

# Students' Perception on the Effect of Disciplinary Suspension on their Psychological Well-being in Public Secondary Schools in Lang'ata Sub-County, Nairobi, Kenya.



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## Abstract

*The purpose of this study was to examine students' perception of disciplinary suspension on their Psychological Well-being in public secondary schools in Lang'ata Sub-county Nairobi, Kenya. The study was guided by two theories – deterrent and reformatory theories of punishment, and sought to address the following research objectives: to determine students' perception of disciplinary suspension in public secondary schools, to find out how students perceive the effects of disciplinary suspension on their psychological well-being. The study employed a mixed method research design specifically phenomenological and descriptive research designs. Target population consisted of forms two and three students, discipline masters and counsellors in the Sub-county public secondary schools. Findings established that there were varied perceptions of disciplinary suspension among the study participants such as: helping students to be reformed and deterring students from future offenses among others. The study also revealed that students perceived disciplinary suspension as a practice that had both positive and negative effects in their lives. The study recommended setting up 'in-school' suspension units in each public secondary school in the Sub-county. This is to ensure that every student with disciplinary suspension is remanded and given the necessary attention and follow up on what his or her indiscipline behaviour deserves.*

**Key Words:** Disciplinary Suspension, Psychological Well-being, Public Secondary Schools, Secondary Education, Counselors and Discipline Masters and Mistresses.

**Paper type:** Research paper

## Introduction

Discipline is vital for smooth running of secondary schools which does not only help to regulate student's behaviour in various situations but also their relationships with others; thus the effectiveness of any school is largely affected by the level of discipline of its members. The banning of corporal punishment and canning by the government of Kenya as a way of restoring discipline has led various school administrations to think of alternative and effective ways of maintaining discipline in schools (MoEST, 2001; Republic of Kenya, 2013; Kiprop, 2012). As a result, disciplinary suspension was recommended and currently used as a method to maintain order and discipline in Kenyan secondary schools. This is because students'

discipline is a major concern for various stakeholders in education from developed to developing countries all over the world (Kiprop, 2012).

As pointed out by Simatwa (2012) however, there are visible signs of breakdown of school discipline worldwide. According to Reynolds (2014) the quality of students' discipline is an important factor in determining the psychological well-being of the students. Psychological well-being consists of positive relations with others, environmental mastery, autonomy, life's purpose, personal growth and self-acceptance (Ryff & Singer, 2012). These attributes are achieved by attaining a state of balance between challenging and rewarding life events (Hird, 2017; Ryff & Singer, 2012). This implies that, students' psychological well-being is a key determinant towards the achievement of school goals and objectives. In many situations, disciplinary suspensions and other exclusionary approaches to indiscipline are used as punishment to achieving discipline by removing students who are trouble-makers from school (Arcia, 2012; American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008).

Disciplinary suspension therefore, is the removal of troublesome students from school for a period of time as a result of indiscipline behaviour (Arcia, 2012). Hence, disciplinary suspension is used in secondary schools as a behaviour management tool for indiscipline students. In all suspension cases however, a common assumption is that students who receive disciplinary suspension will be less likely to engage in disruptive or problem behaviour in the future. Those who utilize this approach on student's indiscipline assume that suspending a student from school serves as a deterrent and a reformative tool to students' problem behaviour (Skiba, 2013). The reality however from available literature is that disciplinary suspension does not always contribute to behaviour change of students' in school, rather contribute to worsening the behavioural condition of students'.

Globally, according to Skiba (2013), most schools find it difficult to manage effectively challenging students' behaviours including violence, anti-social behaviour, bullying, talking back to the teacher, disruptive classroom behaviour, and truancy. Expulsion from school is also used sometimes as a discipline tool although it is much less common than suspension (Skiba 2013). Studies on the impact of disciplinary suspension have been growing, particularly in the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (US) where it has been documented that the rates of disciplinary suspension are increasing yearly (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2013). Disciplinary suspension however, has been associated with negative consequences for suspended students including a high risk of academic failure and school dropout rate (Arcia 2012), detachment from school (Butler, 2005), and failure to graduate on time (Mendez, 2013), as well as student's alienation, alcohol and drug use, and antisocial behaviour in their later lives (Hemphill, 2011).

