

**ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF INDISCIPLINE IN SCHOOL AS A  
MEANS OF ACHIEVING INNOVATION AND TRANSFORMATION IN  
TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS**

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**Abstract**

The paper discussed the issue of indiscipline in teaching and learning process by looking at the concepts of innovation, transformation, indiscipline and teaching and learning. It also looked the forms of indiscipline and the causes such as poor home training influence of mass media and so on. The paper identified some implications of school indiscipline on teaching and learning process like disrupting teaching and learning process thereby making school unsafe for learning and recommends that parents should ensure that their children and wards are well trained as early as possible by instilling the norms and values of the society in them so that teaching and learning process can be made more meaningful if innovation and transformation must thrive.

**Key words:** Innovation, Transformation, Indiscipline.

Education is a vital means of transforming individual and society. Education in Nigeria is also seen as a veritable tool used in the impartation of relevant skill, values, attitude and knowledge. In recent times, school

which the society sees as a place that produce useful individuals has to some extent failed in this duty due to numerous disciplinary problems encountered in school.

Discipline in the classroom is a prerequisite if any meaningful learning is to take place. (Lewis, 1999). Any form of teaching and learning carried

out in a chaotic environment cannot instill in the learners the necessary knowledge, values and skill that they need to function well in the society.

Indiscipline in school has been an issue of concern for educators and it has become a huge concern among educators, policy makers, and the society in general, due to outbreak of violence among learners and disobedience of rules and regulations of the school by the learners and teachers.

The paper therefore, discussed the issue of indiscipline in school as no meaningful teaching and learning can be achieved in an environment where discipline cannot be maintained. The various forms of indiscipline in school are discussed and how these disciplinary problems can be tackled if innovation and transformation must be achieved in teaching and learning.

### **Concept of Innovation and Transformation in Education**

Innovation, according to Hornby (2006), is a new way of doing something. Innovation is also about finding a better way of doing something. That is the application of better solutions that meet new requirements. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/innovation>) Innovation in education has to do with promoting creativity in the educational institutions such that the rapid advances in new technologies will help in changing the need of the economy. (<http://www.innovationcouncil.gov.in/in>

[dex.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=27&itemed=6](http://www.businessdictionary.com/content/view=article&id=27&itemed=6)). On the other hand, transformation is a process of profound and radical change that orients an organization in a new direction and takes it entirely to an entirely different level of effectiveness, ([www.businessdictionary.com/definition](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition) and meaning of transformation). Transformation in education or educational transformation is nothing less than the positive and purposeful transformation of every individual who is involved in education. The transformation of education is really about transforming ourselves-encouraging our own growth as well as our awareness of our growth.

### **Concept of Teaching and Learning**

Teaching refers to the process of imparting knowledge and skills from a teacher to a learner. It encompasses the activities of education or instructing. It is an act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character or physical ability of an individual ([www.ask.com>Q&A>Education>other](http://www.ask.com/Q&A/Education/other)). Learning is the acquisition of knowledge or skills through study, experience, or being taught. Learning is also seen as the act of acquiring new, or modifying and reinforcing exiting knowledge, behaviors, skills, values, or preferences and may involve synthesizing different types of information. ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Learning](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Learning)).

Learning according to Cherry is often defined as a relatively lasting

change in behaviour that is the result of experience. (psychology. about.com> About com> Education > psychology Dictionary> L index).

### **What is Indiscipline?**

Augie (1995) in Boyi (2013) stated that indiscipline is said to exist when members of the organization exhibit disorderly behaviour capable of frustrating, jeopardizing, slowing down or completely impeding the attainment of the set objectives of such an organization.

Thus, indiscipline is the act of going contrary to the norms and values of any given society. The result always brings discomfort and social disorder.

Indiscipline according to Chukwu (2011) refers to deviant behaviours from the normal and acceptable behaviours or those that are harmful to other people and neither promotes learning nor interpersonal relationships. Similarly, indiscipline is a behaviour that manifest frequently and persistently which hinders teaching, effectiveness, students learning process, and positive interpersonal relationships.

