be classified as a European emerged. The new Ghanaian was taught to assimilate the Whiteman's culture inferiority complex, was created in him.

Incessant bombardment of the Ghanaian society with foreign cultures resulted in the creation of a multicultural society in which the youth appear to patronize exotic cultures. As the Ghanaian society became multicultural resulting from external influences, disciplinary problems began to winch their ugly heads and the situation has not shown any sign of abating. Rather, indiscipline has assumed more complexity and sophistication that warrants immediate attention if the situation is to be reversed.

### Statement of the Problem

Second grade institutions are set up to train children to respect school authorities, to observe school rules and regulations and to maintain an established standard of behavior in the society, to enhance human resource development for economic growth and development. Central to the attainment of this goal is a disciplined student who is to be educated. On the contrary, the behavior among school children and the youth has been on the ascendancy in recent years.

The unruly behaviour among students has given cause to many people including the writer to wonder how the objectives of education can be attained while students continue to absent themselves from class, seat during class test or examination, insult or use abusive words on teachers, steal from colleagues, students, drink liquor, smoke and indulge in other forms of delinquency which are believed to have detrimental effects on their lives and academic performance.

Very often, teachers, parents and students accuse each other for being the prime culprit of the causes of indiscipline in schools.

It is in the interest of the researcher to find out whether teachers, parents, school administrators and students think alike of the natural causes and solutions of school disciplinary problems. If they do, what are the elements of a 'mirage' in their perceptions? If they do not, what are the elements of a 'divergence'?

Finally, what strategies could be put in place to address the teachers, students and parents for effective discipline in schools in the country?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to find out the opinion of the respondents on the factors that influence discipline. Specifically, the study attempts to find out the following:

- a) The meaning of discipline
- b) The perception of students and teachers about acts of indiscipline
- c) The effects of disciplinary problems in the school
- d) The suggested solutions to help minimize the disciplinary problems

### **Research Questions**

The study attempts to find answers to the following questions

1. What is the conception of teachers and students of Ghana National College about discipline?
2. What kind of behaviours are considered as indiscipline at Ghana National College?
3. How do teachers and students of Ghana National College perceive the causes of indiscipline at school?
4. What are the views of teachers and students of Ghana National College on maintaining discipline in the school?

### **Significance of the Study**

It is my hope that the findings from this research will help Board of Directors, the school administrators and disciplinary committee members of

Ghana National College and other second cycle institutions in formulating school codes of conduct.

Also, it will be a valuable source of information for policy makers in education (Ministry of Education) in the general behavioural assessment of students of Ghana National College and other second cycle institutions. Besides, the study will help create the necessary awareness about the need for stakeholders to pay particular attention to the problems raised in this study in an effort to provide effective and lasting solutions to disciplinary problems at Ghana National College and other secondary schools.

Also, parents who access this text will find it useful in understanding the supportive role that they have to play to augment the efforts of school authorities in guaranteeing discipline on our campuses. It can also serve as a reference material for other researchers on the nature, causes and remedies for indiscipline in secondary schools and other related topics.

#### **Delimitation**

The study was conducted in one educational institution, namely Ghana National College. The researcher believes that the study will yield a legitimate and reliable result that will help stakeholders of Ghana National College in one way or the other.

### **Organization of the Study**

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one focuses on the introduction, which comprises the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation and the organization of the study.

Chapter two is devoted to the review of related literature on the meaning of discipline, the forms and effects of indiscipline, the causes of disciplinary problems and the suggested remedies.

Chapter three describes the research design, the population, the sample and sampling techniques used, the instrument for collecting data and data collection procedure.

Chapter four deals with the presentation and analysis of both primary and main data.

Chapter five is the synopsis of the study, the research findings, conclusions and recommendations for practice based on the findings of the study.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section of the study deals with the review of related literature and concentrates on the concept of discipline, forms of disciplinary problems, the causes and the means of resolving disciplinary problems.

#### **The Concept of Discipline**

Discipline as a concept defies an all embracing definition. The conceptual framework that each scholar subscribes to depends on the philosophical views espoused by the individual, which is invariably a function of the individual's values, ethics, religion and society of origin.

Baumrind (1991) identifies the authoritarian, authoritative and permissive concepts of discipline. She explains that the "authoritarian" concept refers to the old-fashioned strictness. It follows the "traditional" view point that obedience is viewed as a virtue and conflicts are met with punishment.

The authoritative concept like the authoritarian, believe in firm enforcement of rules but give the children the reason behind the decisions and permit verbal give and take but the final decision belongs to the authority.

Lastly, the permissive concept allows for much freedom as possible and the authority sees their role to the subject as complementary and not antagonistic.

Baumrind (1991) found that the authoritarian and the permissive concepts produce children who are less motivated to achieve and less independent in contrast to the authoritative concept where the children were responsible, assertive, self-reliant and friendly. Baumrind (1991) subscribes to the authoritative concept:

This is supported by Noss (1964) who said "there must be a personal educator exerting influence, however gently and unobtrusively he may do it, otherwise there is no education, no discipline" (p.169). He however cautions that in trying to modify the natural development of the educand, the educator must be careful not to produce a copy of his imperfect self.

The ethical nature of discipline has generated a lot of definitional problems among writers and commentators on discipline. However, there is a consensus on discipline pertaining to a set standard to which educators must submit:

According to Amartey- Amah (1988) discipline is the way of imposing rules and regulations by which control is gained as a result of enforcing obedience or order. Thus, Amartey Amah perceived discipline as bringing the behaviour of people in close conformity to set standards of behaviour represented by rules and norms.

To Shertzer and Stone (1979), discipline is a means of removing the faultiness in the personalities of individuals and encouraging enlightened self-directed behaviour. By this definition, emphasis is placed on discipline which would instill responsible behaviour in the individual.

To Kounin (1971), "discipline is a high rate of work involvement and a low rate of deviancy in academic settings" (p. 11).

This means that if a student participated fully in academic work, he or she can be described as being disciplined. It is clear from these definitions that discipline is defined by

- a) Reference to the entire educational or training process designed to lead to correct understanding habits and behaviour in one growing towards maturity.
- b) A person's subjection to rules and laws. In this sense, a disciplined person is one who adheres to standards and a self-disciplined person does not need external coercion to adhere to the standard.
- c) It connotes the consequences of wrong doing, such as correction, reprimand, chastisement and separation and in extreme instances beat.

### **Forms of Indiscipline**

Students' misbehaviour was defined by Witrock (1987) as "any behaviour by one or more students that is perceived by the teacher or initiate a group of action that compete with or threatens the primary purpose of instruction at a particular moment in a classroom activity" (p. 4).

School disciplinary problems tend to be determined to the student and teacher or parents subjectively. What is considered to be unacceptable, accepted or ignored by another individual. In support of this view, Granger (1968) observes that "what is one teachers' problem may be another's no more than a minor irritation and to another simply a sign of children's behaviour" (p. 7). In the same view, Granger (1968) points out that it is important to try

categorize indiscipline in terms of the actions themselves but in the context in which it occurs or the subsequent reaction of a particular teacher to it

When school disciplinary problems are listed in terms of the frequency with which they occur, unwarranted talking often emerges as the offence that is mostly punished. Smith (1969) Green (1962) and Moles (1989) listed misbehaviour often reported by teachers of Senior High Schools in their order of frequency of occurrence as, talking, disobedience, carelessness, cheating, throwing objects and alcohol use

Chalton and David (1993), itemized misbehaviour cited by research teachers at the university of Sheffield in order of frequency as, talking out of turn, hindering other students, making unnecessary noise, work avoidance not being punctual and getting out of seat without permission

Adesina (1990) identifies truancy, pregnancy, untidiness, cheating in examination, fighting in class, stealing, smoking, drug abuse, indecent behaviour out of school as student misbehaviour relating to the individual

He enumerates student unrest, collective violent protest against teachers, way-laying of school authorities, deliberate destruction of school property as collective misbehaviour of students

Farrant (1986) and Robertson (1996) agree that students' misbehaviour takes the form of violation of the interest of the pupil concerned, such as doing something dangerous to his own health and safety, violation of the interest of other pupils, such as disturbing other students, bullying and dangerous behavior

and violation of the interest of the school or community, such as challenging teachers' authority or failing to wear school uniform

Adentwi (1991) enumerated excessive talking, inattention, walking about in class without permission, rude and arrogant behavior, cheating during class test and examination, sleeping in class during lessons and truancy as forms of indiscipline exhibited by students

### **Causes of Indiscipline**

The causes of indiscipline in school is an issue that has generated much accusation and counter accusations. Many parents blame the teachers and the school environment, while teachers blame the parents and the home environment. Students on their part blame both the parents and the teachers.

Barnes (1999) asserts that some of the most frequently mentioned causes of indiscipline are, difference in pupils' interest, desire for attention on the part of pupils, differences in family values, insufficient parental interest in the child, limited intelligence on the part of the pupil and limited home background (p.203). Smith (1969) identifies the causes of indiscipline in students as frustration, inhibition, broken homes, ill health, and personal mal-adjustment.

In the view of Cautley (1963) the causes of indiscipline in schools can be attributed to abolition of corporal punishment in schools, political upheaval in the country, interference in school discipline by persons in high position and lack of co-operation of parents with teachers, which he collectively defined to as immediate causes. He further identified conditions in the child, for example,

physical defects, conditions in the home, defective family relationships and defective discipline (pp 14, 18) as the remote causes of indiscipline

For the purpose of this research, the causes of indiscipline will be categorized into student-induced, teacher-induced, school-induced and home-parent-induced

#### Teacher-induced Indiscipline

Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta (1996) with Adentwi (1991) identify some forms of teacher caused misbehavior in schools as absenteeism, lateness to classes, flirting with the opposite sex, being too autocratic in class and refusing to answer students questions, dressing improperly to class, being drunk and smelling of alcohol in class

Relating to the relationship between the teacher and students that is, distribution of rewards, Fontana (1986) was of the view that issues such as whether teachers interest and liking for students, whether they relate properly towards the entire students or reward some selected individuals or groups who have the effect of causing students misbehavior if they have negative feeling about them

Gnagey (1968) also attributed students' misbehavior to leadership styles put up by teachers in schools among others. According to Gnagey, some teachers are absolute dictators. Thus they keep their personal judgement and initiative to do anything

Webster (1968), on his part observes that a teacher who is unable to maintain the appropriate sound distance required by his dealings with students can find that they (students) fail to respect him. Fontana (1968) agreed that a teacher who is less sociable might find the task of instructing a group of students with high needs for inclusion a frustrating experience

(Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta 1996) asserts further that teacher absenteeism, lateness to class and tardiness lack of knowledge of the subject matter, borrowing from students, teacher immoral behaviors, such as sexual relationship with students of the opposite sex, alcoholism, drug addiction and bad social manners are teacher-induced causes of student indiscipline.