In Kenya, between 2008 and 2016, there were many cases of school unrest, involving especially burning of schools and students' suspensions were reported all over the country (Cooper, 2016). It was reported that suspension increased dramatically in public school systems in Kenya where over two thousand students were suspended from schools in 2015, the major reason being fighting, lack of respect for teachers, and the violation of zero tolerance policies (Maina & Thinguri, 2016).

Furthermore, cases of resistance to disciplinary suspension have also been observed. On 4th March 2017, Ndonga (2017) reported that Alliance Secondary



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school had suspended from school six students charged with bullying and assaulting their Form One colleague. The Chairman of the school's Management Board also ordered the demotion of 10 prefects including the school captain as part of measures to end the bullying incidents that shocked the country and left students traumatized (Ndonga, 2017). However, Vidija (2016) reported that on 6th September 2016, Sunshine Secondary school students sued the school's management for suspending them without giving them an opportunity to defend themselves against arson charges. They were among the eight who were arrested as they attempted to torch their dormitory on July 22, 2016 (Vidija, 2016).

From this background, it is evident that disciplinary suspension of students has continued to be an issue of concern and has been used as a behaviour management tool in secondary schools in Kenya. However, there is the important question of the perception of students towards disciplinary suspension and its effects on the life of the student. Answering this question provides a better understanding of its efficacy in ensuring discipline in schools.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The success of any education programme depends on a number of key factors including discipline which is one of the challenges that Principals and teachers face many challenges with regards to ensure students' compliance to school norms, regulations and ethics, especially after the government outlawed corporal punishment and canning as methods in schools (Republic of Kenya, 2013).

The culture of students' indiscipline is widespread among public secondary schools in Kenya and Lang'ata Sub-county is not an exception (Lang'ata Sub-County Education Office, 2017). This is in spite of government and schools' efforts to curb it. Emerging students' indiscipline issues in public secondary schools is of great concern to parents, school administration and the ministry of education. This is because a good number of the various acts of students' indiscipline have resulted to suspension and in extreme cases, expulsion. For example, within the 2016/2017 academic year, 87 students were suspended from public secondary schools (Lang'ata Sub-County Education Office, 2017) and this number of suspended students may increase if nothing is done to save the situation.

Consequently, if the rate at which students are suspended is not addressed there may be a high likelihood that the unaddressed emotional and psychological issues caused by disciplinary suspension will lead to low retention rate, poor completion rate as well as poor academic performance of students. Therefore there is need to understand how students perceive disciplinary suspension as well as the effects it exerts on their psychological well-being.

### **Objectives of the study**

- i. To determine students' perception of disciplinary suspension in public secondary schools in Lang'ata Sub-county, Nairobi, Kenya.
- ii. To find out how students perceive the effects of disciplinary suspension on their psychological well-being.



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## Literature Review



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### *Students' Perception of Disciplinary Suspension*

The way students perceive disciplinary suspension is a very important aspect of the phenomenon. This is because disciplinary suspension is aimed at developing in every suspended student a positive attitude toward self-discipline and socially acceptable behaviour. To help every school maintain a learning atmosphere that is safe, conducive for teaching and learning, and free from unnecessary disruption; every student is expected show respect to constituted school authorities, follow rules, policies and laws regarding conduct, discipline, and attendance in school (Colorado District School, 2012).

The global rationale behind disciplinary suspension in secondary schools at times the continued presence of the student in the school would present a serious danger to the safety of either the student or to others in the school community. This means that "School objectives are important considering the fact that discipline or the lack of it thereof, is one of the greatest challenges facing public schools in the United States (Wesley, 2011, p. 5).

