



Comparing Perceptions of Students, Teachers, and Parents on Disciplinary Issues in Public Senior High Schools – A Case Study of Schools in Kumasi, Ghana

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of students, teachers, and parents on disciplinary issues in Public Senior High Schools in Kumasi, Ghana. This study employed a stratified simple random sample approach to determine a sample size of 387 students, 387 parents and 216 teachers. Quantitative data was gathered from four public senior high schools in Kumasi, namely Islamic Senior High School, Kumasi Technical Institute, Opoku Ware School, and Serwaa Nyarko Senior High School. Utilizing ANOVA, the study compared the perspectives of students, teachers, and parents on the definition and purpose of discipline. The use of semi-structured interviews also provided insights into the perception of parents, students, and teachers in public senior high schools in Ghana. The study revealed varying perspectives on the definition and purpose of discipline among students, teachers, and parents. Thus, teachers held a neutral stance, parents disagreed, and students strongly agreed on the concept of discipline. Additionally, differences in perceptions between students and teachers were noted regarding prevalent disciplinary issues such as disobedience and leaving school without permission. Neutrality among teachers and students was identified concerning the destruction of school property as a prevailing disciplinary issue. This study concludes that there are significant variations in how students, teachers, and parents perceive the concept and purpose of discipline. It is recommended that there should be regular meetings and workshops to engage parents and teachers in determining the positive purpose of disciplinary actions collaboratively. By providing insights into the differing perceptions of students, teachers, and parents on disciplinary issues in Ghanaian high schools, this study provides an understanding of how these perspectives impact disciplinary policy and intervention effectiveness.

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INTRODUCTION

Disciplinary issues among students in public senior high schools represent a significant concern for educational institutions with varied perceptions among parents, students and teachers.¹ According to Green et al. parents' perception encompasses how they view and interpret various aspects of their

¹ Joshua W. Kimani, "School Factors Influencing Students' Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Kinangop District, Kenya," 2013.

children's education, school environment, and educational stakeholders, including teachers and administrative staff.² Also, Eccles and Roeser note that the perception of students encompasses their attitudes towards their school, their engagement with the curriculum, their relationships with peers and teachers, their reaction toward disciplinary methods and their overall satisfaction with their education.³ On the other hand, the perception of teachers refers to how teachers view their role, their students, the educational system, and their working conditions.⁴ This perception which includes their beliefs about their efficacy, their relationship with students and parents, their satisfaction with their job, and their views on educational policies and practices impacts how they manage discipline. Managing discipline constitutes one of the most challenging and unpleasant aspects of the teaching profession.⁵ Educators grapple with the multifaceted responsibilities of educating, socializing, empowering, and certifying students, yet the issue of student indiscipline remains very challenging.⁶

Globally, disciplinary issues in high schools have remained a major concern over the years.⁷ According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), common disciplinary problems in schools include bullying, absenteeism, and substance abuse. These issues not only disrupt the learning environment but also have long-term detrimental effects on students' academic and social development.⁸ To support this, a comprehensive study by Temitayo et al. identified physical assault, particularly bullying, as one of the most prevalent disciplinary issues in American schools. The study found that a significant percentage of students reported experiencing or witnessing physical aggression, which has alarming implications for the safety and well-being of students.⁹

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reports that disciplinary issues in high schools within the African continent present significant challenges that impact educational outcomes and overall school environments (OECD, 2018).¹⁰ According to OECD (2018), high levels of indiscipline among students within Africa manifest in various forms, including truancy, substance abuse, violence and disrespect towards teachers and peers. To support this, studies in Nigeria highlighted issues such as bullying, examination malpractice, and violence as prevalent disciplinary concerns in public senior high schools.¹¹ Additionally, in Liberia, the aftermath of the civil war has left a lasting impact on the education system, contributing to disciplinary issues among students.¹² Similarly, studies show that disciplinary issues in public senior high schools in Ghana vary, encompassing issues such as truancy, substance abuse, and conflicts among students.¹³ One prevalent disciplinary issue in Ghanaian public senior high schools is academic misconduct. There are instances of cheating, plagiarism, and examination malpractice among students. The pressure to excel academically, coupled with limited resources

² Christa L. Green et al., "Parents' Motivations for Involvement in Children's Education: An Empirical Test of a Theoretical Model of Parental Involvement," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 99, no. 3 (2007): 532.

³ Jacquelynne S Eccles and Robert W Roeser, "Schools as Developmental Contexts during Adolescence," *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 21, no. 1 (2011): 225–41.

⁴ Robert M. Klassen and Ming Ming Chiu, "Effects on Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Job Satisfaction: Teacher Gender, Years of Experience, and Job Stress," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 102, no. 3 (2010): 741.

⁵ Ajibola A Lukman and Ali A Hamadi, "Disciplinary Measures in Nigerian Senior Secondary Schools: Issues and Prospects," *IOSR Journal of Research and Method in Education* 4, no. 3 (2014): 11–17.

⁶ Fukuzawa Rebecca Erwin, "Classroom Management, School Culture and Community: An Ethnography of Middle School Discipline Policies," 法政大学小金井論集 3 (2006): 13–36; Lukman and Hamadi, "Disciplinary Measures in Nigerian Senior Secondary Schools: Issues and Prospects."

⁷ Kelly Welch and Allison Ann Payne, "Zero Tolerance School Policies," *The Palgrave International Handbook of School Discipline, Surveillance, and Social Control*, 2018, 215–34.

⁸ UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report 2020: Inclusion and Education: All Means All* (Paris: UNESCO, 2020), <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/report/2020/inclusion>.

⁹ Olaitan Temitayo, Mohammed A Nayaya, and Ajibola A Lukman, "Management of Disciplinary Problems in Secondary Schools: Jalingo Metropolis in Focus," *Global Journal of Human Social Science, Linguistics and Education* 13, no. 14 (2013): 7–19.

¹⁰ OECD, "Equity in Education: Breaking down Barriers to Social Mobility," Paris: OECD Publishing, 20AD, <https://www.oecd.org/education/equity-in-education-9789264073237-en.html>.

¹¹ M Omoniye, "Bullying in Schools: Psychological Implications and Counselling Interventions," *Journal of Education and Practice* 4, no. 18 (2013): 70–77; E I Obilor and G U Miwari, "Assessing the Consequences of Violence in Nigerian Public Secondary Schools," *International Journal of Innovative Psychology & Social Development* 9, no. 2 (2021): 133–43.

¹² David Nkengbeza, *Building a Professional Learning Community in a Conflict and Post-Conflict Environment: A Case-Study of a High School in Liberia* (University of Jyväskylä, 2014).

