



Research Article

The forms of indiscipline exhibited by teachers in public schools of Zimbabwe

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT



Keywords:

Indiscipline, public schools, embezzlement, improper association

Article History:

Received: 16-08-2025

Revised: 29-01-2026

Accepted: 19-02-2026

Published: 01-03-2026

Teacher indiscipline is a threat to the production of knowledge within the teaching and learning environment. Discipline of teachers is a complex and controversial aspect to assess in public schools due to their influence in the community. The objective of this study was to identify forms of indiscipline exhibited by secondary school teachers in public schools. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants and data was analysed using thematic content analysis. The case study was used as a research design in this study. The participants were made up of junior teachers, senior teachers, school deputy heads, school heads, human resources officers, schools inspectors, and district schools inspectors. Data was generated using two different methods which were in-depth face-to-face interviews and document analysis. The study found that unauthorised absence from duty, embezzlement of school funds, collection of unauthorised/unapproved levies, stealing of school assets in the form of pilfering, bribing, corruption, altercations with learners' parents, and improper association with female learners by male teachers among others, were established as the main forms of indiscipline among secondary school teachers. The study findings recommend that future research should investigate the persistent causes of indiscipline established in this study among secondary school teachers.

Cite this article:

Kabungaidze, D. T., & Mafa, O. The forms of indiscipline exhibited by teachers in public schools of Zimbabwe. *Sprin Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 5(1), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.55559/sjahss.v5i1.550>

Introduction

Globally, teachers play a vital role in the attainment of educational goals in public schools. They are responsible for high standards in education, the transmission of national values and being role models (Betweli, 2022). Teachers are torchbearers in discovering and developing learners' life serving skills. Patrinos and Kagia (2020) posit that teachers are critical resources in producing quality education. In light of international education policies, teachers are expected to abide by professional ethics. Despite such professional values and importance attached to teachers and the teaching profession, schools often experience various forms of indiscipline among teachers. Teacher indiscipline disturbs the implementation of the planned of the teaching and learning process (Van Nuland and Khandelwal, 2020). The acts of indiscipline committed by teachers can be grouped into distinct categories. The frequency of indiscipline resulting in misconduct cases with pending charges among secondary school teachers in Mashonaland West Province triggered the researchers to conduct the research. Oghuvbu (2021) asserts that indiscipline among teachers in public schools is the acts of behaviour that affect the effective execution of teaching, learning, learners' welfare, administration, and management of the school system.

Discrete Categories Of Indiscipline Among Secondary School Teachers

The extent of indiscipline among secondary school teachers is difficult to assess and hard to prove. Confronted by such a dilemma, a decision still has to be made by the disciplinary authority. It is also difficult to obtain statistics on the nature and extent of acts of indiscipline among teachers in public learning institutions in Zimbabwe. Hallah and Poisson (2020) indicate that few countries have created databases that include references to indiscipline and disciplinary actions taken on the perpetrating of teachers or cases of disputes between teachers and learners. The statistics if any are available; are often limited in scope. Some tools such as perception surveys researched on education stakeholders by the International Institute for Educational Planning (2023) provide useful insight into this global cross-cutting area on unethical behaviour among teachers in countries from South Asia, Bangladesh, India, and Nepal. Mfaume and Bilinga (2023) reveal that various forms of indiscipline experienced among teachers include one or more of the following abusive and violent behaviours, absenteeism, love affairs, private tuition, improper dressing, cheating/forgery, theft, corruption, financial malpractices, and examination fraud. Teachers are entrusted with the most valuable resources, and are expected to promote and maintain the highest standard of conduct with learners in all situations, as part of their duties (Pehlivan, 2020, Van Nuland and Khandelwal, 2020). The

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conduct of the teachers and school heads either within or outside school premises has the greatest and life-long impacts on the moral upbringing of the learners, the teaching profession, and nations across the world (Agil, 2022). Shakeshaft (2022) posits that in North America and the United States of America in particular, incidences of teachers' love affairs involving sexual touching, requests for sexual favor, and unwelcome sexual advances have been revealed by learners in various parts of the country. European countries experience several problems similarly related to teachers contributing to the above argument. Chapman (2021) posits that in Germany for example, some teachers are involved in examination fraud by selling examination question papers. The teachers also go to the extent of selling front seats to learners in large classes and forcing learners to buy certain materials or additional materials to take private lessons in Asian countries, China, and Bangladesh. Transparency International (2020), Bray (2020) and Bray (2022) indicate that the rate of teacher indiscipline has been increasing tremendously. The above-cited scholars further report that teachers engage in selling examination papers or allowing someone else to take the examination for some candidates.

In the same vein, in Sub-Saharan Africa, countries experience more forms of teacher indiscipline. Anangisye and Barrett (2023) are of illustrate that teacher indiscipline coupled with corruption among school heads threatens to undermine current initiatives to improve educational quality in many low-income countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Given this proposition, Betweli (2022) indicates that mass media like radios, televisions, and newspapers reveal several forms of acts of indiscipline committed by teachers in different sub-Saharan countries like Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda to name the least. Kuleana (2023) also posits that male teachers are accused of indulging in sexual relationships with their female learners in schools across Sub-Saharan Africa. Sexual abuse has far-reaching consequences for both learners and teachers. Sometimes it affects learners to the extent that they fail to continue with studies whilst the alleged teacher is found guilty by a disciplinary hearing authority and the teacher is subsequently dismissed.