#### **Student-induced indiscipline**

Student-caused misbehavior according to Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta (1996) may result from the Childs psychological make-up or his sociological background. In support, Brown (1964) shows that causes of indiscipline may be external or internal to the student, "those problems arising from outside the student can be troublesome to him only because they do not enable the fulfillment of a material need. Those from within him can be troublesome because they threaten his self-mastery as a rational moral being (p 54)

Gnagey (1968) identifies some of the causes of student's misbehavior as ignorance of school rules, conflicting rules and frustration Gnagey (1968) continues that even if a student is presented with a neatly organized set of laws, he

never really knows which rules are operational and operational and which are just on paper (p.14)Gnagey(1968) elaborated further that un their confusion. students continue to try out the teacher to establish which rules would normally attract sanction when violated. Talking about conflicting rules, Gnagey(1968) and Kejan(1965)stated that when rules operative in the schools set up differ from those that are operational in the home, students become confused and tend to misbehavior as a result.

Charles (1981) . Citing Dreikurs (1972) attribute students' disruptive behavior to the desire to be recognized, to bring, to be left alone, to seek power and to revenge. Thus emphasizing need as a cause of indiscipline.

#### **School-induced Indiscipline**

Dobson (1983) points out that the second most influential force in the rise of disorder has been the school because of permissive philosophy it has adopted Here, the school is blamed for lack of clear-cut rules and regulations and where they exist, there is lack of enforcement.

Siann and Ugwuegbu (1990) agree with Dobson that if children are given standard of behavior from adults, they tend to see the adult as caring and fair Tetey-Enyo (1995) argued that poor facilities, poor feeding, lack of classrooms, laboratories, workshops, teachers, equipment, materials constitute the immediate causes of student indiscipline He however added that these facilities and provisions, necessary as they are, have sometimes very little to do with acts of indiscipline. There are bound to be disciplinary problems whether they exist or not.



This is an indication that students' misbehavior may not be caused by lack of these facilities but is used as an excuse to demonstrate their displeasure. Touching on the leadership regime as a cause of students' misbehavior, Fontana (1986-49) argued that the nature of school rules, the system of sanctions and punishment, the pastoral care network, the leadership styles of the headmaster and his staff may influence reactions of students. Furthermore, the school climate tends to influence students' behaviour.

Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore and Ouston (1979) observed that the ethos or climate of a school has an impact on the behavior and academic performance of its students. They found that those schools that adopted an "academic" ethos had their students performing well in academic work while those which adopted proper student behavior but lay less emphasis on academic standards also produce better students' behavior.

For Sackey (1995), the list seems not only endless, but incomplete without mentioning the weak personality of the school head, drunkenness, over fraternization with staff or student, chronic ill-health, poor human relations and over anxiety on his part which can together cause indiscipline.

Levinson (1996) suggests that school practices are totally responsible for indiscipline; he attempts to show that violence and bad behaviour by pupils are creative responses to the conditions in which education is provided which range from arbitrary and authoritarian teaching styles to the reification of knowledge and race, class and sex discrimination. He continues by saying that although these

responses may seem irrational to teachers and school administrators, they can be seen as meaningful and even justified in specific circumstances.

#### **Home-Parent- induced Indiscipline**

Farrant (1980) ascribed the causes of indiscipline to "society's changing standards, the maladjustment caused by broken homes and stress within the traditional family system, also the feeling of anonymity felt by the growing resentment among pupils...". Gnagey (1968) indicated that indiscipline can often be caused by displaced feelings of a student, persistently battered by a bullying or drunken father at home...that the transfer of this parent-inflicted hostility of such a student into the classroom is certainly always at the base of persistent student deviancy.

Miranda (1999) indicates that Fr Malcom Rodrigues (a priest) pointed out in an interview that television is what is responsible for the breakdown in moral values among students. He observes that parents allow their children to watch pornographic and other films at home. De Conde (1971) writing on "student Activism stresses on the mass media as being a cause of increased student rebellion". He said "instead, communication between youth culture, as well as increased student travel has made the younger generations protest a matter of international concern". Through the media, youthful rage and violence has been brought into our living room (p 3)

On how the house causes indiscipline, Rutter, Mortimore, & Outon. (1979) says, "family discord and disharmony, parental mental disorder, criminality in the parents, large family size and overcrowding in the home, admission of the child into care of the local authority and low occupational status

were all associated with emotional or behavioral disturbances". Miranda (1999) quoting Macks Bacchus says that because of lack of parental guidance, the moral values among many school children are not there because of this many school children are just drifting through life.

#### **Effects of Indiscipline on Teaching and Learning**

Alhaji Rashid Bawa the Deputy Minister of Education on April 12, 2003 said:

Indiscipline and quality education cannot co-exist since discipline is a prerequisite for quality education and national development; the prevalence of indiscipline in schools will cause quality education to elude us and national development will become a mirage. We must therefore as a society strive to refuse indiscipline in our educational institutions so that our future human resources are not wasted

Without discipline, quality education would be a mirage. One observes a positive relation between discipline and academic performance.

Tettey-Enyo (1995) concludes that discipline is a necessary condition for school work. No school can afford to work in an atmosphere of indiscipline. Discipline not only set the tone of work but also determines the rates of achievement. (Tamakloe, Amadahe & Atta 1996) asserted that the exact impact of classroom discipline may not be easily quantifiable.

However, there is widespread acceptance of the fact that disciplinary problems in the classroom usually reduce the time for the teaching-learning process. Misbehavior makes teaching unpleasant and ineffective if they occur so frequently that the teacher has to spend much of the teaching time correcting them.

Reis (1962) declared that obedience to rules makes for social cohesion, a safeguard against individual impulse and the protection of morally and physically weaker students who are highly incapable of judging responsibility for themselves and need to be kept on the rails by rules" (p. 85). This connotes the need to sentinel the weaker members of the school community against the aggressive ones.

#### **Attempt at Solving Disciplinary Problems**

It is now clear that no one is able to proclaim a system of discipline and guidance that will work effectively in all situations. Personality, family background, values and goals, religion etc. will influence a child's philosophy of life. Each school, each student and each situation is unique. There is no single prescription to solve all discipline problems. However, educational policy makers and administrators have a bewildering variety of discipline models and techniques to choose from. After all, man is a creative being endowed with the ability to find suitable solutions to problems at every time. There is no guarantee that the method that worked for one generation will work similar magic in another generation. For that matter, a variety of strategies, techniques and models for

dealing with students' misbehavior have been suggested by commentators and authors on the issue although the conclusion is not consensual

Gushee (1984) suggests that the fundamental success of a disciplinary measure lies in the ability of the school policy makers and administration to ensure the following

- a) Information policies must be aimed at factual problems not rumours Schools should gather accurate data on students' behavior in the school before setting policy to deal with it
- b) Involvement All groups affected by policy should be involved in creating it- in this case, the students who must conform to the policy the school personnel who must conform to the policy, the school personnel who must enforce it, and ideally, student families and other community members
- c) Problem definition Policy makers cannot assume that every one agrees on what constitute undesirable student behavior Defining the problem is the first step toward solving it
- d) Flexibility rather than relying on a rigid system of penalties, policy should allow for different situations and prescribe different methods for different problems
- e) Communication all students, parents and school personnel should be aware of the school's discipline policy or student conduct code A readable and well designed student handbook is a widely used tool for informing students
- f) Consistent enforcement if students are to cooperate with a discipline code, they must believe they will be treated fairly

Other scholars believe that because of the multifaceted nature of students' misbehaviour, it is better to prevent it from occurring than to create conditions for such misbehavior to occur and attempt to solve it

Kounin (1970), Gnagey (1968) and Fontana (1968) subscribe to this strategy. This is because preventive discipline creates congenial atmosphere for effective teaching and learning and also it helps to avoid the negative effects of threats and punishment

Kounin (1970) asserts that effective teachers could be distinguished not by their way of dealing with students' misbehavior but by the school management technique they adopt to prevent student misbehavior

He further observes that the more effective teachers had greater school awareness and constantly scanned the school so that they were aware of the potential problems and could deal with them before any real difficulty arose. These teachers also anticipated students needs, organize their classroom to minimize restlessness and boredom and effectively coped with the multiple and after overlapping demands associated with teachers

In concurrence with Kounin (1970), Brophy and Everson (1976) asserted that, the key to successful classroom or school management is prevention of problem before they start than to attempt to deal with the problem after they have begun

The use of school rules and regulations has been recommended as a means for dealing with students' indiscipline

This line of thinking is supported by Jones and Hones (1990) that students can be expected to support rules and procedures that enhance learning when the learning process shows respect for student and their needs.

Jones and Jones (1990), McGinnis, Frederick and Edwards (1995) further stated that in using proactive school rules as a means of preventing students misbehaviour, students should be actively involved in their school work and curtailing misbehaviour. Punishment has been also used as a means of ensuring discipline

The use of punishment as a means of ensuring discipline has generated more controversy. Many are those who frequently use discipline and punishment interchangeably. Many feel uncomfortable with the use of the word punishment because it recalls resentment and frustration from their childhood.

The Macmillan English Dictionary for Advance learners defines punishment as "To make someone suffer because he or she has done something against the law or the rules".

Genagey (1995) classifies punishment into restrictive punishment, which seeks to make right a wrong and retributive punishment, which seeks to pay the deviant in his own coin. Various forms of punishment are suggested. These include reduction in score or grade, lost of privilege, fines, detentions after school, in-school suspension, referral to the headmaster, sanctions by peers, assigning of extra work and corporal punishment with headmasters permission and according to the laid down regulations (Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta,1996)

(Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta 1996) posits that although punishment does not start good behaviour and has certain draw backs, yet it may be used in the interest of safety, security, sanity and as a means of deterring others from violating rules and procedures. It is on the basis of this that some argue that some level of punishment so needed to ensure discipline as published in the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2001 edition of the Ghanaian Chronicle in which the Central Regional Ministry Mr Isaac Edumadze is alleged to have advocated for the reintroduction of caning in schools as a way of checking the growing insubordination and discipline in schools.