¹³ Paul Kwasi Kumah et al., "Effective Disciplinary Strategies to Combating Indiscipline in Public Senior High Schools in Kumasi, Ghana," *Journal of Education and Practice* 7, no. 7 (2023): 43–64.

contributes to unethical behavior, jeopardizing the integrity of the educational system.¹⁴ Also, a study by Opoku-Asare et al. provided that, interpersonal conflicts and bullying are pervasive disciplinary issues affecting students in Ghanaian schools; bullying in particular manifests in various forms including physical, verbal and cyberbullying. These issues not only compromise the safety and well-being of students but also create a hostile learning environment.¹⁵

According to a UNESCO report, African schools often face unique socio-economic and cultural challenges that exacerbate these issues.¹⁶ Factors such as poverty, political instability, and the prevalence of child labor contribute to an environment where maintaining discipline is particularly difficult. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) highlights that exposure to violence in communities often spills over into school settings, leading to increased incidences of bullying and physical confrontations among students.¹⁷ Additionally, the lack of adequate training for teachers in managing classroom behavior, coupled with insufficient support from school administrations, exacerbates the problem.¹⁸ Moreover, the fear of academic failure and societal expectations can create a high-stakes environment, fostering a culture where students resort to negative coping mechanisms.¹⁹

The prevailing disciplinary issues among students in Africa particularly Ghanaian high schools contribute to academic deterioration.²⁰ Furthermore, studies highlight the emotional toll of bullying, leading to increased stress, anxiety, and diminished overall well-being among victims. Such negative psychosocial consequences can hinder students' personal development and create an environment of fear and hostility within the school community.²¹ However, strategies and efforts to mitigate disciplinary issues in Ghana public senior high schools have become challenging due to a lack of unanimous perception on the concept of discipline and measures perceived as appropriate to address indiscipline acts. For instance, parents in Ghana often view disciplinary issues through the lens of safety and academic success and express concern that lenient disciplinary measures may lead to a lack of respect for authority and a decline in academic performance.²² Students view certain indiscipline actions as normal; examination malpractice in particular is perceived by students as an eligible medium for their academic success, and feel that disciplinary actions like punitive measures are inconsistent and sometimes unfair.²³ Teachers on the other hand perceive that exam malpractice, truancy, disrespect and violence are significant problems, with 65% of teachers citing them as common issues in their schools and that restorative practices and punitive measures are effective in promoting discipline.²⁴

Consequently, this discrepancy in perspectives informs the purpose of this study which seeks to compare the perception of students, teachers, and parents on disciplinary issues in Public Senior High Schools in Kumasi, Ghana. Specifically, this study intends to compare stakeholders' perspectives on the definition and purpose of disciplinary issues and to compare stakeholders' perspectives on the types of disciplinary issues most prevalent in PSHS. By providing insights into the differing perceptions of students, teachers, and parents on disciplinary issues in Ghanaian high schools, this study provides an

¹⁴ I. N. Alabira, "Factors Associated with Student Disciplinary Behaviour: A Study Of Sakasaka Cluster Of Schools In The Tamale Metropolis Of The Northern Region Of Ghana" (2023).

¹⁵ Nana Afia Amponsaa, Opoku-Asare, Harriet Takyi, and Margaret Owusu-Mensah, "Conflict Prevalence in Primary School and How It Is Understood to Affect Teaching and Learning in Ghana," *SAGE Open* 5, no. 3 (2015): 2158244015592935.

¹⁶ UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report 2018: Accountability in Education*, 2018, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000265538>.

¹⁷ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), "Education for Justice (E4J) Initiative: Comprehensive Education Modules on Integrity and Ethics," 2019, <https://www.unodc.org/e4j/>.

¹⁸ Elizabeth Sackey, Kwarteng Amaniampong, and Juliana Efuwa Abrokwa, "Analysis of the State of Discipline in Kwanyarko Senior High School in the Central Region of Ghana," *Journal of Education and Practice* 7, no. 6 (2016): 124–39.

¹⁹ Sackey, Amaniampong, and Abrokwa, "Analysis of the State of Discipline in Kwanyarko Senior High School in the Central Region of Ghana."

²⁰ Kumah et al., "Effective Disciplinary Strategies to Combating Indiscipline in Public Senior High Schools in Kumasi, Ghana."

²¹ T. F. Kaar, "The Incidence and Impact of Bullying on Students in Second Cycle Schools in Ghana: A Case Study of Selected Schools in the Bawku Municipality" (University of Cape Coast, 2009); Mairead Dunne et al., "Peer Relations, Violence and School Attendance: Analyses of Bullying in Senior High Schools in Ghana," *The Journal of Development Studies* 49, no. 2 (2013): 285–300.

²² Andrew Jenkins and Akiko Ueno, "Classroom Disciplinary Climate in Secondary Schools in England: What Is the Real Picture?," *British Educational Research Journal* 43, no. 1 (2017): 124–50.

²³ Alabira, "Factors Associated with Student Disciplinary Behaviour: A Study Of Sakasaka Cluster Of Schools In The Tamale Metropolis Of The Northern Region Of Ghana."

²⁴ E. O. Agyemang, "Investigating into the Causes and Effects of Students' Unrest in Ghanaian Schools: A Case Study of Adu Gyamfi Senior High School in the Sekyere South District, Ashanti Region" (University of Education, Winneba, 2016).

understanding of how these perspectives impact disciplinary policy and intervention effectiveness. The subsequent sections of this study focus on the literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, findings, and policy implications/ recommendations respectively.

It is because of these objectives that the research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the stakeholders' perspectives on the definition and purpose of disciplinary issues in public senior high schools?
2. What types of disciplinary issues are most prevalent in public senior high schools?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Disciplinary issues in public senior high schools represent a critical aspect of the education system, impacting the overall learning environment and shaping the experiences of students, educators, and administrators alike.²⁵ As educational institutions strive to maintain order, ensure a safe atmosphere, and foster conducive learning environments, the perspectives of various stakeholders—students, teachers, and parents become essential in developing effective disciplinary policies that reflect a balanced understanding of these issues and promote a cohesive and supportive school community.²⁶ Studies have empirically delved into the meaning and purpose stakeholders such as students, teachers and parents attach to disciplinary issues in high schools. For example, in a study by Kibui in Kenya's Secondary Schools, he found that stakeholders have different views on discipline as a necessary tool for maintaining classroom order and ensuring a conducive learning environment. This study highlights how different stakeholders may see punishment as a means to correct student behavior and uphold educational standards.²⁷ Additionally, Gcelu et.al., in their research revealed that students often interpret disciplinary measures as punitive rather than corrective. Students expressed concerns about fairness and the effectiveness of punishment, suggesting that a punitive approach may not always address the root causes of misbehavior. This study highlights the divergence between the teacher's perception of discipline and how students experience it.²⁸