Private tutoring is another form of indiscipline among teachers in schools. (Mfaume and Bilinga (2023) are of the view that despite the efforts made by governments to ban private tuition globally, it is evident that the practice is still prevalent. These two scholars insist that teachers purposefully delay completing subject syllabi on time so that learners attend their private tutoring sessions. According to Bray (2022), private tuition is still a problem of great concern that deprives learners especially those from poor households of their legal rights to quality education globally. Mfaume and Bilinga (2023) are of the conclusive view that ignoring other learners' opportunities to learn is committing a serious offense. The United Nations Organisation Declaration on Human Rights emphasizes equity and equality of education for every child. Even though the practice is criticized for the reason that it makes learners dependent and cannot stand alone even if they know what to do. The learners become used to letting teachers plan for them.

Another form of indiscipline among teachers includes abusive, violent behaviours and theft that frequently occur. Teachers steal several items including teaching materials and certificates (Mfaume and Bilinga, 2023). Bennel and Akyeampong (2020) indicate that these findings do concur with literature research findings carried out in other countries globally. The two scholars further indicate that in Malawi, some teachers are involved in stealing teaching and learning materials. This is typically a destruction of school property by teachers.

Financial mismanagement is one more form of the problem of indiscipline among teachers and heads Ng'oma & Simatwa (2022). Research literature globally indicates that school heads give cash advances to teachers, school management committee officials, education officials, and members of the school community resulting in the mismanagement of financial resources.

Last but not least, some teachers and school heads believe in the use of a cane as a means and code of regulation in correcting learners (Ng'oma and Simatwa, 2022). Corporal punishment has since been outlawed in most countries globally. Most teachers prefer canning learners as it is believed to be achieving immediate results in instilling discipline and saving time. According to Ng'oma and Simatwa (2022) confusion surrounding the implementation of banning corporal punishment and canning in schools makes some teachers believe that banning canning is only on paper. Teachers use corporal punishment to scare and warn potential criminals among learners. Corporal punishment is either administered physically or psychologically. Physical assaults take the form of beating, pinching, and kneeling amongst others, while psychological take the form of standing by the classroom door while others are learning, coupled with verbal abuse and mimicking (Ng'oma and Simatwa, 2022).

Desertion is another form of teacher indiscipline in this case. It carries with it stiffer penalties, such as dismissal from the teaching service (Makau and Coombe (2022). Complementing the above submissions, Nkwanga (2021) expresses the view that teaching is governed by professional ethics and conditions of service in different countries around the globe. In this regard, the research literature on teachers' indiscipline maintains that the code of conduct is very vital for enhanced teacher performance in schools. For example, Mckee and McArdle (2020) reveal that professionalism goes hand in glove with performance. These two authorities further state that one of the hallmarks of any profession is the commitment of its members to a code of ethics that sets out professional values and responsibilities. Unfortunately, the two scholars Mackee and McArdle (2020) do not show how the code of conduct regulations influences actual teachers' performance. Given that, the code of conduct is very important to teachers. Teachers observe their code of conduct regulations by exhibiting a sense of responsibility, respect, decency, integrity, honesty, service, and equality for learning; have a sense of efficacy and a critical component of professionalism (SseKamwa, 2021). However, Ssekamwa (2021) does not indicate the use of the code of conduct towards teachers' actual performance. The code of conduct is made up of a totality of core values surrounding the teacher as a human person and as a social being but these are within his/her confines as society permits. Aiftinca (2022) unfortunately, goes on to maintain that the importance of these core values and their realistic stance on man's educational enterprise are in most cases underscored especially in educational fields. Genza (2021) complements the debate and reveals that teachers by the very nature of their profession are meant to be role models and authority figures to convey moral values by living up to the code of conduct.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

To identify forms of indiscipline exhibited by secondary school teachers in Mashonaland West Province of Zimbabwe.

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopted the case study strategy. It was chosen to understand human behaviour in the social context by interpreting their actions as a single group, community, or a single event. A case study according to Githam (2022) is defined as an investigation to answer specific research questions which seek a rate of different evidence from the case settings. Yin (2022) also further defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context especially when boundaries between phenomenon and context are not defined. It provides a systematic way to collect data, analyze information, and report the results. This fosters the understanding of the particular problem or situation in great depth. The explanatory case study approach makes use of multiple methods of data generation such as interviews, document interviews, archival records, and direct and participant observations and subsequently descriptions of the phenomenon under study (Yin, 2022).

PARTICIPANTS AND SETTING

This study involves educational facilitators found in public secondary schools in Mashonaland West Province. The information was gathered until the researcher noted that the information was saturated. Since the study aimed to investigate the forms of acts of indiscipline and strategies for addressing them among secondary school teachers, data were collected purposively from forty-nine participants in the same province's seven education districts. The participants were made up of junior teachers, senior teachers, school deputy heads, school heads, human resources officers, school inspectors, and district school inspectors. The study collected the personal data of the participants through the use of in-depth face-to-face interviews.