Much as the researcher identify with the ministers concern about escalating cases of indiscipline and immorality in our schools in recent times and the need to adopt some measures to hold them in check, the researcher hastens to differ with the minister and those who tow his line of thinking on the prescribed method of situation because each era comes with its own methods of dealing with educational problems depending on the philosophy of education prevailing at that time.

The use of the cane and other forms of corporal punishment was based on rather antiquated thinking that punishment, especially the severest form facilitated learning among pupils. There were not many problems with the method of ensuring compliance with school rules and regulations because the society was unanimous in its acceptance and teachers who spared the rod were often accused of spoiling the children.



Contemporary, the prevailing societal thinking especially the perception of corporal punishment as an infringement of an individual's human right is making it impossible to use corporal punishment as a means of ensuring student discipline. No wonder parents are physically assaulting teachers who cane their wards.

Although punishment yields quick results, many are those who have spoken against it. To this group of people the physical pain inflicted on pupils strains the relationship between them and their teachers making it impossible for the two main players in the school system to interact freely to ensure effective teaching and learning.

It is further argued that punishment may restrain a child temporarily but it doesn't teach self-discipline.

Gnagey (1968) says that the effect of painful consequences is to suppress the misbehaviour for sometime until the one who inflicted the punishment is not present. Findings by Thorndike (1932) indicated that punishment is less effective in weakening a response than reward is in strengthening it. Thus it is far better to strive to create an atmosphere in which punishment will rarely occur than inflicting punishment as cure for misbehaviour.

Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta (1996) asserted that frequent use of punishment in schools promotes negative attitude towards the school, the teacher and the learning process.

So strong has been the argument against the use of corporal punishment in schools that some have called for its complete scrap from the school system as

reported by a Kenyan Daily Nation 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2003 edition. In that publication, the educational minister Kalonzo Musyoka with support from government officials including President Moi Kibaki through a gazette warned against the use of canes in schools. He explains that corporal punishment was bluntly abused by some teachers, leading to serious injuries and even sometimes the death of pupils. Rewards have also been suggested as having the potential to prevent student indiscipline.

Fontana (1986) defines reward simply as “something” (material and non-material) that appears desirable to the person concerned (p.78). Chalton and David (1993) suggest that reward, as behaviour modification tool should be based on the following principles:

- a) Efforts should be reinforced as frequently as actual performance.
- b) Special efforts may be necessary to determine the appropriate rewards for some recalcitrant offenders because they may have misbehaved so often that it is even not often realized when they put up good behavior
- c) With older students, it might be useful to delay rewarding good behaviour to help them practice good behavior in anticipation of future benefits
- d) Subtle reinforcement such as smile may be applied in order to provide variety of confidential treatment.
- e) With shy and introverted individuals, reinforcement should be given secrecy instead of in public.
- f) Reinforcement can be administered to small or large groups or to individuals.

Guidance and counseling has also been identified as an important tool in the prevention and control of indiscipline in schools. According to Salmon (1985) school heads and the counselors need to be viewed by teachers and parents as playing supporting role as far as discipline is concerned.

Stickle, Satchwell and Meyer (1991) observe that one hundred and sixty (160) counselors used in a study of counselor involvement in discipline forty-one (41) percent reported that they were very often required to counsel individual student in matters of disciplinary problems. Fifty-four (54) percent reported that they were required by school heads to counsel deviant students, five (5) percent said they were asked by teachers to counsel indiscipline students.

Miranda (1999) quotes Allan Bunbury as pointing out that parents serve as role models for their children. Therefore it is necessary that parents are guided and or counseled about the best way of promoting discipline in schools.

Morrison (2002) has suggested that government investment in school or youth recreational centers constitutes positive action as a potent strategy to build self-esteem among the youth as well as reducing boredom and its attendant frustration.

#### **Summary of Related Literature**

Conceptually, most scholars writing on discipline align themselves with either the authoritarian, authoritative or permissive concepts of discipline but differ fundamentally on the definition of discipline due to the ethical and subjective nature of discipline. However, they all subscribe to the submission that

discipline has to do with adherence to established standards and indiscipline refers to rebellion against and violation of such standards

Most authors' observation was that disciplinary problems includes actions that violates the interest of the students concerned, those that violates the interest of other people and those that violates the interest of the school or community

Teachers, students, school administration, parents, home environment, have all been cited as instigators of disciplinary problems in our senior secondary schools by their actions or inactions

It is believed in the circles of education that there is a positive correlation between discipline and high academic performance, hence, the need to pursue discipline in schools

Generally, commentators on discipline have also observed that there is no rule of thumb for ensuring students discipline - rather, each incident of misconduct must be treated on its own merit. However, a common framework upon which all schools can model their disciplinary codes of conduct is agreed upon

The use of rewards, reducing punishment, denial, parent involvement, student participation in evolving school rules are some of the concrete suggestions advanced to ensure discipline in senior secondary schools

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

Many second cycle institutions in Ghana are saddled with disciplinary problems in recent times. Although the government and stakeholders in education are advocating for discipline among the youth, widespread students unruliness, insurrection, demonstrations that leads to vandalism, stealing etc have been recorded. Consequently it has become imperative to find out the factors affecting discipline in Ghana National College, Cape Coast.

The chapter discusses the procedure by which the study was carried out. Specifically, it looked at the research design, the population and sample, instruments, pilot study, data collection procedure and the statistical procedure used in the analysis of the data collected.

#### **Research Design**

The descriptive sample survey design was used for the collection and analysis of data in order to answer the research questions.

Gay (1987) sees this descriptive sample survey as a process of collecting data in order to test the status of the subject of the study. Such a study reports the way things are in the real sense. This method comprises census and sample

surveys Whereas the census survey covers an entire population of interest, the sample survey studies only a portion of the population

Specifically the descriptive sample survey was used in that the study focused on only a portion of the population since the entire size of the population is too large and unsuitable for the study Thus, the design was utilized to find out views of students, teachers and the administrative staff of Ghana National College concerning the factors that affect discipline in the school

#### **Population**

The study was limited to Ghana National College, a second cycle co-educational institution with a population of about (2,500) students and (84) teachers The target population consisted of forms one to three students and (20) teachers

#### **Sample**

The sample for the study comprised (200) students from the population, and (20) teachers totaling (220) This was randomly selected using the simple random sampling technique This procedure was used to ensure a fairly high representation

#### **Instrument**

The research instrument used for the study was mainly questionnaire The reason for using this instrument is that it speeds up data collection It is also known to be quite valid and reliable if well constructed It is economical in terms

of money and time spent in its usage. There were two sets of questionnaire. Questionnaire for teachers and questionnaire for students.

The questionnaire has four sections (A-D) for both teachers and students. Section A consisted of five items that basically required respondents' bio-data (age, sex, etc). The other three sections consist of the main data.

Section B used eleven items to elicit respondents' opinion on the forms of indiscipline that occurred in the school.

Section C had fifteen items, which sought respondents' perception about the causes of the disciplinary problems identified in section B.

Section D was an open-ended question that required respondents to offer suggestions to solve the disciplinary problems identified.

The items included both close-ended and open-ended questions. The open-ended questions are purported to cater for the views of respondents, which have not been catered for in the questionnaire.

#### **Pilot Testing**

In an attempt to determine the consistency and appropriateness of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted to try out the proposed procedures on fifty students of Aggrey Memorial Zion Secondary, a sister school close to Ghana National College. The primary aim of the pilot study was to assess the reliability of the instrument.

The second aim was to identify any areas, which might pose any problem(s) and therefore need(s) to be revised. This was done to check both face

and content validity. This came into realization after the responses. Thus, the researcher was able to add or delete certain items, which were ambiguous.

#### **Procedure for Data Collection**

The questionnaire was given out to students and teachers by hand delivery. Once the questionnaires were handed over to respondents by hand delivery, there was the assurance that the respondents received them.

Students were given between one and two hour's interval to respond and return the questionnaire on the same day. The possibility of this was high since the researcher teaches in the school.

Teacher respondents were given one week to respond to the questionnaire and return them. To ensure that all the questionnaires were returned, teachers were constantly reminded.

#### **Data Analysis**

Being a descriptive study, the researcher first gave serial and code numbers to each questionnaire for easy identification before scoring them. The responses to the various items were then coded and tabulated taking cognizance of their serial numbers. The main statistical technique applied was frequencies and percentages.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents information on the data collected and the results of the data analysis

Fundamentally, the chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of primary data such as demographic information about student and teacher respondents. This chapter also presents findings on what constitute acts of indiscipline, the causes of indiscipline and the recommendations made to remedy such disciplinary problems

#### Sex Distribution of the Population

There were 90 (40.9%) males and 130 (59.1%) females

#### Age Distribution of the Respondents

Respondents indicate their age as shown in Table 1

**Table 1**  
**Age Distribution**

Age	Students	Teachers
10 – 15	33 (16.5)	0 (0)
16 – 20	167 (83.5)	0 (0)
21- 25	0 (0)	0 (0)
26 – 30	0 (0)	5 (25)
31- 35	0 (0)	9 (45)
36 – 40+	0 (0)	6 (30)
	200(100)	29(100)

Percentages are in parenthesis

From Table 1, majority of the students fall within the 16-20-age group constituting 167 (83.5%) while most of the teachers 9 (45 %) fall within the 31-35 age group

The findings indicate that most of the students are in their teens, a period of adolescence which is characterized by strife and indiscipline. The implication is that the school is likely to face many disciplinary problems emanating from adolescent misbehavior. The relatively young staff could assist to maintain school discipline if they themselves are disciplined. If not they could undermine discipline in the school by indulging in teacher-student illicit love affairs.

#### **Academic Background of Teachers**

The teacher respondents were asked to indicate their educational qualifications. Their responses are indicated in Table 2.