According to the Newcastle University (2018), disciplinary suspension takes place when disciplinary procedures has been completed and the decision is that the student be excluded from the school for a specific period of time. Suspension therefore, is the exclusion of a student from an institution for a period of time and it is used as a mechanism to deal with indiscipline students especially in secondary schools. When suspension is perceived as a behaviour management tool, students' who are found stealing or in possession of other student's property, taking drugs, fighting, disobeying school rules, participating in strikes or school unrest among others, are likely to be suspended from school (Omulema, 2015).

In another study carried out by Choi (2017) on students' perception of disciplinary measures in public secondary schools in Kedah, Malaysia majority of the students (80%) felt that disciplinary measures such as disciplinary suspension are unfair, unreasonable, and unsuitable for them. The reason for this perception was that suspension brings the students into loggerhead with their parents, teachers and colleagues in school (Choi, 2017). This reveals that the negative consequences of disciplinary suspension have always been reasons why students do not support it as a behaviour management tool.

In Africa, some studies also have been carried on how students perceive disciplinary suspension. For instance, in a case study that sought student's perception of disciplinary suspension in Ibadan, Nigeria, Okunade (2015) made a distinction between assertive and restorative discipline. Advocated and developed by Lee Canter in 1976, assertive discipline is a method to classroom control which helps teachers to have an organized, teacher-in-charge classroom environment that prevents discipline problems (Aliakbari, 2015), while restorative school practices fundamentally recognizes that schools are educational institutions, so policy and practice should be educative for individual children and the school community (Moyer, 2011). When these two disciplinary methods are properly put in place, then, disciplinary suspension will no longer be needful.

Narrowing down to Kenya, a study by Koech (2017) on the influence of disciplinary suspension on students' behaviour in Bomet county secondary schools revealed that despite the use of suspension, there is still widespread of indiscipline among students

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in the schools. Koech further explained that perceptions of students on suspension policies influence their behaviours in school. This is because some students derive pleasure in being suspended from school since their peers would see them as heroes or heroines who have easily managed to accommodate the worst punishment a school can give to a student. This shows that disciplinary suspension sometimes does not deter or reform students but rather paves way for them to misbehave in the future; especially when they perceive the application and explanation of the rules to be partial or unfairly applied. Furthermore, according to Koech (2017) majority of students felt that suspension was of little use and predicted that they would be suspended from school again". The survey also found that 55% of the suspended students were angry with the person who recommended their suspension from school; while 45% of the students felt that suspension is of little or no value. This suggests that disciplinary suspension does not really meet the needs of the students' with behaviour problems. Perhaps the most disturbing issue with it is that it tends to push away the very students who need the most support from their school.



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*Perceived effects of disciplinary suspension on their psychological well-being.*

A study carried out by Hemphill, et al (2014) in Australia, examined how school suspension affects students' future and social behaviour. The study found that despite its wide use in schools, disciplinary suspension still have serious, unintended negative consequences for the suspended student across a range of domains including poor educational outcomes and problem behaviours. Suspension has also been shown to be a risk factor for juvenile delinquency and future imprisonment. In some studies in the USA, it has been proven that school disciplinary suspension increases the likelihood of the student engaging in anti-social behaviour (that includes violent and nonviolent behaviours) (Perry, 2014; Quin, 2014; Sanders, 2011)

According to Omulema (2015), the practice of suspension and expulsion will continue to be part of the disciplinary resources available to schools for handling disruptive and violent behaviour, and in many cases are needed to protect students and teachers from serious disruption and violence. They maintained that though students who are suspended from school are placed at risk of a host of psychological outcomes including depression, emotional conflicts, low self-esteem and conflict with peers and parents, yet suspension is used as punishment for indiscipline students'. If this is true, then the question is whether disciplinary suspension should be used in secondary schools as a behaviour management tool. Does it mean that there are no better alternative punishments to students' indiscipline and disruptive behaviour.

The findings of a study on the influence of disciplinary suspension on secondary school students behaviour in Bomet County by Koech (2017) are in contradiction with reformation theory where it is found that instead of reforming anti-social behaviour among secondary school students, disciplinary suspension negatively contributed to a poor attitude and behaviour (Koech, 2017). Similarly, Koech agrees with Omulema (2015) that disciplinary suspension has negative psychological effects on suspended students. His findings indicate that when students are suspended, they get depressed; as a result, their concentration in academic and other activities in the school are reduced..