DATA COLLECTION

In this study, data was collected using two different methods which were in-depth face-to-face interviews and document analysis. Terre-Blanche, Durrhein and Painter (2023) relate that the key method of gathering data is qualitative research in the interview. The interviewer provides several approaches to gathering data through structured interviews, group interviews, and unstructured interviews. Interviews are interactional and vary from structured to free open-ended flowing informational exchange, face-to-face, focal group interviews, in-depth individual face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, and online interviews (Creswell, 2022; Denzin and Lincoln, 2020). It was permitted for the expression and exploration of ideas by the participant on forms of indiscipline experienced. The in-depth face-to-face interviews were earmarked for further probing in unclear cases. The interviews were able to pervade and produce contemporary cultural experiences and knowledge of authentic personal, private selves (Silverman, 2022). In-depth face-to-face interviews enabled modifying the line of inquiry; following up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives. The same interview guide was used for each participant category. This was aimed at attaining consistency in the collection of valid data in the study. They gave accounts of their individual managerial experiences built over the eight consecutive years from 2011 to 2018 understudies on the status of indiscipline among secondary school teachers in their respective seven education districts in Mashonaland West Province.

DATA ANALYSIS

In this study, data was analyzed through thematic content analysis. With the interview data, the analysis began by transcribing data according to the category of the participants and the research objective. During data analysis, themes emerged after transcribing, member-checking, segmenting, and coding from the thematic research objective. The data collected from document analysis on teacher misconduct charges and subsequent disciplinary authority determination was manually sorted, segmented, and coded. Member-checking was carried out in the process thus referring to the documents on teacher misconduct charges and subsequent disciplinary authority hearing determination for confirmation of the generated data. In analyzing the data qualitatively, the researchers were guided by the following steps suggested by Terre Blanche, Durrhein and Painter (2023). These were transcribing, member-checking, segmenting, coding, and arranging data into themes and sub-themes.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study followed research ethics and guidelines alluded to in Policy Circular Number 2 Official Secrecy Act which stipulates and even advises an individual such as the researcher to observe confidentiality on classified information. Ethical guidelines are important as they refer to those standards of conduct by researchers and for outlining the behavioural standards of conduct agreed upon by researchers, (Grimm and Wozniak, 2021). The researchers sought permission from participants and the Permanent Secretary for Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE). The participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality as the researchers were bound not to disclose anything by Policy Circular Number 2 Official Secrecy Act, and no real names of persons, secondary schools, or districts were used in this research. The right to privacy, avoiding harm to participants, objectivity, integrity, and honesty in reporting procedures and results as viewed by Grimm and Wozniak (2021) was observed by the researchers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Forms Of Indiscipline Exhibited By Secondary School Teachers In Mashonaland West Province

This was the main research objective of the study. This objective required the participants to identify and state forms of indiscipline committed by teachers in their respective schools. The frequency of teacher indiscipline cases helped the researchers to establish the desired strategic methods that can be used by school heads to effectively address indiscipline in their respective schools in Mashonaland West Province's seven education districts. The following are forms of indiscipline exhibited by secondary school teachers in public schools:

Unauthorized Collection of Fees/Levies from Learners and Parents

Most participants identified an unauthorized collection of fees/levies from parents as one of the forms of indiscipline that were common in the Province. Some of the participants' views on this form of teacher indiscipline are highlighted below:

JNRTR-5 of Rufaro District pointed out that *"Most teachers usually tell learners to bring money to pay for sports and learning areas field work-related activities among others without the school head's authority"*. This was also corroborated by SH-4 of Pachedu District who said *"In the school that I once headed, teachers' especially junior teachers, sports masters/mistresses and sports directors tended to convert the sports and learning areas*

fieldwork to their use". DSI-7 of Pachipamwe District corroborated this view by saying "Termly we handle several such cases in the districts within the Province" The identified unauthorized collection of levies and fees by teachers was corroborated in the document analysis that the school heads and teachers illegally collected school services funds in the form of fees/levies. The document analysis revealed that school heads and teachers violated Directors' Circular Minute No. 23 of 2007 which states that all financial transactions involving school services funds should be carried out with the express permission of the school finance committee in Pachedu District. The most frequently committed forms of indiscipline in the schools in the province were the illegal or unapproved collection of levies and fees from learners and parents by teachers. In support of the above views, Ndung'u (2023) is of the proposition that these forms of teacher indiscipline act at other times go on unnoticed or noticed by the school head and no corrective disciplinary action is done on some of the teachers involved. From recent research literature, Betweli (2022) expresses the view that some teachers are reluctant to change their bad behaviour unless further measures are taken against them. Betweli (2022) further posits that if verbal warning proves a failure, then a written warning will follow, and if the misbehaviour persists then it will call for strong measures such as preferring a misconduct charge on the teacher.