**Table 2**

#### **Academic Background of Teachers**

Qualification	Number
Diploma	3 (15)
B A	4 (20)
B Ed	6 (30)
B Sc	2 (10)
Masters	2 (10)
Others	3 (15)
Total	20 (100)

Percentages are parenthesis

From Table 2 above, 6 (30%) of the teachers had pursued the Bachelor of Education programme and are qualified professional teachers with two teachers holding masters degree

### Acts of Indiscipline

Respondents' perception of what constitutes an act of indiscipline and the extent to which they occur in the school was solicited Table 3 presents the responses of the respondents

**Table 3**  
**Acts of Indiscipline**

No	Acts of Indiscipline	Cat	Opinions/Responses				TR	Total (%)
			To a large extent	To some extent	To a least extent	Not at All		
1	Absenteeism from class	S	28(14)	47(23.5)	83 (41.5)	42(21)	200	100
		T	0 (0)	7 (35)	10 (50)	3 (15)	20	100
2	Absenteeism from dining hall	S	30 (15)	43 (21.5)	73 (36.5)	54(27)	200	100
		T	0 (0)	6 (30)	10 (50)	4 (20)	20	100
3	Lateness to class and other social gatherings	S	26 (13)	62 (31)	74 (37)	38(19)	200	100
		T	3 (15)	3 (15)	14 (70)	0 (0)	20	100
4	Examination malpractice	S	23(11.5)	54(27)	71(35.5)	52(26)	200	100
		T	0 (0)	5(25)	11(55)	4(20)	20	100
5	Writing on the walls	S	23(11.5)	38(19)	68(34)	71(35.5)	200	100
		T	0 (0)	5(25)	10(50)	5(25)	20	100
6	Destruction of school properties	S	32(16)	47(23.5)	52(26)	4(34.5)	200	100
		T	0(0)	4(20)	10(50)	6(30)	20	100
7	Drunkenness, smoking and the use of hard drugs	S	28(14)	57(28.5)	64(32)	51(25.5)	200	100
		T	0(0)	6(30)	8(40)	6(30)	20	100
8	Bullying and fighting	S	42(21)	55(27.5)	51(25.5)	52(26)	200	100
		T	0(0)	5(25)	10(50)	5(25)	20	100

Table 3 continued

No	Acts of Indiscipline	Cat	Opinions/Responses				TR	Total (%)
			To a large extent	To some extent	To a least extent	Not at All		
9	Sexual misconduct	S	42(21)	43(21.5)	59(29.5)	56(28)	200	100
		T	0(0)	4(20)	12(60)	4(20)	20	100
10	Breaking of bounds	S	28(14)	42(21)	56(28)	74(37)	200	100
		T	0(0)	6(30)	8(40)	6(30)	20	100
11	Extortion, stealing	S	38(19)	47(23.5)	57(28.5)	58(29)	200	100
		T	0(0)	4(40)	11(55)	5(25)	20	100
12	Strikes, riots, demonstrations	S	63(31.5)	54(27)	38(19)	45(22.5)	200	100
		T	2(10)	7(35)	7(35)	4(20)	20	100

Percentages are in parenthesis

The data from Table 3 reveal that majority of the respondents were of the view that the offences listed in Table 3 constitute acts of indiscipline that occur in the school. This consensus confirms the research findings by Othanel Smith (1969), Chalton and David (1993) and Adentwa (1991) that offences, which mostly occur in schools, are excessive talking, inattention, walking about in class without permission, rude and arrogant behavior, cheating during class test and examination, truancy, disobedience, defiance of authority, alcohol use, verbal abuse towards teachers, physical aggression toward other students and physical destruction among other students' misconducts.

Item by item analysis of the offences listed in Table 3 reveals that 63 (31.5%) of the students and 7 (35%) of the teachers perceived strikes, riots and demonstrations as constituting acts of indiscipline that occurs in the school. According to the statistics, it was the highest rated act of indiscipline amongst students.

Majority of the students perceived items (1,2,3,4,7 and 9) of Table 3 as acts of indiscipline but occurs only to a least extent in the school when rated. This is an indication that absenteeism, lateness, examination malpractices, sexual misconduct have become a "culture" amongst students and are perpetuated with intent and on purpose.

Majority 74(37%) of the students did not see the breaking of bounds as an act of indiscipline at all. A substantial number 58 (29%) of the respondents did not regard extortion and stealing as an act of misconduct likewise 69 (34%) who were completely not aware and even if they did, did not classify the destruction of school property as acts of indiscipline. The implication is that most of the students do indulge in these acts either ignorantly or intentionally because of lack of school rules enforcement or that the sanctions are not punitive enough to deter future perpetrators.

If a student does not see the destruction of school property as an act of indiscipline, he is likely to resort to vandalism to settle scores with school authorities. This finding vindicates Gnagey (1968) who says that students misbehave results from ignorance of the school rules, conflicting rules and frustration. He continues by saying that even if a student is presented with a neatly organized set of laws, he never really knows which status are operational and which are just on paper.

Table 3 further reveals that no teacher (0%) said that he/she was not aware that lateness to class and other social gatherings on the part of students constituted an act of indiscipline even though the practice is rife among students.

And teachers seem not so bothered either that they lack the moral courage to punish the students for been late because they themselves were worst culprits or they consider such behaviours a minor offence which must not be punished

Teachers were split in their opinions on some items in Table 3. An act that is considered by one group of teachers as misconduct and therefore unacceptable is rightfully accepted as normal by another group of teachers as exemplified by the split opinion on item (7 and 10) Table 3. While 6 (30%) of one group of teachers considered drunkenness, smoking, the use of hard drugs and breaking of bounds as acts of indiscipline that occurred in the school, 6 (30%) of another group of teachers did not agree with the opinion of their colleagues

This lack of consensus amongst teachers supports the assertion by Fontana (1986) that what is one teacher problem may to another be a minor irritation and to another, simply a sign of children's boisterous high spirit (p 7). Respondents were asked to identify other forms of misconducts on the part of students which the researcher omitted in constructing the questionnaire. Table 4 shows the other forms of students misconduct as observed from the respondents' own perspective

Table 4 reveals that all the listed misconduct does occur in the school and both teachers and students are at a consensus. About 53 (26.5%) of students and 6 (30%) of teachers cite insulting, stoning, catcalls, use of profane language, disturbances and improper dressing as some of the misconducts that are registered on the campus

**Table 4****Other Acts of Indiscipline on the Part of Students**

No	Acts of Indiscipline	Cat	Number	Total (%)
13.	Insults, stoning, catcall, use of profane language, disturbances	S	53	26.5
		T	6	30
14.	Improper dressing, use of unauthorized electrical appliances	S	20	10
		T	6	30
15.	Defecating on campus, littering	S	11	5.5
		T	0	0
16.	Favoritism on the part of senior prefects	S	0	0
		T	14	7
17.	Scaling the walls from and to the dormitories	S	15	7.5
		T	0	0
18.	None	S	87	43.5
		T	8	40

It is obvious that students commit these acts against their fellow students causing their victims a lot of nuisance. This confirms the assertion by Farrant (1980) and Robertson (1996) that students misbehaviors takes the form of violation of the interest of the pupils concerned such as disturbing other students and those that violates the interest of the school such as failing to wear school uniform, bullying etc. And Caulley (1961) agrees with Farrant that "indiscipline includes all forms of disrespectful and unruly behavior, shouting in the presence of elders, using bad language, rudeness, laziness, insolence, insulting

by word or by deed and in exceptional cases, smoking, drinking, gambling, stealing and bullying

Respondents opinion on common acts of indiscipline on the part of teachers were elicited Respondents' reactions are captured in Table 5

**Table 5**  
**Common Acts of Indiscipline on the Part of Teachers**

No	Acts of Indiscipline	Cat	Number	Total (%)
19	Insults, slapping, corporal punishment	S	44	22
		T	4	20
20	Favoritism, too friendly to certain student	S	21	10.5
		T	0	0
21	Impatience, lack of concern and love for students	S	15	7.5
		T	0	0
12	Lateness, absenteeism, non-commitment to work	S	60	30
		T	9	4.5
23	Uses of vernaculars, poor teaching methods and improper dressing	S	25	12.5
		T	0	0
24	None	S	35	17.5
		T	7	3.5

From Table 5, students identified insulting, slapping, favoritism, impatience, lateness, absenteeism, non-commitment to work, use of vernacular, poor teaching methods and improper dressing as some of the common acts of



indiscipline among teachers in the school even though 9 (45 %) of the teachers admit that their colleagues were guilty of only lateness, absenteeism, and non-commitment to work

By inference, most teachers are either late to or absent from class and other social gatherings and this reflected in their low level of commitment to work

The reason might be that only a few of the teachers are resident on campus and for the majority who reside outside campus, they might have been facing transportation problems. Another line of thought could be the prolonged conversation in staff common rooms which could also account for lateness to class by teachers. This absenteeism and lateness has the tendency to reduce contact hours between the teachers and the students and has the potential to cause student misbehaviour as cited by Tamakloe et al (1996) in Adentwi (1991) that teacher caused misbehaviour in schools includes absenteeism, lateness in class etc

Twenty-five (12.5%) of the students did intimate that their teachers speak vernacular, dress improperly and use poor teaching methods although no teacher (0%) claim to have knowledge of such practices among their colleagues

If what the students are saying is anything to go by, then the teachers have failed in their responsibility as role models and are sending the wrong signals to the students

From Table 5, 15 (7.5%) of the students claim that their teachers lack patience, concern and love for them. This means that some of the teachers do not

see it as part of their professional responsibility to assist their students with problem topics or other problems, which confronts the students. This seems to suggest that teachers are willing to perform any extra duty on condition that they will be rewarded financially.

Further more, 21 (10.5%) assert that favouritism and an apartheid kind of system are common practices among teachers but no teacher 0 (0%) agrees with the indictment. Of course the teachers cannot afford to identify themselves with the claim by the students probably because they were guilty and are trying to cover up. It was observed that the favoured students or "teachers pets" were mostly chosen as the class prefects. The intention is to use them as shields and informants. They sign attendance books for the teachers when teachers are late or even absent to cover them up against the headmasters reproof. In return the teachers give higher marks, financial assistance and in extreme cases leak examination or class test questions to them and influence the awarding of prizes to their favoured students. It is in the light of this that Fontana (1968) opines that issue such as whether teachers show interest and liking for students, whether they relate properly towards the entire students or reward some selected individuals or groups all have the effect of causing students misbehaviour if they have negative feelings about them.

Not at all, 44 (22%) of students and just 4 (20%) of the teachers perceived corporal punishment meted out to students as an act of misconduct on the part of teachers. This is an indication that the use of corporal punishment as a means of

ensuring discipline is no longer popular and is capable of inciting student insurrection.