## Research Methodology

The study used a mixed research design, specifically the study applied both descriptive survey and phenomenological research designs. Descriptive research design is considered appropriate because it allows the researchers to gather quantifiable and measurable data that can be used to statistically analyze a given population or a particular subject. Similarly, through phenomenological research design, the aim of the research was to understand the essence of situation created by disciplinary suspension by exploring the views of people who have experienced that phenomenon and to obtain an overall picture as it stands when the study is being carried out (Boyd, 2012).

The target population comprised of all the 248 forms two and form three students, the 3 discipline masters/mistresses and the 3 school counsellors of the 3 public secondary schools in Lang'ata Sub-county Nairobi Kenya. In this study, purposive sampling and systematic sampling designs were used. Three (3) public secondary schools were purposively sampled as shown in figure Table 1.



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**Table 1**

*Sampling Matrix of student Respondents per School*

2017-2018 Academic Year	Gender		
	Boys	Girls	Total
School A		84	84
School B	83		83
School C	41	40	81
Total			248

*(Source: Researcher, 2018)*

The researchers also used purposive sampling design to sample three (3) discipline masters/mistresses and three (3) school counsellors respectively. Systematic sampling was used to sample 248 students. This sample comprised of both suspended and non-suspended students. By employing systematic sampling method the first  $k^{\text{th}}$  element was selected at random and all other elements were selected systematically according to a predetermined pattern. The sample size ( $n$ ) of students who responded to the questionnaire was thus obtained by selecting the first  $3^{\text{rd}}$   $k^{\text{th}}$  element of the population ( $N$ ) and every  $3^{\text{rd}}$  unit thereafter; where  $n$  is the sample size,  $k^{\text{th}}$  is the class interval and  $N$  is the total population. The sampling frame is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2***Sampling Matrix of all Study Participants*

Category	Target population	Sampling procedure	Actual Sample	Percentage (%)
Schools	3	Purposive	3	100
Discipline masters	3	Purposive	3	100
Counsellors	3	Purposive	3	100
Form 2 and 3 Students	758	Systematic sampling	248	32.7

*(Source: Researcher)*

This study used both qualitative and quantitative research instruments. Interview guide was used to collect qualitative data whereas questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data. All quantitative data obtained from questionnaires were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program for windows version 21. On the other hand, qualitative data derived from open ended questions and interview guides were analyzed using thematic analysis technique. Codes were used to represent the different participants interviewed and consequently employed in the reporting of qualitative data. The codes include  $F_3SFS_A$  denoting form three suspended female student from school A, IFCA represents interviewed female counsellor from school C,  $F_3SFS_A$  stand for form three suspended female student from school A,  $F_2SFS_C$  denotes form two suspended female student from school C, and  $F_3SMS_C$  for form three suspended male student from school C.

### Response Rate

The initial sample size of the study was 254 (100%) respondents, which included 244 students who were to respond to the questionnaire for quantitative data and 10 respondents who were to participate in the interview schedules for qualitative data. Out of 248 questionnaires which were distributed for quantitative data, only 238 were fully filled on return. Nine participants out of ten responded to interview schedules for qualitative data, including 3 discipline masters/mistresses, 2 counsellors and 4 students. In total 247 respondents participated in the research. This gave a response rate of 97% which was considered sufficient for data analysis following the recommended minimum of 50% by Mugenda and Mugenda (2013). This means there was good and proportional representation of respondents of the sample size. The summary is on Table 3.