Financial Malpractices by Teachers and School Heads

The proceeding discussion indicates that most participants identified financial malpractices by some school heads and teachers as one of the forms of indiscipline that was commonly committed in the province. Views by some of the participants on this form of indiscipline are highlighted below:

SNRTR-7 of Rufaro District reported that "Some teachers and school heads bribed parents and guardians when enrolling learners in the urban day and boarding schools". This was corroborated by DSH-6 of Chido District who pointed out that "In the three schools where I have taught before as a junior and senior teacher respectively, school heads had tendencies of creating artificial shortages of places into Form 1 resulting in parents/guardians pleading for places and paying money for the acceptance and placement of his/her child in the school, money paid is converted to own personal use". DSI-3 of Moyowokurera District corroborated this view by expressing that "When each term begins, as head of the district I receive and handle several such acts of indiscipline committed by namely our school teachers, school bursars and teachers mostly from urban day schools in the province".

In support of the above views, similar findings in the study are revealed in the document analysis. Financial malpractices result in embezzlement of school funds by teachers, school bursars, and school heads in the schools. For example, in Chido District, the school head and bursar embezzled funds to the tune of 2 382.00 USD. In this instance, the bursar illegally collected levies for personal use. In this case, the school head and bursar were found incompetent, negligent, and found guilty by the disciplinary authority. The money was recovered from the school bursar and the school head's terminal benefits. The two perpetrators were dismissed accordingly with a fine of 300.00 USD each.

The same views are echoed by Ng'oma and Simatwa (2022), who further corroborated that schools are characterized by corruption that was going on undetected by district office inspectors. The views are expressed by Anangisye (2023), Betweli (2022), Mfaume and Bilinga (2023) and Mabagala (2023) who all posit that school heads and teachers involved in financial

malpractices in the procurement of goods and services in school. In a nutshell, from the various research scholars cited above, one can safely conclude that stealing school assets compiled with corruptive dealings was being done in various ways in schools. This needed redressing by MoPSE, PSC, and other relevant authorities. Undoubtedly, in dealing with the encountered challenges, it is imperative to overcome the issues of financial malpractices among teachers and school heads if MoPSE improves conditions of service for the teachers especially the issue of remuneration. This would in a way, reduce incidents of embezzlement of funds and corruption prevalent in the schools.

Teacher Incompetence, Negligence, Improper Conduct and Conduct Performance of Duties

During the in-depth face-to-face interview session, most participants identified teacher incompetence, negligence, improper conduct, and performance of professional duties as some of the forms of indiscipline that were common in Mashonaland West Province. Some of the participants' views on these forms of teacher indiscipline are highlighted below:

JNRTR-4 of Runyararo District revealed that "Most teachers tend to frequently absent and reporting for work late, an indication of improper conduct and performance of duty". This was corroborated by HRO-6 of Maworesa District who pointed out that "In the districts that I has worked before junior teachers, senior teachers and school heads had a tendency of frequently neglecting their duties and learners and attend to their private work or business during working hours". DSI-5 of Chido District corroborated this view by saying that "Monthly the junior and senior teachers miss classes and abscond duties translated to least teacher contact with the learners. We receive monthly reports and handle such cases in the district in the province. Analytically some of the teachers neglect duty and attend to their own private business without even requesting permission from the school head".

The above findings of the study are well supported by document analysis in Maworesa District with evidence that a school head failed to observe the policy contents on organized school visits and educational tours application papers concerning the Secretary's Policy Circular No. P54 to the Provincial Education Director-Mashonaland West Province and resulted in the drowning of a female learner in the school swimming pool. The school head had left the school without appointing an acting school head. The school head had failed to observe the policy contents directive and created a gross administrative supervisory vacuum exploited by teachers who were dismissed early leaving learners unattended to the school swimming pool. In this instance, a Form 1A female learner drowned. The failure to delegate tasks in the school head's absence was an act of improper conduct, negligent, and incompetent performance of duty. The indication was that the school head and some teachers were discharged from service with penalties.

From the participants' responses, the indications were that there was no strong awareness of the forms of acts of indiscipline among teachers and school heads in secondary schools in Mashonaland West province. The participants' views call for the enhancement of knowledge and competencies of teachers and school heads on the implication of teacher indiscipline concerning a teacher's incompetence, negligence, improper conduct, and performance of duty alluded to in the Public Service Statutory Instrument 1 of 2000 as Amended in 2001, First Schedule (Section 2) Acts of Misconduct Regulations. From the findings of this thematic part of the study, it would appear that the enhancing of knowledge and competence of

teachers and school heads on the implication of indiscipline behaviour and attitude would be one of the significant mitigation measures in secondary schools in addressing acts of indiscipline in the province. This is similar to the findings by Azano (2023), who posits that in-depth training of teachers facilitates their comprehension of the teachers' code of conduct regulation. Azano (2023) further goes on to emphasize that this finding is a key strategy to cater to the educational and professional needs of teachers. This would help change the attitudes of the teachers and school heads conclusively make them more responsive to discipline and positive orientation in their discharge of duties.