With respect to stakeholders' perspectives on the purpose of disciplinary issues, studies on the impact of disciplinary practices on classroom environments found that consistent and fair discipline positively influenced the overall learning atmosphere.²⁹ That is, stakeholders perceived discipline not only as a means to address misbehavior but also as a crucial element in creating a conducive environment for effective teaching and learning. In a study by Jerome Freiberg et al., the researchers explored classroom management and the long-term effects of disciplinary interventions on students' ability to self-manage their behavior. Findings suggested that disciplinary actions, when implemented with a focus on teaching students self-regulation and responsibility, contributed to improved behavior management skills.³⁰ Additionally, research conducted by Machumu and Killugwe delved into stakeholders' perceptions of discipline management to improve students' academic performance and emerging experiences. The study revealed that stakeholders perceived effective discipline as a factor positively influencing academic outcomes, reinforcing the idea that discipline is integral to supporting the educational mission of schools.³¹ These studies collectively support the idea that discipline in public senior high schools serves the purposes of promoting effective teaching and learning, as well as helping students manage their own behavior for long-term positive outcomes.

²⁵ Paul Kwasi Kumah et al., "Perspectives and Determinants of Discipline in Public Senior High Schools in Ghana: A Multi-Stakeholder Study," *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry* 12, no. 8 (2021).

²⁶ Agnes W Kibui, "Stakeholders' Perspective on Disciplinary Problems in Kenya's Secondary Schools," 2017.

²⁷ Kibui, "Stakeholders' Perspective on Disciplinary Problems in Kenya's Secondary Schools."

²⁸ Ntombizandile Gcelu, Padayachee, and Moses Onyemaechi Ede, "School Stakeholders' Collaborative Strategies for Management of Discipline in Secondary Schools in Ilembe District," *International Journal of Mechanical and Production Engineering Research and Development* 11, no. 6 (2021): 1–14.

²⁹ Linda J. Culberson, *The Role of Discipline in Classroom Management* (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1999); Victor Kipkemboi Salgong, Owen Ngumi, and Kimani Chege, "The Role of Guidance and Counseling in Enhancing Student Discipline in Secondary Schools in Koibatek District," 2016.

³⁰ H. Jerome Freiberg, David Oviatt, and Emily Naveira, "Classroom Management Meta-Review Continuation of Research-Based Programs for Preventing and Solving Discipline Problems," *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR)* 25, no. 4 (2020): 319–37.

³¹ Haruni J. Machumu and Zueni K. Killugwe, "Stakeholders' Perceptions on Discipline Management as a Means to Improve Students' Academic Performance Emerging Experiences from Bunda District Schools, Tanzania," *Journal of Education, Research, and Behavioral Science* 2, no. 6 (2013): 76–89.

Disciplinary issues in public high schools have been an issue of concern since time immemorial. A study by Skiba et al. discussed the implications of zero-tolerance policies on school discipline, emphasizing the disproportionate impact on minority students. It was noticed that zero tolerance policies in the USA have been associated with the emergence of the school-to-prison pipeline, wherein students, particularly from minority backgrounds, face harsh disciplinary measures that contribute to their involvement in the criminal justice system.³² Also, bullying remains a significant disciplinary issue in American high schools, with the added dimension of cyberbullying in the digital age, highlighting the need for comprehensive strategies to address this evolving disciplinary challenge.³³ Again, disciplinary issues related to substance abuse and school violence are persistent concerns in American high schools.³⁴ The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) provides insights into the link between substance abuse and violent behavior among students.³⁵

Similarly, in Africa student unrest and violence often tied to various socio-political issues have been observed in Nigerian public senior high schools.³⁶ Also in the work of Lukman and Hamadi, it was found that truancy and high dropout rates are significant disciplinary issues affecting the educational landscape in Nigeria.³⁷ Additionally, in the assessment of the factors causing senior high students' involvement in examination malpractice in the Takoradi Metropolis of Ghana, Adamu et al. revealed that examination malpractice such as cheating, impersonation, and other dishonest practices are pervasive disciplinary challenge affecting the integrity of Ghanaian high schools.³⁸ Addressing this issue requires a comprehensive approach involving educators, policymakers, and students to uphold the principles of academic honesty. Moreover, student unrest and protests are recurring disciplinary challenges in Ghanaian public senior high schools. After investigating the causes and effects of student unrest in Ghanaian schools, Agyemang revealed that socio-political factors contribute to these disruptions and the subsequent impact on the educational system.³⁹

Disciplinary issues among students in public senior high schools represent a critical aspect of the educational landscape. While disciplinary challenges may differ among various regions and schools, it is essential to ascertain whether there is uniformity or diversity in the variations of these issues. For instance, drug abuse is viewed differently by stakeholders; thus, parents may sometimes be oblivious to their child's involvement in substance abuse, creating a disparity in recognizing this issue compared to teachers and students.⁴⁰ Also, disobeying authority is interpreted differently. Students may see it as a form of resistance against perceived injustice, while teachers and parents may view it strictly as a disciplinary concern.⁴¹ This disparity in perspectives necessitates open communication channels to bridge the understanding gap.

However, while there are variations on certain disciplinary issues, a consensus exists in stakeholders' perceptions. For instance, truancy is commonly viewed as a shared concern among stakeholders.⁴² Studies demonstrate that absenteeism negatively affects academic performance and disrupts the learning process. Teachers and parents alike emphasize the importance of consistent attendance for effective learning.⁴³ Similarly, physical attacks and bullying are universally condemned

³² Russell J. Skiba, Mariella I Arredondo, and Natasha T Williams, "More than a Metaphor: The Contribution of Exclusionary Discipline to a School-to-Prison Pipeline," *Equity & Excellence in Education* 47, no. 4 (2014): 546–64.

³³ Skiba, Arredondo, and Williams, "More than a Metaphor: The Contribution of Exclusionary Discipline to a School-to-Prison Pipeline."

³⁴ Russell J. Skiba et al., "Race Is Not Neutral: A National Investigation of African American and Latino Disproportionality in School Discipline," *School Psychology Review* 40, no. 1 (2011): 85–107.

³⁵ Skiba et al., "Race Is Not Neutral: A National Investigation of African American and Latino Disproportionality in School Discipline."

³⁶ Obilor and Miwari, "Assessing the Consequences of Violence in Nigerian Public Secondary Schools."

³⁷ Lukman and Hamadi, "Disciplinary Measures in Nigerian Senior Secondary Schools: Issues and Prospects."

³⁸ Abass Adamu, Benjamin Blandful Cobbinah, and Rukaya Alhassan, "Assessment of the Factors Causing Senior High Students Involvement in Examination Malpractice in the Takoradi Metropolis of Ghana," *Open Journal of Social Sciences* 9, no. 6 (2021): 241–54.