Small as the figures might look from 4.5 and therefore statistically insignificant, one cannot downplay the potential of students to nurture and propagate a seemingly harmless misconduct into a full-fledged destructive mischief via peer pressure. Therefore every act of misconduct identified must be taken seriously and nipped in the bud no matter how infinitesimal it is currently

#### **Causes of Indiscipline**

The researcher purported to find out the causes of indiscipline in the study area in order to find workable and effective solutions to the menace of indiscipline. Table 6 represents respondents' perceived causes of indiscipline in the school relating to school facilities

A careful perusal of the statistics in Table 6 reveals that majority of the respondents strongly disagree with all the statements as potential causes of students' indiscipline. For instance, only 36(18%) of students and 0(0%) agreed that overcrowding in dormitories has the tendency to cause student indiscipline

**Table 6**  
**Causes of Indiscipline**

No	Causes of Indiscipline	Cat	Opinions					Total (%)
			SA	A	D	SD	TR	
25	Overcrowding	S	27(13.5)	36(18)	51(25.5)	86(43)	200	100
	in dormitories	T	4(20)	0(0)	15(75)	1(5)	20	100
26	Overcrowding	S	24(12)	32(16)	46(23)	98(49)	200	100
	in the dining hall	T	5(25)	2(10)	10(50)	3(15)	20	100
27	Overcrowding	S	41(20.5)	54(27)	41(20.5)	64(32)	200	100
	in library	T	4(20)	2(10)	11(55)	3(15)	20	100
28	Overcrowding	S	38(19)	41(20.5)	51(25.5)	70(35)	200	100
	in dispensary	T	0(0)	4(20)	13(65)	4(20)	20	100
29	Acute shortage	S	31(15.5)	30(15)	43(21.5)	96(48)	200	100
	of urinal and facilities	T	3(15)	3(15)	10(50)	4(20)	20	100
30	Inadequate	S	42(21)	30(15)	43(21.5)	96(48)	200	100
	textbooks, teaching and learning materials	T	4(20)	5(25)	7(35)	4(20)	20	100

It can therefore be inferred from Table 6 that most students and teachers see indiscipline as a behavioural phenomenon that is bound to occur whether

excellent school facilities such as adequate dormitories, dining hall, library, laboratories, toilet, informatory and text books exist or not. This is an indication that students misconduct may not possibly be caused by lack of good school amenities. The lack of such facilities are used as an excuse to demonstrate a concealed agenda.

This finding contracts the argument by Tetey Enyo (1995) that poor facilities, workshops, teacher's equipment, lack of classrooms, laboratories constitute the immediate causes of students' indiscipline.

It is important to note the similarity in opinion expressed by majority of the respondents. According to 96 (48%) of the students, acute shortage of toilet and urinal facilities did not contribute to the indiscipline in the school and 10 (50%) of the teachers concurred. This can be interpreted to mean that both teachers and students are consensual about the lack of relationship between school facilities and students delinquency.

This lends credence to the assertion by Asiedu Akrofi (1978) that whenever there are disciplinary problems in schools, the school administrator has to examine the following possible causes, the teacher, the subject matter, the child or person and the home.

Respondents perception on the social causes of indiscipline were sought. The causes of students' misbehaviour relating to the teacher, students, school administration and parents is presented in Table 7.

**Table 7**  
**Social Causes of Indiscipline**

No	Causes of indiscipline	CAT	SA	A	D	SD	TR	%
31	Lack of parental control	S	60(30)	46(23)	47(23.5)	47(23.5)	200	100
		T	2(10)	3(15)	9(45)	6(30)	20	100
32	Too much money giving to students by parents as compensation for love and care	S	79(39.5)	38(19)	36(18)	47(23.5)	200	100
		T	3(15)	5(25)	8(40)	4(20)	20	100
33	Peer influence	S	36(18)	26(13)	58(29)	80(40)	200	100
		T	0(0)	0(0)	10(50)	10(50)	20	100
34	Relation between the student body and the administration	S	38(19)	41(20.5)	56(28)	65(32.5)	200	100
		T	0(0)	4(20)	13(65)	3(15)	20	100
35	Level of student's participation in decision-making	S	35(17.5)	32(16)	53(26.5)	80(40)	200	100
		T	3(15)	5(25)	9(45)	3(15)	20	100
36	Punishment meted out to students	S	58(29)	80(40)	26(13)	36(18)	200	100
		T	3(15)	8(40)	5(25)	4(20)	20	100
37	Limited flow of information	S	31(15.5)	35(17.5)	65(32.5)	69(34.5)	200	100
		T	3(15)	10(50)	7(35)	0(0)	20	100
38	School rules are too hard and difficult to comply with	S	20(10)	40(20)	57(28.5)	83(41.5)	200	100
		T	4(20)	7(35)	5(25)	4(20)	20	100
39	Influence of drugs	S	40(20)	37(18.5)	53(26.5)	70(35)	200	100
		T	3(15)	6(30)	7(35)	4(20)	20	100
40	Sexual relationship between male teachers and female students	S	41(20.5)	60(30)	50(25)	49(24.5)	200	100
		T	3(15)	10(50)	7(35)	0(0)	20	100
41	Influence of the media	S	58(29)	49(24.5)	47(23.5)	41(23)	200	100
		T	10(50)	7(35)	3(15)	0(0)	20	100

Figures from Table 7 indicate that majority of the students blame the home and for that matter parents for the upsurge in students misdemeanors. 60 (30%) say that parents should be held accountable for the lack of character training and discipline in the students 79 (39.5%) of the students were smart to recognize that because parents neglect their parental responsibilities, they try to bribe their wards by giving them too much money to compensate them for the love and care that they (parents) could not offer. Thus parents exacerbate the indiscipline in their wards by giving more money to their morally starved children. This is a serious indictment on and a wake up call for all parents. The students seem to suggest that charity begins at home and therefore what they have become is a product of the home- their first school of socialization of which their parents are the caretakers and trustees.

Most parents shirk their responsibilities in controlling their children at home. They do not care what their wards do either because they are preoccupied with the quest for money or are just not been responsible

According to Rutter et al (1979), family discord, disharmony, parental mental disorder, criminality in parents, large family size, overcrowding in the home, admission of child into care of local authority and low occupational status are all associated with emotional or behavioural disturbances stemming from defective family relation- incomplete homes that have come about as a result of parents living apart or children living with relatives and having multiple homes

In such homes there are no rules and even where rules exist, they are not enforced. When this happens the student finds it difficult to reconcile the rules of

the school and excessive freedom at home. Since people find it difficult to obey rules than to enjoy their freedom, indiscipline results as rightly stressed by Gnagey (1968) that when the rules set up in the school differ from those of the home, students become confused and misbehaviour may thereby result.

The implication is that the child seeks attention probably to compensate for lack of parental care and there is no doubt that in some cases this could lead to a wide range of indiscipline behaviours. This confirms the assertion by Miranda (1999) quoting Mack Bacchus assertion that because of lack of parental guidance the moral values among many school children are not there because of this many school children are just drifting through life.

Thus lack of character training and self-control can be traced to the fact that it is necessary for school authorities to seek the cooperation of parents in enforcing discipline as advised by Gottfredson (1988) that increasing parents involvement is a critical element in improving order in troubled schools.

Certain morally irresponsible conducts of parents such as drinking, smoking, engaging in criminal activities, activities, adultery, prostitution, drug use, etc. etc. etc. serve as recipe for students' misbehaviour. If parents perpetrate these acts openly and nakedly before their wards, the children perceive such acts as being socially acceptable and they tend to practice them when the school discipline is weak. Thus the model as models for their children is defeated. This corroborates Sigmund Freud's (1980) assertion that if children are given standards of behaviour from adults, they tend to adopt these for themselves if they see the adult a learning and that



From Table 7, more than 80 (40%) of the students and 8 (40%) teachers agree that punishment meted out to students is another cause of students' misconduct. This could be interpreted to mean that either the punishment is frequently used and not proportional to the offences committed or the students want to have their own way. This confirms the assertion by Tamakloe et al (1996) that frequent punishment in school promotes negative attitude towards the school, the teacher and the learning process. For this reason, Thorndike (1932) advise that it is better to strive to create an atmosphere in which punishment will rarely occur than in inflicting punishment as a cure for misbehaviour.

It is interesting to note the differences in opinion on whether school rules are too harsh and difficult to comply with and that is why students misbehave. While more than 7 (35%) of the teachers say that the school rules enshrined in the schools code of conduct which the school applies are too harsh and difficult to comply with and that is why students misbehave in support of Gnagey (1968) that students become rebellious when they feel rules are unfair to them, 83 (41.5%) of the students disagree and think that the school rules are fair and easy to comply with.

If the school rules are fair according to the students, yet they flout them, then it presupposes that the students do not know which of the rules are strictly enforced. The students will try all the rules through misbehaviour. This corroborate the assertion by Gnagey (1968) that even if a student is presented with a neatly organized set of laws, he never really knows which status is operational and which are just on paper.

Table 7 also shows that 10 (50%) of the teachers believe that limited flow of information from the school authorities to the students and vice versa has the propensity to ferment mistrust between the two parties although 69 (34.5%) of the students hold a contrary view. This brings to question the level of students' participation in decision-making. This means that either there are no laid down procedures for students to address their grievances or the students are not aware of such opportunities. When this happens, students nurse their displeasure and capitalize on the least opportunity such as a ban on sporting activities or entertainment, poor quality of food at the dining hall etc to cause mayhem. Forums and other platforms that respect students' views must be made available to students to make their grievances known, since the lack of transparency breeds suspicion.

Figures from Table 7 further reveal that majority of both teachers 10 (50%) and more than 60 (30%) of the students agree that sexual relationship between male teachers and female students in the school could instigate students' misconduct. This agreement between the teachers and the students can be attributed probably to the fact that our society frowns on and condemns sex between teachers and students. In addition, sexual relationship between teachers and students is known to lead to other offences such as discrimination or favouritism in terms of rewards and punishment.

A teacher is sure of being called all sorts of names, ridiculed, taunted and disrespected if he engages in sexual relationship with students as amply declared by Webster (1968) that a teacher who is unable to maintain the appropriate social

distance required by his dealings with students can find that they fail to respect him.

Tamakloe et al (1996) citing Adentwi (1991) also warns that teacher misbehavior that causes indiscipline includes flirting with the opposite sex. It is incumbent on teachers seen as role models to avoid the temptation of being lured into sexual relationship with students, as society will never forgive them for ruining their future leaders.

Furthermore, more than 58 (29%) of students and half 10 (50%) of the teachers agree that the media is also answerable for the spate of students indiscipline. This corroborates the claim by Bandura (1971), Curwin and Mendler (1988) that film-mediated models are just as effective as real models in shaping children's behaviour, which demands control and supervision of films that the students watch.