Indecorous Behaviour, Assault, and Altercations with other Teachers and Parents

In this part of the sub-thematic area, most participants identified indecorous behaviour or assault and altercations with other teachers and parents as one of the forms of indiscipline that were most prevalent in the province. Some of the participant's views on this form of teacher indiscipline are highlighted below:

DSH-1 of Runyararo District pointed out that *"Most teachers' especially junior teachers report from duty drunk without the school head noticing that"*. This was corroborated by JNRTR-7 of Pachedu District who said *"In three schools that I once taught at, I observe that most junior teachers and some senior teachers had a habit of reporting for duty under the influence of alcohol and drugs resulting into disregard of the Public Service acts of misconduct regulations governing all teachers in the civil service"*. SI-3 of Chido District corroborated this view by saying that *"Most school heads in the district report such cases of allegations to their respective schools' inspectors for advice on how best to address such emerging incidences. As such, we handle a big number of allegations leveled against some teachers and school heads"*.

In light of the above views, Runyararo District equally reveals incidences of indecorous behaviour/assault and altercations with a parent resulting in fighting with the parent of the learner in Runyararo District. The alleged and convicted teacher in this instance exchanged vulgar words and fought with a parent by the door of the teacher's classroom in the presence of the male learner who was each time not doing assigned work in the Food Technology and Design subject. The teacher was found guilty by the disciplinary authority for putting MoPSE in disrepute and fined 350.00 USD, recovered from salary in two equal installments. The teacher in this regard was further warned, reprimanded, and advised to be diplomatic in handling grievances always.

In this study, empirical evidence indicates that indecorous behaviour/assault alcohol, and drug abuse were forms of teacher misconduct. Ng'oma and Simwatwa (2022) argue and posit that indecorous behaviour assault, drunkenness, and drug and substance abuse are all serious health issues that should be discouraged as much as possible among teachers. Research study literature (Ng'oma and Simwatwa, 2022) emphasizes that assault is a serious offense and carries with it interdicting and jail term as a penalty. Ng'oma and Simwatwa (2022) further indicate that alcoholism, drug abuse substance abuse as forms of misconduct possibly cut across other forms of misconduct as it is possible that some teachers engaged in alcoholism and end up coming to school late with post-related alcohol, drug, and substance abuse hangover may lead to indiscipline among learners as they may end up emulating their teachers that alcohol takers often lose their tempers and may end up with cases of assault s such like

teachers rarely complete their syllabus on time. Almost the same reasons for drug abuse were for alcoholism.

Ng'oma and Simwatwa (2022) go on to express the view that peer influence and whereunto behaviour were a major factor in some teacher involvement with alcoholism as most victims felt idle and got consolation into alcohol. According to Ng'oma and Simwatwa, (2022) this form of misconduct through indecorous behaviour is common with young teachers. In such situations, family problems or misunderstandings drive teachers into dependence on alcohol drugs, and substance abuse. In one's view, this is quite common with teachers in remote areas of the province where alcohol is readily available. In conclusion, alcoholism, and drug and substance abuse are a serious health issue that should be discouraged among teachers. Teachers indulging in them end up being medical cases and as such may not adequately perform teaching duties (Ng'oma and Simwatwa (2022). In the same view, Goodland et al (2024) sum up it all; by emphasizing that habitual public drunkenness is a ground good enough to justify dismissal from the service. As such, school heads should be mindful of such indecorous behaviour as teachers as the duties of a teacher are very crucial and if not performed as expected may pose a danger to the well-being of learners and the teachers they work with (Ng'oma and Simwatwa 2022).

Unauthorized Collection of Money for Holiday Lessons Teachers' Incentives

Most participants identified unauthorized collection of money from parents for teachers' holiday/extra lessons incentives as one of the forms of acts of indiscipline that was common in most schools in the province". Most participants' views on this form of an act of indiscipline are highlighted below:

JNRTR-2 of Pachedu District pointed out that *"Most examination class teachers and school heads tell learners to bring money for holiday learners' incentives"*. This was corroborated by DSH-1 of Pachipamwe District who said that *"In the last three schools where I respectively taught and deputized teachers especially "O"-Level and "A"-Level examinations class teachers were in the habit of collecting holiday/extra lessons teachers' incentives in respect of lessons taught"*. DSI-5 of Maworesa District corroborated this view by saying *"The collection of the holiday/extra lessons teachers' incentives was unauthorized. As a district, we receive and handle several such cases mostly in the second and third term and institute an appropriate investigation on alleged teachers and school heads in the province"*. In support of the above-corroborated views by most participants, document analysis shows the prevalence of unauthorized collection of money as teachers' incentives for holiday/extra lessons conducted by teachers and school heads.

Given that, Chido District reveals documentary analysis evidence on teacher money for holiday/extra lessons and teacher incentives in Chido District. In this case, the teacher collected and used learners for personal monetary gains. The teacher charged extra lessons at 5.00 USD per learner and all the 350.00 USD collected illegally was recovered from the teacher's salary as part of his/her determination. The teacher was in this case, further fined 100.00 USD in two equal instalments, warned, and reprimanded.