³⁹ Agyemang, "Investigating into the Causes and Effects of Students' Unrest in Ghanaian Schools: A Case Study of Adu Gyamfi Senior High School in the Sekyere South District, Ashanti Region."

⁴⁰ Temitayo, Nayaya, and Lukman, "Management of Disciplinary Problems in Secondary Schools: Jalingo Metropolis in Focus."

⁴¹ Samuel Asare Amoah et al., "Managing School Discipline: The Students' and Teachers' Perception on Disciplinary Strategies," *British Journal of Psychology Research* 3, no. 2 (2015): 1–11.

⁴² Chinyere Catherine Ukala, "Students' perception of Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State, Nigeria," *European Journal of Research in Social Sciences* Vol 6, no. 3 (2018).

⁴³ Kumah et al., "Effective Disciplinary Strategies to Combating Indiscipline in Public Senior High Schools in Kumasi, Ghana"; Ukala, "Students' perception of Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State, Nigeria."

as disciplinary issues. Studies in Nigeria and Ghana reveal a consensus among students, teachers, and parents that violence undermines the school's safety and inhibits a conducive learning environment.⁴⁴

From the literature, there is agreement on the importance of discipline for maintaining a conducive learning environment, with stakeholders viewing it as essential for both behavior management and academic success.⁴⁵ However, perceptions diverge on the nature and implementation of disciplinary measures. For instance, while teachers may view punishment as necessary to uphold order, students often see it as punitive rather than corrective. Furthermore, stakeholders in different regions exhibit varying concerns: zero-tolerance policies in the U.S. disproportionately impact minority students and contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline, while issues like truancy and examination malpractice are highlighted as critical challenges in Nigeria and Ghana.⁴⁶ Overall, the literature review shows that although regional and stakeholder perspectives on disciplinary issues vary, consistent attendance, prevention of violence, and fair disciplinary measures are widely accepted as key to supporting academic integrity and creating safe school environments.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this study, the Social Learning Theory of Bandura and Akers was employed. Observational learning, a core element of Social Learning Theory, involves acquiring behaviors by watching others.⁴⁷ In public senior high schools, students learn from the behaviors of peers, teachers, and parents. Bandura highlighted that individuals learn by observing the consequences of others' actions.⁴⁸ Research by Boxer et al. showed that such learning influences aggressive behavior among adolescents, affecting how students perceive and react to disciplinary situations in school.⁴⁹

Modeling, another component of Social Learning Theory, involves imitating the behavior of role models.⁵⁰ In schools, teachers and administrators set behavioral examples through their handling of disciplinary issues. Bandura argued that behaviors associated with positive outcomes are more likely to be imitated. For instance, Gregory and Ripski found that teachers who model appropriate disciplinary responses can positively influence students' behavior.⁵¹ On the other hand, imitation, the direct replication of observed behavior, is another mechanism through which students learn in schools.⁵² For instance, Marton found that students often imitate aggressive behaviors seen in their peers, underscoring the role of imitation in disciplinary contexts.⁵³

Akers' Social Learning Theory incorporates differential association, emphasizing the impact of social interactions on behavior.⁵⁴ In schools, interactions with peers, teachers, and authority figures shape students' behaviors. Warr noted that these interactions can lead to positive or negative associations with certain behaviors.⁵⁵ Observing peers rewarded for disruptive behavior can lead to positive associations with such actions, while consistent disciplinary enforcement can create negative associations with deviance.

⁴⁴ Ukala, "Students' perception of Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State, Nigeria"; Kumah et al., "Effective Disciplinary Strategies to Combating Indiscipline in Public Senior High Schools in Kumasi, Ghana."

⁴⁵ Salgong, Ngumi, and Chege, "The Role of Guidance and Counseling in Enhancing Student Discipline in Secondary Schools in Koibatek District"; Machumu and Killugwe, "Stakeholders' Perceptions on Discipline Management as a Means to Improve Students' Academic Performance Emerging Experiences from Bunda District Schools, Tanzania."

⁴⁶ Adamu, Cobbinah, and Alhassan, "Assessment of the Factors Causing Senior High Students Involvement in Examination Malpractice in the Takoradi Metropolis of Ghana."

⁴⁷ Anwar Rumjaun and Fawzia Narod, "Social Learning Theory—Albert Bandura," *Science Education in Theory and Practice: An Introductory Guide to Learning Theory*, 2020, 85–99.

⁴⁸ Rumjaun and Narod, "Social Learning Theory—Albert Bandura."

⁴⁹ Paul Boxer et al., "Proximal Peer-Level Effects of a Small-Group Selected Prevention on Aggression in Elementary School Children: An Investigation of the Peer Contagion Hypothesis," *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology* 33 (2005): 325–38.

⁵⁰ Rumjaun and Narod, "Social Learning Theory—Albert Bandura."

⁵¹ Anne Gregory and Michael B Ripski, "Adolescent Trust in Teachers: Implications for Behavior in the High School Classroom," *School Psychology Review* 37, no. 3 (2008): 337–53.

⁵² Rumjaun and Narod, "Social Learning Theory—Albert Bandura."

⁵³ Klara Marton, "Imitation of Body Postures and Hand Movements in Children with Specific Language Impairment," *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology* 102, no. 1 (2009): 1–13.

⁵⁴ Ronald L. Akers and Wesley G Jennings, "Social Learning Theory," *The Handbook of Criminological Theory*, 2015, 230–40.

⁵⁵ M. Warr, *Companions in Crime: The Social Aspects of Criminal Conduct* (Cambridge University Press, 2002).

The definition component of Social Learning Theory involves individuals' attitudes toward behaviors.⁵⁶ In schools, students who see deviant behaviors as acceptable are more likely to engage in them. This reflects the theory's assertion that behavior aligns with personal values and attitudes. Differential reinforcement involves the balance of rewards and punishments associated with behaviors. In schools, positive reinforcement for rule-breaking behavior can encourage such behavior, while consistent punishment can deter it. This element of the theory underscores the importance of reinforcement in shaping behavior.⁵⁷

Overall, Social Learning Theory, as developed by Bandura and expanded by Akers, provides a framework for understanding behavior acquisition through observation, modeling, imitation, and reinforcement. It highlights the cognitive processes involved in learning from role models and the impact of external reinforcements, although it faces critiques regarding its consideration of cultural factors⁵⁸ and potential overemphasis on peer influence.⁵⁹ Despite these critiques, the theories offer valuable insights into learning and behavior in the context of disciplinary issues in public senior high schools.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, a mixed-method approach encompassing both qualitative and quantitative analysis was employed. In relation to this, the embedded research design was utilized with the qualitative data playing a supportive role in order to provide a comprehensive understanding by providing additional insights into this study's findings.⁶⁰ By collecting both numerical and non-numerical data on disciplinary issues, researchers were able to use both statistical methods and themes to determine the perception of disciplinary issues across different stakeholder groups. This approach enhanced the rigor of the study and provided objective insights into the prevalence and severity of disciplinary concerns. Also, the quantitative approach allowed for the collection of large-scale data from a diverse sample of 387 students, 216 teachers, and 387 parents from four selected SHS in Kumasi. This inclusivity ensured a representative analysis of disciplinary issues, contributing to the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of Public Senior High Schools in Kumasi. Again, quantitative research facilitates a comparative analysis by quantifying and comparing the responses of students, teachers, and parents on various disciplinary issues.⁶¹ Through statistical tests, such as ANOVA, the researchers were able to identify significant differences and similarities in perceptions, offering a nuanced understanding of the homogeneity of variances among different stakeholder groups.