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**Table 3***Response Rate of Respondents*

Category	Respondents	Responded	%	Not Responded	%
Form 2 and 3 Students	248	242	97	5	2
Discipline Masters/ Mistresses	3	3	0.3	0	0
Counsellors	3	2	0.2	1	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>97.5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2.1</b>



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**Discussion of Findings****Students Perception of Disciplinary Suspension**

The first objective of this study sought to determine students' perception of disciplinary suspension in Langata Sub-County Public Secondary schools. Students were required to respond to 8 questions designed to elicit their perception on disciplinary suspension. The data collected on this issue is presented in Table 4

**Table 4***Students Perception of Disciplinary Suspension*

STATEMENTS	SD (1)	D (2)	UD (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Mean	Std. Dev.
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)		
Indiscipline students should be suspended from school	46(19.3)	42(17.2)	32 (13.4)	76(32.4)	49(18.1)	3.13	1.409
Disciplinary suspension helps students to comply with school rules and regulations	30(12.6)	27(11.3)	12(5.0)	89(37.4)	80(33.6)	3.68	1.371
Suspended students are deterred from committing offense in the future	43(18.1)	40(16.8)	32(13.4)	76(26.5)	49(22.3)	3.19	1.418
Suspended students sometimes drop out of school	33(13.9)	26(10.9)	22(9.2)	82(34.5)	75(31.5)	3.59	1.390
Disciplinary suspension helps students to reform	34(14.3)	39(16.4)	17(7.1)	81(34.0)	67(28.1)	3.45	1.415
Disciplinary suspension is not the best way to restore order and discipline in school	44(18.5)	49(20.6)	24(10.1)	45(18.9)	76(31.9)	3.24	1.534
Students who were suspended from school are able to reintegrate themselves in school	54(22.7)	52(21.8)	16(6.7)	76(27.7)	49(21.0)	3.03	1.501
Disciplinary suspension should be abolished	58(24.4)	53(22.3)	30(12.6)	34(14.3)	63(26.5)	2.96	1.552

n=238 (100%) (Source: Researcher, 2018)



The result of the study on student's perception of disciplinary suspension shows that students were in support of disciplinary suspension. This support emerged from the fact that majority of the students (62.1%) were of the opinion that disciplinary suspension helps students to be reformed while 48.8% believe that disciplinary suspension deters students from future offenses. This result therefore agrees with reformative and deterrent theories of punishment that informs this study – that punishment of offences have reformative and deterrent effects on the offender when it is given at the right time and with the right measure. This result disagrees with Koech (2017) who found that despite the use of suspension, there is still widespread of indiscipline behaviour among students in secondary schools. The current study revealed that students, discipline masters/mistresses and counsellors have varied perceptions of disciplinary suspension. Some support it while others are against it. Those in support of it consider it to be an effective means to restore order and discipline in school, that guarantee effective teaching and learning; For instance, a F<sub>3</sub>SFS<sub>A</sub> interviewed from school A' said

*I support disciplinary suspension because it helps the students to know that the mistake they did is not good, that they should abide by the school rules and regulations. It helps the students to understand that the mistake they do is wrong, that they should always try to do the right thing when they are in school (Interview, 29 June, 2018);*

Those against it advocate for its removal because it's not considered as the best option to restoring order and discipline in schools. For instance, the IFC<sub>A</sub> from school A said:

*Some students drop out of school because of discrimination from teachers and stigmatization from students. Sometimes teachers relate to these students with suspension experience differently especially those whose offence was considered serious. These students are often snubbed by teachers which make them afraid to approach teachers for assistance in their studies since they feel that the teacher might get upset with them (Interview 28 June, 2018).*

Furthermore, the findings from the study participants interviewed show that they support disciplinary suspension. For instance, a F<sub>3</sub>SFS<sub>A</sub> interviewed from school 'A' said

*I support disciplinary suspension because it helps the students to know that the mistake they did is not good, that they should abide by the school rules and regulations. It helps the students to understand that the mistake they do is wrong, that they should always try to do the right thing when they are in school (Interview, 29 June, 2018).*

Therefore many research participants were in support of disciplinary suspension of students because it deters students from future offenses and thus help them to be reformed. From these findings, it can be interpreted that the practice of disciplinary suspension in Langata public secondary schools is a very difficult and challenging one. It is difficult and challenging because on the one hand students perceive suspension as a good practice 50.5% and on the other hand some do not accept it as the best way to restore order and discipline in school.