In light of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education Secretary's Circular Number 12 of 2014 and the moratorium on holiday extra/lessons issued on 14 April 2014, the provision for schools emphasizes that school heads apply for authority to conduct lessons during holidays and no collection of

unapproved incentives should be done. The same Secretary's Circular Number 12 of 2014 stresses that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's valued clients and stakeholders should be guided accordingly regarding this clarification on authorized lessons during school holidays. The same Circular Minute No. 12 of 2014 stresses the point that any school violating the above injunction should be dealt with in terms of Statutory Instrument 1 of 2000 as Amended in 2001, First Schedule (Section 2), Acts of Misconduct. It further advises that teachers and school heads should respect the letter and spirit of this communication to address indiscipline arising from the unauthorized collection of teachers' incentives for holiday extra lessons in schools.

The above study finding was in line with that of Betweli (2022) who posits that the teacher's misconduct was a result of economic-related factors. The recent empirical studies analyzing the behaviour of teachers indicate that low income and inadequate salaries were claimed to be the major causes of teachers engaging in unauthorized collection of holiday tuition/extra lessons incentives regardless of the location of their respective schools. The teachers are of the full notion that since salaries and their income were not satisfactory, they were forced to engage in private activities to supplement their income. Betweli (2022) furthermore reiterates that teachers spend official hours in self-initiated activities such as selling assorted snacks/maputi, second-hand clothes, second-hand shoes, assorted vegetables, and stationery among many other examples teachers can think of. These findings are also in line with Hallak and Poisson (2024) and Anangisyse (2023) who also disclose that low salaries are prime causes of dissatisfaction amongst most teachers and school heads which consequently results in teachers' violations of the code of professional conduct in most schools.

The above finding was in concurrence with that of Makau and Coombe (2022) who posit that low salaries earned dampened the hearts of most teachers to neglect their core duties. School heads in this regard see family expectations and low salaries earned by teachers as leading transfers out of service. Poor attitude to work is also cited by Allyn and Bacon (2024), as one symbolic indication of low motivation leading to acts of teacher indiscipline. Allyn and Bacon (2024) further emphasize that a teacher should be committed to his/her duty fully and consider it as a calling. To address the challenge of unauthorized collection of money for conducting holiday extra lessons teachers' incentives, the government of Zimbabwe should pay a living salary to its teachers so that the teachers are fully committed to their core duties in the schools. Allyn and Bacon (2024) in support of the above views, posit that teaching is a full-time profession that requires total commitment and dedication on the part of the teacher. Good behaviour entails discipline among teachers and as such deserves adequate salary remuneration to abide by the ethics of the teaching profession (Mawere, Shava and Mapolisa, 2023).

Embezzlement of School Funds by Teachers and School Heads

On this part of the research study question, most participants identified the embezzlement of school funds as one of the forms of indiscipline that was most common in Mashonaland West Province. As such, some of the participants' views on this form of indiscipline among teachers and school heads are highlighted below:

JNRTR-1 of Pachedu District pointed out that "Most school heads and teachers embezzled funds through various ways at schools they work because of the low salary they earn and cannot sustain their livelihood monthly due to the ever-increasing rate

of inflation". This was corroborated by SNRTR-7 of Pachipamwe District who said that "Most school heads and teachers who mismanaged school funds at one school where I was previously teaching, I observed that the main books of accounts were not properly maintained. The school head and teacher responsible for maintaining the various key books of accounts lacked school financial accounting skills". SH-2 of Maworesa District claimed that "Most school heads and teachers pointed out that they had a tendency of converting the school funds to their personal use through parallel receipting for example that goes on unchecked by the district education office school's inspectorate and district accountant". SI-4 of Chido District corroborated this by saying that "Every month we receive numerous reports on abuse of school funds committed by many school heads and teachers delegated the responsibility of collecting and receipting funds". DSI-1 of Runyararo District corroborated the above view by disclosing that "In most schools in the districts in the province experienced frequent cases of financial mismanagement due to the lack of financial discipline and capacity to employ school bursars to assist them".

In line with the above assertions reported by most participants, related findings from document analysis indicate evidence of the school head embezzling of School funds without the express permission of the school Development Committee (SDC). The school head of Pachipamwe District as indicated in the document analysis was charged and subsequently discharged from the service on account of the aforesaid financial embezzlement of school funds. The school head withdrew school funds without the express permission of the school development committee funds in the amounts of 4 224.00 USD, 4 090.00 USD, and 2 780.00 USD. The school head in his determination was found incompetent, negligent, abusive, and improperly performed his duty. In the same vein, the school head was found guilty and discharged from the service, and school funds embezzled from the school were recovered from the school head's terminal benefits.

This study finding was in tandem with similar findings conducted by Ng'oma and Simatwa (2022), who state that most school heads and teachers who mismanaged school funds in summary did so because of ignorance of accounting procedures. In support of the above argument, Ng'oma and Simatwa, (2022) further elaborate that school heads, deputy school heads, and some delegated senior teachers were of the same accord that the acute lack of self-respect led them into this vice. The two scholars Ng'oma and Simatwa (2022) furthermore disclose in their findings the realization that a disciplined school head, deputy school head, and some delegated senior teachers will be prudent in managing school funds.