### **Forms/Types of Indiscipline**

The types of indiscipline that are found in Nigerian schools manifest in various forms. The types seen include the follow:

Examination malpractice involving students, teachers and parents, such as teachers selling out the examination questions to students,

sexual immorality among students and between staff and students, forcing students by teachers/lecturers to buy study materials by way of making the sale of the study materials as part of the continuous assessment mark, admission racketeering by the school management, stealing of school equipment and library books by students and staff, disregard for school rules and regulations, undesirable acts exhibited by students such as truancy, absenteeism, lateness, disobedience, apathy and stubbornness, alcoholism, drug abuse, cruelty, dishonesty, fighting, vandalism, bullying, indecent dressing, negligence, laziness, school riots, assaults on fellow students and teachers/lecturers, cultism, speaking pidgin English and wearing of dirty or wrong uniforms. (Nakpodia 2010)

### **Causes and Effects of Indiscipline in Teaching and Learning Process**

#### **1. Lack of Proper Home Training**

The home is the first school of the child and as one of the agents of socialization; it becomes mandatory on the parents and senior members of the home to impart into the child the belief system, attitude and interest of the society. When this is not properly done at home, it makes people who are known as human beings to behave like animals. The family remains the major agent of socialization of an individual from infancy to adolescence and beyond. This neglect by parents and guardians in effectively instilling

into their children the desired socialization they need can be attributed to parents/ guardians being always away from home throughout the day either as office workers or business people. In support of this, Lagu (2007) said that children at age two experience day –time absenteeism to day –care centers, school or evening lessons.

Ukoha (1992), in Ikwuba and Sugh (2013), pointed out that children learn by observing and imitating what they see in their parents/guardians. Most of what children do in early years of their lives are learnt from watching parents. Most of children's beliefs and values are acquired within the context of family. Some parents are not committed to the course of socialization of their children. Those parents that appear committed easily get tired of enforcing correction. The fact that, not all learners are indisciplined, is an indication that some of them still receive good socialization from home.

## **2. Influence of Mass Media**

The mass media is presently the major contributor to the high level of indiscipline among learners in the school today. Effects of media activities daily frustrate the efforts of family socialization of young people. Most acts of indiscipline such as violence and brutality, indecent dressing, crazy fashion and immorality today are learnt by the

young people from the media. Both parents and government do not determine the media activities the young people are exposed to sometimes, parents appear helpless over their children's over social attachment to media programme. What is often noticed is that children resist parental connection and prefer to defend their actions.

## **3. Government's Value System**

According to Ikwuba and Sugh (2013), Nigeria practices mixed economic system that is materialistic in nature. The Nigerian government attaches a lot of value to wealth to the detriment of life. Money in Nigeria is everything that worth striving for. This mainly accounts for the level of corruption experienced today in Nigeria. The following comments are made about the nature and level of corruption in Nigeria. Corruption is the major aspect of the lives of many Nigerians individually, collectively, religiously, socially, economically and politically (Abeshi, 2000).

The dominant value in the society determines the direction in which the society and its members move. A person who has a positive value orientation is well behaved and vice versa. Nigeria is a society that cherishes negative values. Children natured in this kind of unhealthy environment are bound to have problems with moral values.

The high level of corruption has led to other problems responsible for indiscipline in Nigerian schools. These include lack of proper funding, inadequate provision of teaching and learning facilities, lack of staff motivation, admission, malpractice, recruitment of unqualified staff, lack of proper supervision and monitoring of academic activities and above all, lack of effective formulation of academic policies and implementations. Indiscipline adversely affects every sector of the economy and every aspect of societal life. The deviants suffer punishment of various forms through which their peace and concentration in academics are affected. Some of them drop out of school through expulsion and failure. It causes some students to obtain poor results and could shorten a person's life span. For instance, some students at high institutions of learning and even at the secondary school level have died prematurely through cultism.

Indiscipline frustrates school efforts in inculcating norms and values of the society and in enhancing academic performance in students. Matsimoti (2000) indicated that "school indiscipline leads to poor academic performance." To him, because much time is spent on handling acts of indiscipline, less time is spent on teaching. This means that the syllabus is not covered hence students inadequately prepare for examinations. School infrastructure or other resources are damaged because of this negative

behaviour. Deviant students end up messing up the culture of schools. Teaching becomes a problem and the over all performance goes well below the least expected.