The research was conducted within the Kumasi metropolis, which is administratively divided into four sub-metropolitan District councils – Bantama, Manhyia, Nhyiaeso, and Subin. Kumasi emerged as a commercial centre for the convergence of trade routes.⁶² The city expanded in land area, population size, social life and economic activities thus becoming the second largest city in Ghana in these respects only to Accra. Kumasi is located at latitude 6.35°N to 6.40°N and 1.30°W to 1.35°W in the transitional forest zone with an elevation of approximately 250 to 300 metres above sea level. Kumasi has a total area of about 254 km². With a population of 2,035,064, the Kumasi metropolis possesses the highest population amongst the other districts in the Ashanti Region accounting for 42.6% of the region's entire human population.⁶³ The choice of Kumasi as a case lies in that the issues of indiscipline continue to rise in the various PSHSs found in the community. For instance, Kumasi recorded two deadly student-related violent riots in 2019 alone. On March 29, 2019, Tetteh reported an incidence of student vandalism that resulted in the destruction of 800 seats at the Baba Yara Sports Stadium leaving at least one student

⁵⁶ Akers and Jennings, "Social Learning Theory."

⁵⁷ Akers and Jennings, "Social Learning Theory."

⁵⁸ Hyeisung C. Hwang and David Matsumoto, "Culture and Social Behavior," in *Getting Grounded in Social Psychology* (Psychology Press, 2017), 343–59.

⁵⁹ Elizabeth A. Bradshaw, "A Rose by Any Other Name: State Criminality and the Limits of Social Learning Theory," *The Hilltop Review* 5, no. 1 (2011): 3.

⁶⁰ Bradshaw, "A Rose by Any Other Name: State Criminality and the Limits of Social Learning Theory."

⁶¹ Jacqueline Bloomfield and Murray J Fisher, "Quantitative Research Design," *Journal of the Australasian Rehabilitation Nurses Association* 22, no. 2 (2019): 27–30.

⁶² K. B. Dickson, *A Historical Geography of Ghana*. (CUP Archive, 1969).

⁶³ Ghana Statistical Service, "The 2021 Population and Housing Census of Ghana General Report. Vol 3B," 2021, [https://census2021.statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/fileUpload/reportthemesub/2021 PHC General Report Vol 3B_Age and Sex Profile_181121b.pdf](https://census2021.statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/fileUpload/reportthemesub/2021%20PHC%20General%20Report%20Vol%203B_Age%20and%20Sex%20Profile_181121b.pdf).

hospitalized.⁶⁴ This was caused by rioting students of Al Azhariya Senior High School and Obuasi Secondary Technical School during the Ashanti Region Super Zonal Athletic Competition. The police likewise picked up ten students of the Kumasi Technical Institute (KTI) for engaging in a protest that led to the destruction of school property.⁶⁵ The foregoing picture points to fundamental flaws with the upbringing of students in the second cycle institutions in the region that continues in the tertiary institutions.

Data for this study was gathered from various stakeholders, including students, parents and teachers. Therefore, the target population comprises all stakeholders including teachers, parents and students at Islamic Senior High School, Kumasi Technical Institute, Opoku Ware School, and Serwaa Nyarko Senior High School. To gather quantitative data, the research utilized the probability sampling design known as the stratified simple random sample approach. A stratified sampling technique was employed in the study to ensure that the sample accurately represents the diverse subgroups within the population of students, teachers and parents in Kumasi Senior High Schools, thereby enhancing the generalizability and validity of the findings. To determine the sample size for each stakeholder in each school, the total sample size for each stakeholder (teachers=216, students=387, parents=387) is divided by the total number of strata (Islamic Senior High School, Kumasi Technical Institute, Opoku Ware School, and Serwaa Nyarko Senior High School). For teachers, a sample of 54 teachers is selected from each school. For students and their parents, a sample of 97 students and parents were selected from each school respectively.

Data Collection Methods

The research utilized a structured questionnaire and interview guide as its main data collection methods. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions with a five-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree) for responses. It was divided into two sections: the first section gathered information about the participants' demographic characteristics, while the second section focused on the study's objectives, which were to explore the concept of discipline and the variations in perspective on the prevalent disciplinary issues. The use of standardized questionnaires in the research allowed for the objective measurement of variables related to disciplinary issues. This minimized the potential for bias and subjectivity in data collection, contributing to the reliability and validity of the study. The use of semi-structured interviews also provided insights into the perception of parents, students, and teachers in public senior high schools in Ghana. The researchers gathered the field data from students, teachers, and parents at Islamic Senior High School, Kumasi Technical Institute, Opoku Ware School, and Serwaa Nyarko Senior High School. For student respondents, 387 questionnaires were distributed with permission from the school heads. The students convened at the dining halls of their schools after classes to fill out the questionnaires, which were explained by the investigator and some teachers. Completed questionnaires were collected before the students left the dining halls. The teachers who were briefed on the study's objectives received 216 questionnaires and were given two working days to respond. Due to the unavailability of parent participants during the designated two weeks for data collection, the researcher and school authorities decided to engage with parents at Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings to gather their input.

Analytic methods

Quantitative data analysis utilized IBM SPSS version 20 for generating percentages in descriptive statistical analysis. ANOVA was employed for inferential statistical analysis to assess significant differences in stakeholders' perspectives on the subject matter. Content analysis was also utilized to make meaning out of the qualitative data.

⁶⁴ C. Asiedu-Yirenkyi, "Incidence of Indisciplinary Behaviour among Students in Senior High Schools in Bantama Sub-Metropolitan Schools in the Kumasi District of Ghana," *European Journal of Education Studies*, 2019.

⁶⁵ Asiedu-Yirenkyi, "Incidence of Indisciplinary Behaviour among Students in Senior High Schools in Bantama Sub-Metropolitan Schools in the Kumasi District of Ghana."