In veracity, the Ghanaian child is flooded with assorted print and electronic materials, which has no respect for morality and expurgation. Films, newspapers and the Internet within the reach of the Ghanaian students contain scenes that are inimical to the moral construction and decency of the students.

With Ghanaian culture increasingly becoming susceptible to foreign cultures and the propensity of the Ghanaian to copy blindly, coupled with parents becoming more irresponsible, the media is influencing the moral composition of the Ghanaian youth.

This is exactly the picture painted by Miranda (1999) citing Fr. Malcom Rodrigues (a priest) in an interview that television is what is responsible

for the break down in moral values among students, "parents allow their children to watch pornographic and other films at home and De Conde (1971) appears to concur with him when he said 'communication between youth cultures, as well as increased student travel, has made the younger generation protest- a matter of international concern. He further laments "through the media, youthful rage and violence has come into the living room".

Yet still from Table 7, 79 (39.5) of the students admit that the relationship between administration and the students' body can cause students misbehaviour. From the statistics, it seems all is not well with the relationship between the school authorities and the students. Whenever the relationship between the school authorities and the students' strains, then the effectiveness and the leadership style of the school authorities especially the headmaster or principal must be examined.

It could be that the headmaster is ineffective in the sense that he does not take interest in the students and the teachers and surface occasionally to issue instructions as accurately articulated by Duke (1989) that poorly discipline schools have principals who are visible only for official duties such as school assembly or announcing the verdict of an offender to whole school and do not take interest in neither the teachers nor the students, no formal relationship, no speaking to teachers.

Such a headmaster is denied advance information on staff and students grievances, which would have been preventable. Such a principal is always relying on curative or restorative measures after students have misbehaved. Thus, the atmosphere in the school is a response of the students to the regime of

administration that prevails in the school as found by Fontana (1986) that the nature of school rules, the system of sanctions and punishment, the pastoral care network, the leadership style of the headmaster and his staff may influence reactions of students

### **Remedies for School Disciplinary Problems**

Respondents were asked to provide propositions to solve or minimize disciplinary problems in the school Table 8 presents the submissions of the respondents

From Table 8, respondents seem to suggest that parent involvement in dealing with students' misbehaviours is indispensable 30 (15%) of students and 4 (20%) of teachers canvass for the adoption of such an approach This method is supported by Miranda La Rose (1999) who quotes Allan Bunbury as pointing out that parents serve as role models for their children Therefore it is necessary that parents are guided or counseled about the best ways of promoting discipline in schools

**Table 8****Remedies for Disciplinary Problems**

No	Suggested Remedies to Indiscipline	Cat	Number	Total (%)
	Flexible exeat regulations and going on mid	S	29	14.5
	term breaks	T	2	10
	Respect for students views through open	S	32	16
	forums	T	2	10
	The use of effective guidance anJ counseling	S	15	7.5
	center in the school	T	4	20
	Proper teaching of religious and moral	S	15	7.5
	education concepts	T	0	0
	Minimizing punishment	S	22	11
		T	2	10
	Teachers should be caring and tolerant	S	10	5
		T	0	0
	Rewards should be used frequently	S	11	5.5
		T	4	20
	Parents should be involved in dealing with	S	30	15
	student indiscipline	T	4	20
	Reduction in enrollment	S	10	5
		T	3	15
	Minimizing favouritism and affection for some	S	9	4
	students	T	1	0
	Punctuality should be stressed	S	9	5
		T	0	4.5
	None	S		4.5
		T	0	0

Respondents believe that exam rules should be made more student friendly. 29 (14.5%) of the students and just 2 (10%) of the teachers recommend flexible exam regulations and frequent mid term breaks. This is a signal that the students are suffering from boredom. Commendable as the suggestion of the students may be, the researcher hastens to say that frequent exams and midterm breaks has the tendency to disrupt academic work by reducing contact hours between teachers and students and this could impact negatively on the completion of the syllabus as teachers will rush to complete it.

The students have to be educated and involved in the process of enacting the school rules and regulations. That way they will not find it draconian as suggested by Jones and Jones (1990) that students can be expected to support rules and procedures that enhance learning when the learning shows respect for students and their needs.

Table 8 further reveals that 32 (16%) of the students think that if students views are respected and involved in decision making, the spate of indiscipline associated with violation of school rules will be minimized thus making what McGinnis et al (1995) said that in using proactive school rules as a means of preventing students misbehavior, students should be actively involved in their school work curtailing misbehavior.

Respondents also believe that if rewards are stressed, most of the students' misconduct can be prevented. Some of the unedited rewards suggested by the respondents include:

- a) "Teachers should write good comments in terminal report"

- b) "students good behavior should be recognized at public ceremonies such as speech days"
- c) "rewards of material things should fairly be distributed"

The suggestion of the respondents corroborates the observation by Thorndike (1932) that punishment is less effective in weakening a response than rewards in strengthening it. 22 (11%) of the students who responded to item N of the questionnaire recommended that punishment should be minimized as a means of dealing with students rage against teachers who frequently unleash punishment on them. This confirms Tamakloe et al (1996) finding that frequent punishment in the school promotes a negative attitude towards the school, the teacher and the learning process.

In the view of the students, urgent amendment is needed in the school's mode of punishment system and the students propose

- a) "student lashing at assembly and classrooms should be stopped"
- b) "students doing manual work as punishment while their other colleagues are in class should be halted"
- c) "insulting students in public should be curbed"
- d) "in-school suspension instead of out-school suspension should be used"

Students also suggested that if the guidance and counseling units in the school is made very effective, most of the students misbehaviors could be reduced. This is a clarion call to the school authorities especially heads of the guidance and counseling centers. It is important that school counselors are not Respondents believe that exact rules should be made more students friendly. 29



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## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter deals with the synopsis of the findings of the study, the conclusions drawn from the findings and also presents the recommendation for practice and for further research

#### Summary

The study commenced with the research topic "factors influencing discipline at Ghana National College, Cape Coast" The study sought to find out the factors that affect discipline and how to control these factors

In pursuance of this, the study examined the concept, meaning, forms of discipline Furthermore, the causes of and solutions to disciplinary problems were also looked at

In line with the study objective, a descriptive survey was conducted at Ghana National College This technique enabled the researcher to focus on only a portion of the population since the entire size of the population was too large and unsuitable for the study

The target population of the study area comprises forms one to three students and teachers of Ghana National College The sample of the study

comprised (200) students and (20) teachers totaling (220) who were randomly selected using the simple random sampling technique to ensure fairness

Researcher designed questionnaires were used to serve as instruments for collecting the data because it is quite valid, economical, fast and the nature of the research topic made it a more convenient instrument. There were two sets of questionnaire devices

- a) Questionnaire for students and
- b) Questionnaire for teachers

The questionnaire had four sections (A – D) for both teacher and student respondents. Section A comprised of five items that basically required respondents' bio-statistics. Section B had eleven items that sought to find out the forms of indiscipline that occurs in the school.

Fifteen items were used in section C to elicit respondents' perception about the causes of students' indiscipline.

Section D was an open-ended question that asked respondents to suggest ways to deal with students' disciplinary problems.

Questionnaires were hand delivered to respondents. Students had two hours while teachers had two weeks interval within which to respond to the questions and return them.

There was a hundred percent return rate. This is attributable to the fact that the researcher is a tutor in the school who enjoys a lot of good will from the students and the teachers alike.

### Summary of Findings

Based on the responses it came to light that about 167 (83.5%) of the students are aged between 16-20 years. Majority of the students are in their teens and the tendency was high for juvenile related disciplinary problems in the school.

The study also revealed that 12 (60%) of the teachers had pursued at least a bachelor's degree, 6 (30%) were diploma and other certificate holders. With collective effort, teachers could tactfully handle student misconduct.

#### Acts of Indiscipline

The study found out that absenteeism was a major problem in the school. It took the form of absenteeism from the dining hall, class and other social gatherings. All but 42 (21%) of the students and 3 (15%) of the teachers did admit that absenteeism was an act of indiscipline that occurred in the school.

It also came to light that even if students will avail themselves at class and other social gatherings, they were late. Thus lateness was identified by 74 (37%) of the students and 14 (70%) of the teachers as an act of indiscipline that occurred in the school.

Findings from the study also indicated that destruction of school property was considered an act of indiscipline that occurred in the school by majority of the students although 69 (34.5%) of students and 6 (30%) of the teachers objected.

Through the study, it came to light that examination malpractice was real among students. 71 (35.5%) of students and 11 (55%) of teacher respondents

agreed in toto 52 (26%) of the students supported by just 4 (20%) of the teachers however held a contrary opinion

But for 56 (28%) and 4 (20%) of students and teachers respectively who disagreed, all the respondents admitted that sexual misconduct between male teachers and female students and among students themselves prevailed in the school

Although majority of the teachers and the students concurred that extortion and stealing were acts of misconducts that occurred in the school, 58 (29%) of the students and 5 (25%) of the teachers rebuffed the stance by the majority

Generally majority of the respondents accepted that drunkenness, smoking, and the use of hard drugs were acts of indiscipline among students that students and teachers alike in the school had to contend with. However 61 (25.5%) of the students and 6 (30%) of the teachers held a contrary opinion. Through the study, it manifested that fighting and bullying are real phenomenon in the school

Also, but for 74 (37%) of students and 6 (30%) of teacher respondents who denied knowledge or are deliberately refusing to acknowledge the prevalence of breaking of bounds in the school, all the respondents conceded that the phenomenon was real in the school

The researcher learnt that the most inconceivable manifestation of indiscipline in school were strikes, riots and demonstration among students according to the respondents. But for 45 (22%) of the students and 4 (20%) of the

teachers who dissented, all the respondents agreed that such behaviours were misconducts that occurred in the school. Perhaps the respondents were influenced by the 2002 event in which student riot destroyed much of school property and personal effects of teachers.

It also came to light through the study that most students had to bear the blunt of some of their colleague's misbehaviour such as insults, use of profane language, disturbances in the form of noise making, cat calling, defecating on campus and favouritism from their senior prefects.

The study also discovered that absenteeism, lateness, abuse of corporal punishment, insulting, use of poor teaching methods and general apathy towards work were rife among teachers.

Some teachers were found to have over fraternized with some students, dressed improperly and spoke the local dialects in class.

#### Causes of Indiscipline

The study revealed that there was no link between school facilities and student indiscipline. Majority of the students disagreed with overcrowding in major school facilities such as library, dining hall, dormitories, infirmary, toilet and urinal as potential causes of student indiscipline in the school. And their teacher respondents concurred.