This suggests that measures need to be put in place – like psycho-education and in-school-suspension – to help students obey school rules and regulations as well as take responsibility of their actions whenever they contravene school rules.



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The findings therefore is in line with deterrent theory of punishment, which holds that offender's punishment should be strong and sufficient enough to prevent future instances of the offense. The findings and the theory therefore support school administration to suspend students who try to disrupt the school life.



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## Perceived Effects of Disciplinary Suspension on Psychological Well-being of Students

The third research question was to determine the effect of disciplinary suspension on psychological well-being of public secondary school students in Langata Sub-county, Nairobi, Kenya. To determine this, students were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with regards to statements measuring the effects of disciplinary suspension on psychological well-being of students. The data collected is presented in Table 5.

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**Table 5**

### *Perceived Effects of Disciplinary Suspension on Well-being of Students*

STATEMENT	SD (1)	D (2)	UD (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Mean	Std. Dev.
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)		
Disciplinary suspension affects students positively	58(24.4)	48(20.2)	24(10.1)	61(25.6)	47(19.7)	2.96	1.494
Disciplinary suspension affects students negatively	45(18.9)	36 (15.1)	28(11.8)	59(24.8)	70(29.4)	3.30	1.498
Students who receive disciplinary suspension are often anti-social and rude	43(18.1)	48(20.2)	32(13.4)	62(26.0)	53(22.3)	3.14	1.437
Because of disciplinary suspension some students drop out of school	23(9.7)	30(12.6)	23(9.7)	61(25.6)	101(42.4)	3.70	1.315
Often, students who were suspended from school do not have good and positive relationship with teachers	39(16.4)	33(13.8)	21(8.8)	66(27.7)	79(33.3)	3.47	1.477
Often, students who were suspended from school do not have good and positive relationship with fellow students	70(29.4)	55(23.1)	26(10.9)	58(24.4)	29(12.2)	2.68	1.426
Students who were suspended from school are discriminated against in class	78(32.7)	56(23.5)	30(12.6)	35 (14.7)	39(16.4)	2.60	1.477
Disciplinary suspension makes students feel less confident about themselves.	35(14.7)	36(15.1)	26(10.9)	78(32.7)	63(26.5)	3.40	1.409
Students who are suspended from school perform poorly in studies	51(21.4)	39(16.4)	46(19.3)	49(20.6)	53(22.2)	3.05	1.455

n=238(100%) (Source: Researcher, 2018)



Based on the research results, it is evident that disciplinary suspension had both positive and negative effects on student's psychological well-being. A valid 45% of the study participants agree to the positive effects of disciplinary suspension on student's well-being while a valid 44.6% disagree. This implies that majority of the study participants' favour the use of suspension in the management of student's indiscipline behaviour since it is considered an effective means to restore order and discipline in school. Similarly, a valid 54.2% of the study participants agree to the negative effect of disciplinary suspension on student's well-being as against 34.0% who disagree. Furthermore, the perceived effects of disciplinary suspension on well-being of students showed a highest mean score and standard deviation of ( $M = 3.70$ ,  $SD = 1.498$ ) and a lowest mean score and standard deviation of ( $M = 2.60$ ,  $SD = 1.409$ ). This indicates that the data points are spread out over a range of values. Contrary to deterrent theory of punishment, the result shows that majority of the students 54.2 % agree that the negative effects of suspension outweighs its positive effects. This result is in agreement with Omulema (2015) that disciplinary suspension has negative psychological effects on suspended students. His findings indicate that when students are suspended, they get depressed; as a result, their concentration in academic and other activities in the school are reduced



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Based on these research findings, it is evident that disciplinary suspension had both positive and negative effects on student's psychological well-being. One of the positive effects of disciplinary suspension is that it helped students' to become aware that certain behaviours are not tolerated in school. For example a  $F_2SFS_C$  form two suspended female student from school C said