Ethical Consideration

Throughout this assessment, due credit and appreciation have been accorded to the works of others. Furthermore, all procedures involving human subjects in the conducted studies adhered to equivalent ethical standards and complied with the ethical guidelines set forth by the institutional and/or national research council. Ethical clearance in the form of a letter of endorsement was obtained from the headmasters and headmistresses of the selected schools. The data collected for this study remained entirely confidential and was intended solely for academic purposes. Recognizing the importance of protecting the identities of study participants, the researchers opted to keep respondents anonymous. As a result, the identities of the respondents were excluded from the responses obtained during the data gathering process.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Differences in Perspectives of Parents, Teachers and Students on Discipline in PSHS Using ANOVA

The researchers analyzed the variance in the mean values of the perspectives of the stakeholders about disciplinary issues in the PSHS. The variance measures how dispersed the data points are around the mean value, while the F statistic is the ratio of the two variances (Frost, 2020). The ANOVA testing sought to determine if the mean scores differed among teachers, students and parents on their perspective of school discipline in PSHSs. Before conducting the ANOVA, the sample was evaluated to verify, that the assumption of homogenous variance was satisfied. The homogeneity of variance was determined using Levene's test. This was done at a 95% level of confidence with a null hypothesis that the variance was equal, followed by ANOVA and post hoc grouping information using the Tukey method where appropriate.

Table 1: Homogeneity Test for Perspectives of Discipline in PSHS

Statement	Levene's test statistic	P-Value
1. Discipline refers to the punishment imposed by the teacher on a student	0.16	0.854
2. Discipline is an action that promotes effective teaching and learning	1.74	0.176
3. Disciplinary actions are intended to help students manage their behaviour well	1.30	0.085

Source: Fieldwork, January 2024

The homogeneity test for each of the variables for the ANOVA test shows Levene's test statistic and its associated P-Value as shown in Table 1 above. The null hypothesis states that all variances are equal and the alternative hypothesis states that at least one variance is different and was tested at a 0.05 significance level. Since all the probability values are greater than 0.05, the study fails to reject the null hypothesis and concludes that all the population variances are equal hence our homogeneity assumption was met.

Post Hoc Test (Anova Multiple Comparison) Using Tukey Method and 95% Confidence For Perspectives of Discipline in PSHS.

Table 2 below shows the post hoc test (ANOVA multiple comparisons) using Tukey's method and 95% confidence for perspectives of discipline in PSHS.

Table 2: Post Hoc Test for Perspectives of Discipline in PSHS

Statement	Student	Teacher	Parent	P.SD	Sig.
1. Discipline refers to the punishment imposed by the teacher on a student	4.563a	2.575b	2.267b	1.490	0.000 *
2. Discipline is an action that promotes effective teaching and learning	4.586a	4.033b	3.899b	2.063	0.000 *

3. Disciplinary actions are intended to help students manage their own behaviour well	4.463a	4.088b	4.480a	0.855	0.000 *
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Source: Fieldwork, January 2024.

*P-values with * denote statistical significance at 5%. P-v Stakeholders' perspective on the definition and purpose of disciplinary issues in PSHS. Values without asterisks are statistically insignificant. Means that do not share a letter in a row are significantly different. Sig. = Significance P.SD = Pooled Standard Deviation. Mean approximate to 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree*

Table 4.2 indicates that teachers were neutral, parents disagreed, and students strongly agreed that discipline is the punishment imposed by the teacher on a student and an action that promotes effective teaching and learning. Teachers and parents had the same perspective in defining the statement but were significantly different from the perspective of students. In addition, students and parents highly agreed with each other that disciplinary actions are intended to help students manage their behaviour well, but teachers fairly agreed with the statement. Students and teachers had the same perspective in agreement with statement three which differs statistically from parents' perspective.

In order to provide comprehensive insight into stakeholders' perception of the definition and purpose of discipline in PSHS, the respondents were asked, "How do you define discipline, and what do you believe is its primary purpose in the school setting?" from this the responses centered on these three themes. Thus, discipline is the punishment imposed by the teacher on a student, discipline is an action that promotes effective teaching and learning and disciplinary actions as tools to help students manage their behavior well. These are evidenced as highlighted below. From the findings, while teachers and parents perceive discipline as an action that promotes effective teaching and learning and acting as tools to help students manage their behavior well students also perceive discipline as the punishment imposed by the teachers on students. The responses of participants regarding this finding are highlighted below:

Student 2: *Discipline is often seen as a form of punishment by many teachers, but I believe it should be about guiding students to understand and correct their behavior. Sometimes it feels like the teachers are just trying to punish us for everything. But I guess it's their way of keeping us in line."*

Teacher 6: *"For me, discipline means creating a positive classroom environment where effective teaching and learning can take place. It's not just about punishing students. "Discipline is necessary to maintain order in the classroom. When students break the rules, they need to understand that there are consequences for their actions.*

Parent 4: *"Disciplinary actions should help students manage their behavior and learn from their mistakes, not just be a way to punish them. I believe in strict discipline because it teaches children that their actions have repercussions. It's a way to prepare them for the real world."*

Stakeholders' Perspective on the Prevailing Disciplinary Issues Among Students in PSHS Using ANOVA

This section presents the differences in the perspectives of stakeholders on the prevailing disciplinary issues among students in PSHS using ANOVA and F statistics. The ANOVA testing sought to determine if the mean scores differed among teachers, students, and parents on their perspective of the prevalence of school disciplinary issues in PSHSs.

Before conducting the ANOVA, the sample was evaluated to verify that the assumption of homogenous variance was satisfied. The homogeneity of variance was determined using Levene's test. This was done at a 95% level of confidence with a null hypothesis that the variance was equal, followed by ANOVA and post hoc grouping information using the Tukey method where appropriate.

Table 3: Test of Homogeneity of Variances for Prevailing Disciplinary Issues among Students in Public Senior High Schools

Statements	Levene's test statistic	P-Value
1. Disobeying authority	0.91	0.340
2. Going out of school without permission	2.12	0.146
3. Physical attack e.g., fighting among students with/without a weapon.	1.22	0.269
4. Drinking of alcohol	0.00	0.967
5. Destruction of school property	1.95	0.163

Source: Fieldwork, January 2024.

The homogeneity test for each of the variables for the ANOVA test shows Levene's test statistic and its associated P-value. The null hypothesis states that all variances are equal and the alternative hypothesis states that at least one variance is different and was tested at a 0.05 significance level. Since all the probability values are greater than 0.05, the study fails to reject the null hypothesis and concludes that all the population variances are equal hence our homogeneity assumption was met.