Generally, students agreed that all the items listed in Table 7 are immediate or remote causes of causes of indiscipline in the school.

It came to light that parents were accountable for most of the misconducts exhibited in the school. Majority of the students cited the lack of parental control

as the immediate causes of indiscipline in the school and most of the teachers agree although 47 (23.5%) of the students disagree and apportion the blame elsewhere

Majority of the respondents felt that parents bribe their children for the negligence of their parental responsibility by giving them too much money as compensation, which is one of the root causes of student indiscipline. Only 47(23.5%) of students and 4 (20%) of teachers dissented

It was also observed that limited flow of information from the school authorities to the students and vice versa, had the tendency to cause a gulf between the students and the school authorities. 10 (50%) of the teachers acceded to this although 69 (32.5%) of the students held a contrary opinion.

Furthermore, school rules were observed to be too harsh and difficult to comply with and that is why students misbehaved. Thus the students strive to be free and in so doing rebel against the rules and regulation that entangled them.

It was also revealed that sexual misconduct involving both students and teachers created a fertile ground for breeding students' indiscipline. 60 (30%) of students and 10 (50%) of the teachers supported this finding.

The study also brought to the fore the fact that what students see and read from the print and electronic media is a contributing factor to student indiscipline. Thus pornographic materials, crime and violent scenes screened and published in the electronic and print media respectively had the potential of influencing the students to behave in like manner.

It became evident from the study that frequent use of punishment can trigger student resentment and ferment bitterness against teachers and the school authorities. But for 36 (18%) of the students and 4 (20%) of the students who disagreed, all the respondents concurred.

Quite a substantial number of the respondents cited poor relationship between the students' body and the school authorities as an immediate cause of student indiscipline.

It was quite baffling that all the teacher respondents 20 (100%) did not see any link between student indiscipline and peer influence, majority of the students agree with the teachers.

The use of hard drugs, smoking and drunkenness were all admitted to be the driving force behind some student indiscipline.

To deal with the above-enumerated indiscipline, it was found that

- 1 School rules and regulations especially those governing exam should be made flexible
- 2 School authorities must respect the views of the students
- 3 The guidance and counseling unit in the schools should be made operational and effective
- 4 Rewards should be used frequently
- 5 Parents should be involved in dealing with students' misconducts
- 6 Punishment should be minimized
- 7 Enrollment should also be reduced
- 8 Teachers must treat students fairly



## Conclusions

From the study, the following conclusions have been arrived at  
Generally, absenteeism from academic and extra-curricula activities was rife on campus. This involved both teachers and students. Even if teachers and students would attend a function, they were late.

Also, invigilation mechanisms to check examination malfeasance were ineffective to avert examination malpractices among students. It appears students are having a field's day in the examination halls either because they have become too sophisticated in the act or that the teachers look on with apathy.

Next, it appears that anytime there is misunderstanding between students and the school authorities, students vent their anger on school properties and vandalize them.

Further, some students are involved in stealing, drunkenness, smoking and drug abuse. This was possible because rules on exam were compromised in some cases for some students presumably for favours.

Both teachers and students are guilty of using foul language on campus. Some teachers exhibited lackadaisical attitude towards work and this stemmed from general discontent among teachers about conditions of service.

Another overwhelming finding was that illicit sexual relationship existed between the opposite sexes in the school. Both students and teachers are in this practice. The possibility of the phenomenon occurring is likely because some students attended extra classes in their masters' homes. When these illicit affairs

become unveiled, teacher and student culprits lose their respect and are taunted by colleagues

Parents and generally the home are to be held responsible for the surge in student indiscipline on campus. Parents' inability to nurture and direct the character of their wards at their formative years, apparently because they are too occupied with chasing money, leave these adolescent students at the mercy of their bad friends at school and neighborhoods to socialize. Most parents resort to bribing their wards with huge sums of money to compensate them for their inability to care for them.

Furthermore, suspicion exists amongst teachers, the administration and the students. This is partly attributable to lack of accurate information flow amongst all the parties involved, thereby engendering mistrust and vindictiveness on campus.

The print and the electronic media have contributed in no insignificant measure to the misconduct that prevailed on campus. Sights and sounds of morally starved materials are accessible to students either at home or at school. Students come under intense pressure to practice what they see and watch.

It appears the rules and regulation put in place to regulate the general conduct in the school does not go down well with the students. Students dislike intensely the systems of retribution in the school. This is probably because students are not consulted in the promulgation of such rules and teachers abuse the punishment procedure.

The guidance and counseling unit has lost its significance in the school as some major students' misconducts could have been detected and averted well in advance if the unit had been effective. Mechanisms for monitoring and detecting students' discontent and possible rebellion are either non-existent or paralyzed.

Lastly, soaring enrollment levels which is incommensurate with school facilities and teachers has created supervisory problems for the school. The above are the factors affecting discipline at Ghana National College.

#### **Recommendations for Practice**

Naturally we are all looking for the infallible way of promoting good discipline. If such a way existed we would all be using it and students' misbehaviour in schools would no longer be an issue. All experienced teachers know that no such recipe exists.

Discipline is an essential component of the school system. School work is impaired in the absence of discipline and academic work and achievements take a nosedive. Discipline not only sets the tone for academic work but also determines the rate and pinnacle of accomplishment. It is against this backdrop that all stakeholders in education must form a strong coalition to guarantee a congenial ambience for academic work and proper education of students.

In the light of this, the following recommendations have become crucial vis-à-vis the conclusions and the findings of the study established.

To start with, on the role of the media, it cannot be dismissed that the media is playing a very significant role and has contributed largely towards the democratization process in our country. It has enabled us as citizens to be aware

of certain issues within the public domain thereby facilitating the citizens role in ensuring that the government is held accountable and for that reason, I will not be dismissive of the role the media has played.

It is however admissible that there is some level of irresponsibility in the journalism profession that as a people we need to accept that a lot of our media practitioners are engaged in sensationalism and craze for money and in so doing publish and screen all sort of morally deprived materials which does not serve the interest of the nation and inimical to the moral construction of our youth.

Ideally every profession should have a code of ethics and a supreme body to regulate its members conduct in order not to drag the professions name in the mud but it appears the Ghana Journalist Association has lost its clout as a body with oversight responsibly in ensuring responsible media practice in the country

The Ghana Journalist Association, the Ghana Films Censorship Board, the Musicians Union of Ghana (MUSIGA) and the Ghana Media Commission should liaise and work collaboratively to ensure that morally dissipated songs, newspapers, films, magazines and of late radio programmes are shown the exit out of the country.

The GJA must as a matter of urgency take a second look at it curriculum in our journalism training schools to see if the curriculum is addressing some of these issues.

The National Commission on Culture must also rise up from its doldrums and defend the good aspects of our culture that ensured discipline in our communities from being eclipsed by foreign cultures that have brought our

demise in morality. This I believe if implemented could help apply the breaks on the wheels of indiscipline induced by the media

On the use of punishment, teachers, parents, students and the school authorities must come to terms with the fact that law rules society. Laws of the country are supposed to be obeyed by all members of the society. Where citizens flout the laws of the country, they are punished so that there will be order in the society. The responsibility for punishment has been assigned to judges. Hence it is their duty to exercise that power in accordance with the laws of the society without fear or favour. Citizens must understand that the judge in imposing punishment is only performing his duty. Hence any ill feeling must be directed at society at large who made the laws and prescribed the punishment and not the judges. If the citizens do not like the law they are free to change it. Judges therefore because of the nature of their work cannot be sued for anything said or done in their judicial capacity unless they act outside the scope of their work or jurisdiction. Punishment though painful has its benefits as well. The Holy Scriptures, in Hebrew 12 verses 5 to 11 recognizes this when it states that "God disciplines those He loves and such discipline when effected produces a harvest of righteousness and peace"

One of the aims of punishment is retribution. Retributive justice, which takes the form of hard labour, is to show the community's disapproval to injustice and to let offenders know that they will suffer proportionally for their deeds.

There is also the deterrent and preventive aims of punishment. Their objective is to put fear in the offender in order to prevent him from repeating the

crime in future. For such criminals the only way the society can be protected from their actions is solitary confinement for a considerable length of time and where necessary for life. This will make it extremely difficult for them to indulge in their criminal activities.

Punishment is also imposed on criminals to reform them. The idea behind the reformative aim is that there is something fundamentally wrong with those who commit crimes. There is no reason why in one society some members should be peace loving and law abiding while others should be violent. The reformative principle is therefore aimed at supplying the violent member of the society with the necessary deficiencies to cure him and guide him to a path of righteousness. To reform such a criminal implies to change his character by means of a particular punishment to him. This it is hoped will make the person a useful and productive person in the society. If these are not the reasons for which punishment is effected, then there is no justification for its use.

The school is a subset of the society and its laws or rules are carved out of the broader societal laws so that students can easily integrate into the society with minimal difficulty after completion of their study in the school. In pursuance of this, school authorities are made trustees and charged with the responsibility of training students in accordance with society's standards and expectation. Students must therefore understand that the school authorities are just performing their duties when a student misbehaves and is punished. The students must also understand that any one of them who deviates from the expectations of the school

has also fallen short of society's expectation and will have to be proportionally punished to correct them, reform them and serve as a deterrent to others as well

It is therefore incumbent on the students to amend their conducts to avoid being punished. The school authorities also have a responsibility to ensure that the power and confidence reposed in them is not abused by arbitrary use of punishment. Also in an event that a student would have to be punished, the rationale for which the student is being punished should be made known to him or her

It is the firm believe of this researcher that if this counsel is heeded to, disciplinary problems arising from punishment could be reduced to the barest minimum. This brings to mind the process of evolving and formulating school rules

In ideal sense all schools should have a set of rules and regulations tailored to direct the conduct and activities of the students. The rules should also be geared towards the attainment of the goals of the school. The rules and regulations cannot solve all disciplinary problem across board for all schools because indiscipline varies from school to school and therefore every misconduct must be treated as a unique case that must be investigated and a deserving antidote found to it

For this reason teachers, students, parents, heads of institutions and the schools board of governors must be involved in passing school rules and regulations because a matter that concerns all must be share and brainstormed by

all. Anyone of these parties who is minus out of the equation is likely to undermine the status quo established in the school.

The conservative and antiquated thinking that the student is a minor and must therefore not be represented in the parliament that formulates school rules and regulation must be discarded.