*I was suspended for one week as a result of fighting in school. The suspension came to me as a surprise because I never believed that one day I will be suspended from school. It was my first time to fight in school. I pleaded to be pardoned but that never happened. For the first two days I was bitter and angry with myself and the student I fought with. Later, however, the suspension experience helped me to reflect on how I could have avoided the fight and by extension the suspension. I've learned a lesson and have resolved never to fight again in school (Interview, 24/6/2018).*

Similar findings from qualitative data derived from interview participants showed that the students who are suspended were psychologically affected negatively. For example, a  $F_3SMS_C$  from school C said:

*When I was suspended, my parents insulted me and they were disappointed and I hated myself. The suspension also affected my performance in Mathematics and Chemistry. I was also stigmatized by other students who viewed me as a bad person. When I came back from suspension, I lost some of my friends because they now consider me to be a bad person (Interview, 24/6/2018).*

The implication from the study findings is that disciplinary suspension has more negative effects on student's well-being than positive effects. This finding agrees with Gregory (2014) who asserts that the negative consequences of disciplinary



suspension outweighs its positive benefits because it increases the possibility of poor study outcome and eventual dropping out of school of suspended students. This shows therefore that disciplinary suspension is a multi-faceted phenomenon which should involve various stakeholders in its planning and implementation.



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## Conclusions and Recommendations

From the first research objective, the study concluded from its findings that students, discipline masters/mistresses and counsellors have varied perceptions of disciplinary suspension including that it helps students to be reformed and that it deters them from future offenses among others. The study also concluded that disciplinary suspension is a multi-faceted phenomenon. As a result of its multi-faceted nature, some study participants were against it and advocate for its removal while others are in support of it and solicit for its use in secondary schools. The study participants in support of it consider it to be an effective means to restore order and discipline in school. They argue that disciplinary measures are necessary for maintaining safe, conducive, harmony, controlled, and positive environment in secondary school. In an effort to prevent and resolve students' discipline problems and ensure efficient functioning of schools as a second home for the students, there must be fair, reasonable, and suitable disciplinary measures where students' perception should be taken into account. Similarly, study participant who are against it advocate for its removal because it's not considered as the best option to restoring order and discipline in schools. This is because they perceive disciplinary suspension as unfair, unreasonable and unsuitable in matters of education.

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Based on the second research objective, the study concluded from its findings that disciplinary suspension had both positive and negative effects on student's psychological well-being. One of the positive effects of disciplinary suspension is that it helped students' to become aware that certain behaviours are not tolerated in school. Similarly, disciplinary suspension also affected student's psychological well-being negatively since some participants reported being bitter and filled with hatred towards self before and after the suspension experience. As a result of this bitterness and hatred, the bond between the student and the school is weakened, which is a disadvantage since the student feels socially disconnected and ostracized from friends and the school.

Following the research findings, the study recommends that various stakeholders in education be involved in the planning and implementation of disciplinary suspension in secondary schools. As stakeholders in the education of students, their perceptions about suspension as a tool for discipline and contributions will provide suggestions to improve the discipline in secondary schools for the betterment of the students and the society at large. Again the study recommends to the students to be law abiding in school. This is because the school rules and regulations exist to help them become better students. When these rules are kept, there would not be any need for suspension. The study also recommends to parents to teach their children good manners and behaviour at home. This is because majority of suspension cases were as a result of inappropriate behaviour and bad manners.

Considering the positive effects which disciplinary suspension has on students psychological well-being, the study recommends that the Ministry of Education should see to it that every secondary school has a quality and functional



guidance and counseling department as well as counseling rooms to help counsel students with disciplinary issues in the school before they are suspended from the school. As a result of its negative effects, the study recommended that the Ministry of Education should see to it that each public secondary school submits its student disciplinary suspension rules which outlines student's offenses that attract suspension and their duration. This will help the ministry to monitor and evaluate disciplinary suspension cases and by extension help reduce its negative effects on student's well-being. This is to ensure that every student with disciplinary suspension is remanded and given the necessary attention and follow up on what his or her indiscipline behaviour deserves.



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