Post Hoc Test (Anova Multiple Comparison) Using the Tukey Method and 95% Confidence For Prevailing Disciplinary Issues Among Students in Public Senior High Schools.

In Table 4 below, both students and teachers agreed that the prevailing disciplinary issue among students in public Senior High Schools was disobeying authority (statement 1) but their views are significantly different from each other. Approximately, students strongly agreed to statement 2 that the prevailing disciplinary issue among students in public Senior High Schools was going out of school without permission whilst teachers fairly agreed to the statement but were not significantly different from each other. Furthermore, Physical attacks e.g., fighting among students with/without a weapon are highly agreed by students and fairly agreed by teachers as the prevailing disciplinary issues among students in public Senior High Schools. Approximately, students agreed that drinking alcohol was a prevailing disciplinary issue among students, but teachers were indifferent. Moreover, both teachers and students are neutral to statement 5 that the destruction of school property was a prevailing disciplinary issue among students in public Senior High Schools. Both students and teachers do not have the same level of agreement in rating the statements as their agreements are statistically different from each other except for statement two.

The findings through the interview revealed that both parents, students and teachers identified bullying amongst the students; smoking; improper dressing; physical attacks on students and teachers; theft and substance abuse as the main acts of indiscipline among students in the PSHS, students and teachers only also perceive that absenteeism lateness; use of mobile phones in school; leaving school without permission are main acts of indiscipline among students in the PSHS. Finally, teachers only believe that occultism and homosexuality are another major indiscipline among students in Public Senior High Schools in Kumasi. It can be inferred from the foregoing that various forms of indiscipline occur in public senior high schools, as articulated by the respondents.

"As a parent, I am deeply concerned about the increasing incidents of bullying and substance abuse in schools. My child often talks about how some students are smoking and getting into fights. It's alarming to see improper dressing and theft becoming so common. We need stronger measures to address these issues." (Parent 4)

"It's scary sometimes. You see students bullying others and smoking right on the school grounds. Physical fights break out often, and there's a lot of stealing. Some students dress inappropriately, which adds to the chaos. It's really affecting our learning environment. Many of us struggle with being on time or even attending classes regularly. It doesn't help that some students sneak their mobile phones into school, which is a big distraction. Sometimes, they leave the school premises without permission, and it sets a bad example for the rest of us." (Student 3 and 5)

"We are constantly dealing with cases of bullying, smoking, and students attacking each other or even the teachers... We have observed an alarming trend of occultism and homosexuality among some students" (Teacher 6)

Table 4: Post Hoc Test for Prevailing Disciplinary Issues among Students in Public Senior High Schools

Statements	Student	Teacher	SD	Sig.
1. Disobeying authority	4.405a	4.105b	1.053	0.002*
2. Going out of school without permission	4.501a	4.370a	0.996	0.146
3. Physical attack e.g., fighting among students with/without a weapon.	4.179a	3.658b	1.091	0.000*
4. Drinking of alcohol	3.704a	3.155b	1.343	0.000*
5. Destruction of school property	3.166a	2.693b	1.424	0.000*

Source: Fieldwork, January 2024.

*P-values with * denote statistical significance at 5%. P-values without asterisks are statistically insignificant. Means that do not share a letter in a row are significantly different. Sig. = Significance P.SD = Pooled Standard Deviation. Mean approximate to 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree*

DISCUSSION

Stakeholders' Perception of Definition and Purpose of Discipline in Public Senior High Schools (PSHS)

The findings of the study bring to light various perspectives on the definition and purpose of discipline among students, teachers, and parents. The first finding indicates that teachers express a neutral stance, parents disagree, and students strongly agree that discipline is the punishment imposed by the teacher on a student and an action that promotes effective teaching and learning. Furthermore, teachers and parents share a similar perspective on this definition, but it significantly differs from the viewpoint of students. The variation in perspectives indicates a potential disconnect in the conceptualization of discipline.⁶⁶ Teachers, who are often the administrators of disciplinary measures, may view it more neutrally, possibly focusing on maintaining order rather than perceiving it solely as a tool for effective teaching and learning. This is because teachers' interactions with students provide them with insights into the complexities of student behavior and the various factors influencing it. This deeper understanding and experience lead them to approach discipline with a more nuanced perspective, recognizing that it serves multiple purposes, including behavior correction, deterrence, and creating a structured environment conducive to learning. These findings align with Bandura's social learning theory which suggests that individuals may form their definitions and attitudes toward behaviors through observational learning.⁶⁷ In this context students might be observing and imitating the behaviors of their peers or teachers, contributing to their distinct perspective on what constitutes discipline.

Again, from the quantitative results this study found that students and parents highly agree with each other that disciplinary actions are intended to help students manage their behavior well, while teachers only fairly agree with the statement. Parents and students may associate discipline more strongly because in traditional Ghanaian society, discipline is seen as a means of fostering personal growth and self-regulation, essential for future success.⁶⁸ Also, teachers' stance on this reflects their reservations about the efficacy of these measures. In line with Bandura, the alignment between students and parents suggests shared observations of positive outcomes or reinforcement associated with such interventions.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Kibui, "Stakeholders' Perspective on Disciplinary Problems in Kenya's Secondary Schools."; Lukman and Hamadi, "Disciplinary Measures in Nigerian Senior Secondary Schools: Issues and Prospects."

⁶⁷ Rumjaun and Narod, "Social Learning Theory—Albert Bandura."

⁶⁸ Opoku-Asare, Takyi, and Owusu-Mensah, "Conflict Prevalence in Primary School and How It Is Understood to Affect Teaching and Learning in Ghana"; Emmanuel Gyan et al., "Causes of Indiscipline and Measures of Improving Discipline in Senior Secondary Schools in Ghana: Case Study of a Senior Secondary School in Sunyani," *Journal of Education and Practice* 6, no. 11 (2015): 19–25.

⁶⁹ Rumjaun and Narod, "Social Learning Theory—Albert Bandura."

Furthermore, from the qualitative findings, it was revealed that while teachers and parents perceive discipline as an action that promotes effective teaching and learning and acting as tools to help students manage their behavior well, students also perceive discipline as the punishment imposed by the teachers on students. This perception of the students stems from their direct experiences with disciplinary actions, which they often encounter in response to their behavior. In many Ghanaian societies like Kumasi, respect for authority and adherence to societal norms are highly valued. This cultural backdrop influences parents and teachers to view discipline to uphold these values within the school setting. For them, discipline is not merely about punishment but about instilling virtues that align with cultural expectations of respect, responsibility, and academic diligence.⁷⁰ This finding therefore provides a nuanced understanding of the perception of parents, teachers, and students on the definition and primary purpose of discipline in Public Senior High Schools in Kumasi, Ghana. Practically, these findings suggest the need for educational policies that bridge the perception gap by promoting disciplinary approaches that emphasize positive behavior reinforcement and effective communication between students, teachers, and parents to align understanding and expectations of discipline.