In light of the findings recounted above, it can be revealed that the school head and teacher's discipline was cited by most participants as a key factor in the involvement of financial mismanagement. Ng'oma and Simatwa (2022) conclude the above assertions by pointing out that disciplined minds on financial matters were found to be better managers. The findings of the literature and the findings imply that whenever financial embezzlement occurs in the school public expenditure in education is denoted as ethical and social impacts are sometimes enormous. The poor management of public resources has seen most school heads and delegated senior teachers being investigated and charged if found wanting, demoted, dismissed, or transferred to other schools (Ng'oma and Simatwa, 2022).

Improper Association of Male Teachers with Female Learners

In this part of the research question sub-thematic area, most participants identified female learners' sexual abuse by male

teachers through improper association as one of the common forms of acts of indiscipline in secondary schools in Mashonaland West Province. Some of the participants' views on this form of indiscipline among teachers are highlighted below:

DSH-6 of Runyararo District reported that "Most male teachers in particular usually engage in sexual affairs with their female learners in secret ways" This was also corroborated by SH-5 of Moyowokurera District who said that "In three schools that I once headed, teachers especially junior teachers tended falling in love with their female learners to the extent that they sleep with them resulting in unwanted pregnancies and subsequently the learners drop out of school".

Another participant JNRTR-2 of Pachipamwe District also corroborated this view by saying "In four schools where I have previously taught, male teacher mannerisms and lack of self-discipline play a great role in indulgence with female learners; such like teachers take advantage of classrooms base rooms/offices to lure female learners for sexual needs". In the same view, SI-1 of Rufaro District also corroborated this view by saying that "On the termly basis the district office school's inspectorate handles several such cases and in most instances are urgently investigated on so as not to put the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to disrepute".

The above study findings concur with similar study findings from document analysis in which a senior teacher was charged and brought before a disciplinary authority on improper association with a Form 4 female learner in Maworesa District. The document analysis asserts that a senior teacher requested a tongue-to-tongue kiss from a girl learner for a reward or payment of 10.00 USD. In this particular case, the learner refused and reported the case to the senior woman in the school. From the document analysis, the male senior teacher was found guilty and fined 300.00 USD from their salary payable in two equal instalments. The male senior teacher was also strongly warned and reprimanded by the disciplinary authority in its determination to the teacher.

Because of the above-asserted argument, from most of the participants in the study, Tshuma, Ndlovu and Bhebhe (2024) contend that teachers are complex and dynamic and are therefore obliged to develop different ways of doing their work, hence develop different and incompatible goals which increase the chances of acts of indiscipline and conflict school management. In addition to that Madziyire et al (2023) posit that schools are composed of teachers with differences in age, cultural backgrounds, ethics and values, beliefs, goals, attitudes, socio-economic status, and political persuasions, hence there are bound to be acts of indiscipline and conflict when such teachers come together with their perceptions on issues different. From an educational management analysis point of view in the field, such incompatible activities and goals exist among teachers in the education system from time to time and should be consistently addressed.

In the same vein, it has emerged from the research literature in this study that a lack of self-discipline among teachers is greatly responsible for the sexual abuse of female learners by some male teachers through improper association with minors. Ng'oma and Simatwa (2022) reveal that such teachers unashamed lose themselves and stoop to low sleep with their female learners in secret places convenient to the perpetrator. Ng'oma and Simatwa (2022) interestingly further amplify the above view by saying that a man eats where he works, implying that teachers prey on their learners. In the context of these findings, one would safely point out that sexual abuse of female learners through improper association is rampant in some schools but goes on undetected in some instances by most

school heads. The corroborated views from most of the participants in this study indicate that many female learners have their future dreams shattered because of unwanted pregnancies attributed to their teachers.

Given the above recent research literature support analysis, focusing on the study findings this implies that stringent measures should be put in place to protect female learners at all their levels of learning experiences against what Ng'oma and Simatwa (2022) further call "sex-pest teachers" in schools, implying that some male teachers have become sex parasites to the innocent female learners in the secondary schools. In support of the above critical assessment, Goodland et al (2020) also reiterate that it is important to note that a teacher's conduct at all times and in all ways, is a moral matter, and for that reason alone, teaching is a moral activity. This indicates that teachers should refrain from abusing female learners through improper association with minors in Mashonaland West Province's seven education districts as alluded to by most participants in this study.

Stealing of Government Donated Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) School Building Materials.

On this part of the research question, most participants identified stealing of government-donated Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) school construction or infrastructure material in schools as one of the forms of indiscipline that was very common in Mashonaland West Provinces' seven education districts. Some of the participants' views on this form of indiscipline are highlighted below:

JNRTR-7 of Pachipamwe District confided that "Some teachers and most school heads usually steal in small quantities Public Sector Investment Programme construction materials that include bags of cement, paint window frames, brick force, deformed iron bars, furniture, textbooks and school feeding program assorted foodstuffs such as 50kg bags of rice, chunks, beans, cooking oil, 50kg of grain/maize, sugar, salt and peanut butter". This was corroborated by DSH-4 of Pachedu District who said that "In five schools that I once taught at and two other schools that I once deputized, teachers especially heads of departments and school heads had the tendency of stealing school assets such as Science laboratory equipment, Agricultural Science hoes, fertilizers, donated textbooks, broiler chickens ready for marketing and furniture among others through pilfering. The heads of department and school heads are most put to personal use instead of being utilized by learners in the schools during lessons". SI-1 of Moyowokurera District corroborated this view by saying that "On a termly basis, we receive many such cases, investigate and write reports and institute misconduct charges if found necessary wherever such allegations are found to be true on any heads of department and school heads".