School indiscipline strains cordial social relationship between students, school staff and parent. Staff in a bid to correct students become their enemies and sometimes, target of attack. It creates atmosphere of insecurity for teachers and discourages hard work among teachers. Some parents out of their undue love and concern for their children enter into conflict with individual staff and school authorities in the course of correcting their children. Innovation and transformation in whatever form cannot thrive in an atmosphere of conflict.

Indiscipline batters societal norms and values. Abeshi (2000) pointed out that indiscipline destroys the foundation of the moral and ethical values on which the personal pronouns are yet allowed rich cultural heritage was founded. It has reduced the long standing regard that the world in general has for Nigerians and Nigeria as giant of Africa. It ruins a society's hope of raising responsible leadership, conclusive life atmosphere and development.

#### **Implication of School Indiscipline on Teaching and Learning Process**

Disciplined classroom environments are a pre-requisite for

effective teaching and learning. If school environments or classrooms are not conducive for effective teaching and learning, it has great negative impact on the quality of instruction. (Okolie, 2013).

This means that for innovation and transformation to take place in teaching and learning acts of indiscipline experienced in the school must be put to check. Some of the implications of indiscipline include:

1. Acts of indiscipline can severely impede the culture of teaching and learning in schools if not properly handled. In line with this Edem (1982) in Asiyai (2012), stated that indiscipline is an act that deviates from societal norms and values. It is a violation of school rules and regulations which is capable of obstructing the smooth and orderly functioning of the school system.
2. When teachers and learners are not disciplined, school goals become unattainable. Aguba (2009), states that discipline is very important so as to produce a breed of well cultivated youths who will develop not only respect for themselves but also for others in the school and society.
3. School indiscipline if not controlled breeds crisis and conflicts. And when this occurs, the school becomes violence prone and this can lead the learners into possessing

weapons engaging in substance abuse and gangsterism, this will make the school unsafe for conducive learning. In support of this, Maphosa and Mamman (2011), in Okolie (2013), said that the realization that learners could take and even abuse drugs at school as well as possess and use dangerous weapons serves to highlight how unsafe schools have become.

### **Conclusions**

The paper has shown that school indiscipline is a common phenomenon in Nigerian school system especially in the secondary and tertiary levels.

The paper also identified that parental/home factor, influence of mass media and some of the systems used by the government are some among the various factors that contribute to indiscipline in schools and have consequences on the teaching and learning process which means that if these disciplinary acts are not well handled they could severely impede on the innovations and transformation that must take place in teaching and learning.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the factors identified as the causes of indiscipline in school and its implication on achieving innovation and transformation in teaching and learning, the paper gives the following recommendation:

1. The fight against indiscipline should start from the home. As early as when a child is born, the

parents/guardians should try as much as possible to imbibe into the child the norms and values of the society. As the popular saying goes, charity begins at home, it becomes imperative on parents to ensure that their children or wards are given the necessary home training they need so as to help them function well and be useful to the society.

2. The mass media as all know is entrusted with the duty of entertaining, informing and educating. In the course of carrying out this duty, programmes that are not going to impact on young ones' positively must be properly screened and edited before released for viewers. The use of mass media equipment at home must be guided by parents to make sure that children do not watch programme that will not impact positively on them. Also use of cell phones by children should be put in check especially at night. In achieving this, parents can instruct their children/wards to switch off their cell phones at least by nine o'clock at night and the cell phones kept under their parents custody till the next day to stop their access to use of some of the social networks that can easily corrupt and destroy their well being.
3. The government and stakeholders in education should ensure that education is always given its right place in the hem of affairs. Teachers

should be adequately motivated by ensuring that their salaries are paid on time so that they do not resort to extorting money from learners. Also incessant strike actions in the system should be properly addressed. For example, for over six months the academic union of federal polytechnics and colleges of education in the country have been on strike. This strike action definitely must affect the students and teachers negatively. The students especially must have been exposed to so many ills in the society since they have been out of school for sometime. What this means is that when the students eventually are called back to school, so many things are bound to happen and it is only the people in the system that will be able to tell of their experiences.

4. The guidance and counseling units of schools also must be up and doing in their duties by ensuring that learners are constantly oriented and re-oriented on the ethics of the system so that these learners will at the end of their course of study be found worthy in character and learning because according to Donga (1998), without discipline there will be no education in any institution.

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