Stakeholders' Perspective on the Prevailing Disciplinary Issues among Students in PSHS

Disciplinary challenges in public senior high schools are complex and multifaceted, requiring a nuanced understanding of the perceptions held by students, teachers and parents. From the quantitative findings, this study found that both students and teachers recognize disobeying authority as the primary disciplinary issue in public Senior High Schools, suggesting a consensus on its prevalence and impact. This alignment is due to the clear and visible nature of authority disobedience, which both groups could readily observe and experience. However, the divergence in their views on other issues, such as going out of school without permission and physical attacks, underscores a gap in perception. This discrepancy stems from the fact that students' perspectives are shaped by their daily interactions and personal encounters with peers, leading to a heightened awareness of certain behaviors like physical altercations and unauthorized absences. Teachers, on the other hand, might rely on reports and observations that don't capture all incidents, resulting in a more moderate view as suggested by social learning theory.⁷¹ Also, both groups' neutrality toward property destruction suggests it is less prominent or noticeable compared to other issues, possibly because it occurs less frequently or is less disruptive.

Additionally, to delve much into the stakeholders' perspective on prevailing disciplinary issues among students in Public Senior High Schools in Kumasi, Ghana, this study, in general, revealed that bullying; smoking; improper dressing; physical attack on students and teachers; theft; substance abuse; absenteeism; lateness; use of mobile phones in school; leaving school without permission; occultism and homosexuality are the most common acts of indiscipline among students in the PSHS. However, different perspectives emerged; while both parents, students and teachers identified bullying; smoking; improper dressing; physical attacks on students and teachers; theft and substance abuse as the main acts of indiscipline among students in the PSHS, students and teachers only also perceive that absenteeism lateness; use of mobile phones in school; leaving school without permission are main acts of indiscipline among students in the PSHS. Teachers also only believe that occultism and homosexuality are other major acts of indiscipline among students in Public Senior High Schools in Kumasi. The alignment in perception among all three stakeholders is because these issues are often disruptive, have clear consequences and are easily observable, making them common points of concern for parents, students and teachers alike. As identified by Opoku-Asare et al. and Gyan et al. the strong communal and familial ties in Ghanaian society emphasize the importance of protecting children and maintaining respect within educational settings, prompting all groups to view these behaviors as significant issues.⁷² The visible and disruptive nature of these acts makes them a collective concern, as they undermine the core values of respect, responsibility, and discipline that are highly regarded in Ghanaian culture. This resonates with

⁷⁰ Gyan et al., "Causes of Indiscipline and Measures of Improving Discipline in Senior Secondary Schools in Ghana: Case Study of a Senior Secondary School in Sunyani."

⁷¹ Rumjaun and Narod, "Social Learning Theory—Albert Bandura."

⁷² Opoku-Asare, Takyi, and Owusu-Mensah, "Conflict Prevalence in Primary School and How It Is Understood to Affect Teaching and Learning in Ghana"; Gyan et al., "Causes of Indiscipline and Measures of Improving Discipline in Senior Secondary Schools in Ghana: Case Study of a Senior Secondary School in Sunyani."

the social learning theory which emphasizes observation and the direct impact of social action in impacting perceptions.⁷³ Also, this shared experience contributes to a common understanding that disobedience is a prevalent disciplinary issue in PSHS.⁷⁴

Furthermore, differences between groups arise from their distinct roles and perspectives within the school ecosystem. Students and teachers identifying absenteeism, lateness, use of mobile phones in school, and leaving school without permission as main acts of indiscipline likely reflect their daily experiences and the immediate impact these behaviors have on classroom dynamics and learning processes.⁷⁵ Also, the teachers' unique concern about occultism and homosexuality may stem from their positions as authority figures who receive reports on various issues in the school therefore having the upper hand on varied information.⁷⁶

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study highlights significant differences in how stakeholders—students, parents, and teachers—define discipline. To address this, it is recommended that schools organize regular forums where all stakeholders can discuss and develop a shared understanding of discipline. These forums, along with workshops and training sessions, will encourage open dialogue and collaboration, ensuring a unified approach to disciplinary strategies.

Another key finding focuses on the differences in perceptions regarding the positive purpose of disciplinary actions. To bridge this gap, schools should facilitate parental involvement through regular meetings and training programs. These initiatives will help parents better understand the benefits of disciplinary measures, leading to a more supportive and effective approach to behavior management. Additionally, this study reveals discrepancies between students and teachers concerning common disciplinary issues, such as disobedience and absenteeism. To address these concerns, tailored interventions should be implemented, including modeling strategies and observational learning techniques. Workshops and open discussions between students and teachers will help align their perspectives, ensuring that disciplinary measures effectively address shared concerns.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to compare perceptions of students, teachers and parents on disciplinary issues in Public Senior High Schools in Kumasi, Ghana. The findings revealed differing perspectives among students, teachers, and parents on the definition and purpose of discipline, with students often associating discipline with punishment, while teachers and parents see it as a tool for promoting effective learning and behavior management. This disconnect suggests the need for clear, shared understandings of discipline that incorporate cultural expectations and respect for authority, aligned with students' developmental needs. Overall, the study highlights that aligning these perceptions could foster a more cohesive approach to discipline, one that is understood and respected by all parties involved. Moreover, this research sheds light on the prevalent disciplinary issues within these schools, such as disobedience, absenteeism, and the use of mobile phones, with varying emphasis on issues like occultism and homosexuality by teachers. These insights suggest that policies should be developed to address visible and disruptive behaviors, while also recognizing the specific roles and experiences that shape each group's perceptions. Effective disciplinary strategies should involve collaborative discussions among all stakeholders, enhancing students' behavior and fostering a respectful and constructive school environment that supports academic and personal growth in line with Ghanaian cultural values.

⁷³ Rumjaun and Narod, "Social Learning Theory—Albert Bandura."

⁷⁴ Ibrahim Mohammed Gunu, "Exploring Alternative Disciplinary Measures in Ghanaian High Schools; Unveiling the Guidelines for Positive Behaviour Management in Policy and Practice," *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies* 10, no. 2 (2019): 133–39.

⁷⁵ Temitayo, Nayaya, and Lukman, "Management of Disciplinary Problems in Secondary Schools: Jalingo Metropolis in Focus."

⁷⁶ Kennedy Nyeseh Ofori, G. Tordzro, E. Asamoah and E. Achiaa, "The Effects of Indiscipline on Academic Performance of Junior High School Students in the Fanteakwa District of Ghana," *JEP* 9, no. 21 (2018).

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