The study findings concur with document analysis which indicates the stealing of government-donated Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) school construction materials in Pachipamwe District. The document analysis study findings further reveal that the deputy school head improperly conducted herself by stealing 100 by 50kg PPC bags of cement donated by the government through the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) for school construction. The stolen 100 by 50kg PPC bags of cement were put to personal use. The deputy school head was found guilty by their admission to the aforesaid theft. The deputy school head replaced the 100 by 50kg PPC bags of cement with immediate effect. In this case, the deputy school head was found guilty and fined 600.00 USD to be recovered from salary in equal instalments.

In light of the findings recounted above, it has been empirically revealed that efforts have been taken by the government and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to promote discipline among teachers, but teacher malpractice is still a problem of great concern in Zimbabwe. Mfaume and Bilinga (2023) pinpointed that the problem affects the teaching and learning processes, the entire teaching profession, and the wider community. Mfaume and Bilinga (2023) further reveal that theft was evident among teachers and school heads in secondary schools. Analytically, the two scholars indicate that teachers were accused of stealing teaching and learning materials, building materials, water buckets, and school funds. In one's opinion, knowing such factors was important to provide apropos the problem in the seven districts of Mashonaland West Province. Likewise, research literature emphasizes the view that more collaborative effort must be put forth by MoPSE and the Public Service Commission (PSC), the government of Zimbabwe, and the wider community to remedy the problem to ensure that national and educational goals are realized (Mfaume and Bilinga, 2023)

Abuse of Maternity Leave by Female Teachers

On this part of the research question of this study, most participants identified abuse of maternity leave by females of child-bearing age as one of the forms of indiscipline that was common in Mashonaland West Province. Some of the participants' views on this form of indiscipline among the female teachers are highlighted below:

JNRTR-6 of Rufaro District revealed that "Most female teachers usually do not tell their school heads on time that they are pregnant and would proceed on maternity leave". This was corroborated by SNRTR-4 of Chido District who said "In the three schools that I once taught female teachers especially the juniors fresh from college tended not to tell the school head but to proceed quietly on unapproved maternity leave and may be delivered secretly while on school holiday working day or weekend in some cases. The female teachers would report and continue with normal duties as usual as if nothing ever happened". DSI-3 of Pachedu District corroborated this view by pointing out that "Each term we handle quite a good number of such cases and either instruct the school head or schools inspectors to investigate and write a report on such incidents and take the appropriate course of action on the teacher".

The above study findings indicated that disciplinary authority found out that whilst on pupation a junior female teacher abused maternity leave. The lady teacher in this case failed to apply for maternity leave as stipulated in Statutory Instrument 1 of 2000 as Amended in 2001. The junior female teacher delivered a baby girl whilst on probation. She concealed the pregnancy whilst at her workplace as she feared to proceed on unpaid maternity leave. In this case, the Disciplinary Authority found her guilty and fined her 400.00 USD to be recovered from her salary in two equal instalments. The junior lady teacher was further reprimanded

The findings revealed different forms of female teachers' abuse of maternity leave such as failure to apply for authority to proceed on maternity leave, failure to tell the school head about being pregnant whilst on probation, proceeding with pregnancy delivery, and immediately returning to work as if nothing has happened. In one's analysis, the indications are that most female teachers especially the juniors are mostly ignorant of Statutory Instrument 1 of 2000 as Amended in 2001 on the code of conduct concerning maternity leave. The code of ethics and conduct which is a missing link is an important document for female teachers to understand and readily use as it stipulates the

dos and don'ts for all female teachers in the teaching service in Zimbabwe (Simuyaba and Chibwe, 2022). Simuyaba and Chibwe (2022) further stress the fact that any female teacher's breach of the code of conduct and ethics results in a penalty depending on the gravity of the offense.

In concluding this thematic area, I strongly envisage that all teachers should read sections of the Statutory Instrument 1 of 2000 as Amended in 2001 understand the document, and adhere to its provisions. Furthermore, a new orientation towards work and maternity leave provisions for the new and old female teachers in the service must be created among teachers. This implies that teachers' especially female teachers of childbearing age must develop a healthy attitude to maternity leave provisions, teaching, and good discipline toward work. Mfaume and Bilinga (2023) point out that, for the effective and successful promotion of teacher ethics and the achievement of educational goals, procedures should not only be known to school heads but to junior female teachers as well as a result of some unethical incidents can be reduced. Therefore, once every teacher and school head becomes aware of such procedures incidents such as unreported pregnancies will appear before the respective authority hence actions will be taken against perpetrators.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Unauthorised absence from duty, embezzlement of school funds, collection of unauthorised/unapproved levies, stealing of school assets in the form of pilfering, bribing, corruption, altercations with learners' parents, and improper association with female learners by male teachers among others, were established as the main forms of indiscipline among secondary school teachers. There was a need to investigate the persistent causes of the acts of indiscipline established in this study among secondary school teachers.

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