There are merits for engaging all the stakeholders in the process of formulating the school rules and regulations.

Students' participation in making rules will give them the opportunity to speak their minds and offer useful suggestions. This way, they will understand the spirit and letter of the rules. They will also feel that their views have been respected. The opinions of students can be elicited through the suggestion box and student representative council.

First year students should be provided with the code of conduct of the school on their first day of reporting to the school.

Teachers' involvement also ensures that the rules are enforced without fear or favour and teachers who seek cheap popularity with students by turning a blind eye on offences committed by students are eliminated.

Parent involvement also minimizes the embarrassment of what if, where some parents undermine the authority of teachers by openly abusing the teachers or punish their wards in the presence of students.

The board of governors of the school must also frequent the school to be abreast with events in the school rather than wait for things to escalate before the step in. They must also ensure that the scale of justice is held fairly balanced. The



situation where some alumni members intervene to waive punishment of their children when they misconduct themselves must be halted for that is tantamount to discriminative justice

School rules school also be reviewed periodically so as to bring them up to date with contemporary issues is diligently put into practice, students will not have problems with the school rules

The bible reads in Proverbs 22 verse 6 "that train up a child the way he should go and when he grows he will not depart from it". This Biblical verse gives the terms of reference to parents in their assignment as custodians charged with the responsibility of training up their children. While admitting that the economic situation in the country makes it difficult to have every tota of information about their children, there is no justification whatsoever for parental negligence. Parents must play a pivotal role in checking indiscipline in their children during their early years before teachers and religious leaders offer the needed support. Parents must have time to educate their children on the culture of respectful speech, dressing and also explain to them the effects of immorality so that the good attributes they pick up will guide them in the future. In addition, parents must avoid quarreling and using vulgar language in the presence of their children than their peers. Parents must not ever burden the school with entire responsibility of bringing up their wards

They must attend PTA meetings regularly where issues affecting their wards are deliberated upon. Parents must respond promptly when called upon by the school authorities to deal with misconducts involving their children. In the view of the researcher this recommendation will reduce parent related causes of indiscipline.

The Ghana Education Service must severely sanction any teacher who is not able to restrain himself and get entangled in sexual relationship with students. Teachers must not be permitted to conduct with students at odd hours to avoid the temptation of getting involved in such an abhorring act.

This will serve as a deterrent to other teachers who are contemplating joining their colleagues. This will minimize the incident of teacher-student sexual relationship.

To curb the high incidence of lateness and absenteeism on the part of teachers, the heads of institutions must intensify their supervisory role and query teachers who are late or absent from class or other gatherings of the school. The head must keep an eagle's eye on the attendance book for teachers.

Performance appraisal could also be used to audit the professional conduct of teachers to ensure that they conform to the ethics of their profession. These will keep the teachers on their toes. They will also vacate their lackadaisical attitude towards their professional mandate.

Also the guidance and counselling units must be strengthened to identify and deal with students' problems before they escalate. Teacher counselors must not involve themselves in the punishing of students else they will lose confidence.

in them and will avoid them when they have problems. Also, enrollment should be reduced to make monitoring effective.

Good conducts exhibited by students should be acknowledged and rewarded accordingly. Facilities that will enable students unearth their talents should be provided so that each student will gain recognition and fulfillment in what he or she knows how to do best else, students who cannot be identified with academic or sport achievements will strive for recognition in negative behaviours.

Structures for early detection and monitoring of students' misconducts should be put in place. This is to avoid the situation where school authorities are caught unaware and in their frustration, use excessive force to deal with students' misconducts, thereby exacerbating a minor irritation that would have been resolved amicably. If teacher and student informants' anonymity could be guaranteed without betrayal from their colleagues, they would be encouraged to report any unsavory acts.

A positive ethos in schools in which there are mutually respectful relationships between teachers and pupils and among teachers and other staff must be pursued. The ethos should recognize and value the social and community purposes of schools as well as academic purposes.

A more 'personalized' curriculum, which meets the learning needs of students, needs to be considered. All behaviour occurs in context. If you are made to feel stupid and worthless, one way of affirming your worth is by rebelling against the system, which undervalues you.

### **Recommendation for Further Studies**

The study was limited in scope because the findings were based on the responses of students and teachers from Ghana National College only. Its findings are therefore tentative. To make it more comprehensive, there is the need to replicate the subject of discipline among other second cycle institutions throughout the country.

Studies could be conducted to determine the correlation between discipline and students' achievements. Investigation could also be conducted to find out whether other forms of indiscipline other than those identified by this research exist in secondary schools in the country.

An enquiry into teachers' motivation to ensure discipline in schools is also recommended.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS**

**FACTORS AFFECTING DISCIPLINE AT GHANA NATIONAL  
COLLEGE, CAPE COAST**

The purpose of this study is to find out the factors that affect discipline at National and how to control them you are entreated to answer the questions as objectively and honestly as possible

Your response will be treated with strict confidentiality, as the purpose of the work is purely academic

Thank you for your co-operation

**Instruction**

Fill in the blank spaces and indicate by ticking (✓) in the box of the response that applies to you

**SECTION A - BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS**

- |   |      |                                       |                                    |                                    |
|---|------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Sex  | <input type="checkbox"/> Male         | <input type="checkbox"/> Female    |                                    |
| 2 | Age  | <input type="checkbox"/> Below 16 yrs | <input type="checkbox"/> 16-17 yrs | <input type="checkbox"/> 18-29 yrs |
| 3 | Form | <input type="checkbox"/> One          | <input type="checkbox"/> Two       | <input type="checkbox"/> Three     |

- 4 Programme of study  General Arts  Science  
 Business  Vocational skills

5 Where have you lived most part of your life?

6 Where do you normally spend your holidays?

### SECTION B - CAUSES OF INDISCIPLINE

#### Physical factors

Please indicate with a tick (✓) the extent to which you agree to the following physical factors as the cause(s) of indiscipline in nation, that is, S A Strongly Agree, A Agree, D Disagree and S D Strongly Disagree

	SA	A	D	SD
a Overcrowding				
i In the classroom				
ii Dormitories				
iii Dining hall				
iv Library				
v Dispensary				
b Acute shortage of mineral and toilet facilities				
c Poor library facilities/inadequate textbooks and other teaching and learning materials				

**SECTION C - DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS FACED BY THE  
ADMINISTRATION AND TEACHERS IN THE  
COLLEGE**

Please tick (✓) your level of awareness of students indiscipline viz

	To a large extent	To some extent	To a least extent	Not at all
Students indiscipline				
a Absenteeism				
i from classes				
ii from the dining hall and other social gatherings				
b Lateness to classes and other social gatherings				
c Examination malpractices				
d Writing on the walls				
e Destruction of school properties - tables and chairs, louver blades, fluorescent tubes				
f Drunkenness, smoking and use of hard drugs				
g Bullying, fighting				
h Sexual misconduct				
i Breaking				
j Extortion, stealing				
k Strikes, riots, demonstrations				

Social factors

	SA	A	D	SD
1 Lack of parental control				
2 Too much money given to students by parents as a compensation of love and care				
3 Peer influence				
4 Relationship between the administration and the student body				
5 Level of participation in decision-making				
6 Punishment meted out to students				
7 Limited flow of information				
8 School rules are too harsh and difficult to comply				
9 Influence of drugs				
10 Sexual relation between some of the male teachers and to opposite sex				
11 Influence of what students see on the television				

l. Please list any other acts of misbehaviour you consider which have been omitted

m. List any common acts of indiscipline on the part of the teachers that you know

n. What suggestions would you give to help combat or minimize disciplinary problems in the college?

i

ii

iii

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**APPENDIX B**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS**

**FACTORS AFFECTING DISCIPLINE AT GHANA NATIONAL  
COLLEGE, CAPE COAST**

This study is being conducted by the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, University of Cape Coast, to find out the factors that influence indiscipline at National and how to control them. We are therefore appealing to you to answer the following questions as objectively as possible. Confidentiality is highly assured.

**SECTION A - BIOSTATISTICS**

Tick (✓) or complete the following statements as it applies in your case.

- 1 Gender     Male                     Female
- 2 Age         21-30                     41 and above
- 3 Academic qualification and year
  - a  Diploma      Year
  - b  B A (Arts)      Year
  - c  B A (Soc Sc)    Year
  - d  B Ed              Year



e [ ] B Sc            Year

f [ ] M A            Year

g [ ] M Ed          Year

h Other (specify)

4 Professional status

i [ ] Superintendent

ii [ ] Senior superintendent

iii [ ] Principal superintendent

iv [ ] Assistant director

5 What subject(s) do you teach?

## SECTION B - CAUSES OF INDISCIPLINE

### Physical factors

Please indicate with a tick (✓) the extent to which you agree to the following physical factors as the cause(s) of indiscipline in college, that is, S A - Strongly Agree, A- Agree, D- Disagree and S D - Strongly Disagree

	SA	A	D	SD
a General Overcrowding in the school				
b Acute shortage of urinal and toilet facilities				
c General poor sanitation conditions on campus				
d Poor library facilities/ inadequate textbooks and other teaching and learning materials				

**SECTION C - DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS FACED BY THE  
ADMINISTRATION AND TEACHERS IN THE  
COLLEGE**

Please tick (✓) your level of awareness of students indiscipline viz

	To a large extent	To some extent	To a least extent	Not at all
Students indiscipline				
a Absenteeism				
i from classes				
ii from the dining hall and other social gatherings				
b Lateness to classes and other social gatherings				
c Examination malpractices				
d Writing on the walls				
e Destruction of school properties - tables and chairs, louver blades, fluorescent tubes				
f Drunkenness, smoking and use of hard drugs				
g Bullying, fighting				
h Sexual misconduct				
i Breaking of bounds				
j Extortion, stealing				
k Strikes, riots, demonstrations				

Social factors

	SA	A	D	SD
1 Lack of parental control				
2 Too much money given to students by parents as a compensation of love and care				
3 Peer influence				
4 Poor relationship between the administration and the student body				
5 Level of participation in decision-making				
6 Punishment meted out to students				
7 Limited flow of information				
8 School rules are too harsh and difficult to comply				
9 Influence of drugs				
10 Sexual relation between some of the male teachers and to opposite sex				
11 Influence of what students see on the television				

l Please list any other acts of misbehaviour you consider which have been omitted

m List any common acts of indiscipline on the part of the teachers that you know

n What suggestions would you give to help combat or minimize disciplinary problems in the college?

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