

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY PRINCIPALS IN ENFORCING STUDENTS' DISCIPLINE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EDO NORTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT, NIGERIA

Ofeimu Josiah, Abdulrahaman Zeniatu and Kolawole Bolanle Oluwatoyin

¹Council Affairs Division, Ambrose Alli University, P.M.B. 14, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria

²Rifad Int'l Group of Schools, Auchu, Edo State, Nigeria.

³Excellent Academy Educational Services, Education House, Old-Ife Road, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT: *This study was carried out to investigate challenges encountered by principals in enforcing students discipline among secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District. Five (5) research questions were raised while three (3) hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The descriptive method based on survey research design was adopted. A population of 286 principals of public and private secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District was used while 172 principals constituted the sample size using a simple random sampling technique. The sample comprised 60% of the entire population. The questionnaire was used to gather relevant data and was titled: Challenges of Principals in Enforcement of Students' Discipline Questionnaire (CPESDQ). The data collected were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-test. It was found among others that principals in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District encountered 10 different challenges in the enforcement of students' discipline. Some of these challenges included school owners' interference and students' fear of assault which were ranked highest, while restriction by law was ranked least in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District. Further, principals of public secondary schools encountered more challenges in the enforcement of students' discipline than their counterparts in private secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District. It was recommended based on the findings that principals of secondary schools should develop coping strategies in solving challenges encountered in enforcing students' discipline. The strategies were Reality Therapy (RT) and Discipline with Dignity (DD).*

KEYWORDS: Challenges, Principals, Enforcing, Students' Discipline, Reality Therapy, Discipline with Dignity

INTRODUCTION

The education sector is guided by rules and regulations. All members of the school are expected to adhere to various standards or codes set in the school (Okumbe, 2001). The rules and regulations are expected to guide behaviours of staff and students of the school community as well as its relationship with the various publics. The essence of these codes of conduct is to maintain discipline behaviour in the school system.

Discipline is an important component of human behaviour. It helps not only to regulate people's reactions to various situations but also regulates human conducts and relations with others (Ajibola & Ali, 2014). Discipline is when students are taught to respect the school authorities, observe the school rules and regulations, maintain an established standard of

behaviour. The place of discipline in school cannot be overemphasized. A disciplined environment guarantees a conducive environment for teaching and learning.

Ezeocha in Osakwe (2013) observed that youths are deviating from the expected behaviour necessary for good living in the society. According to Ileri (1992), in traditional society, the question of children's discipline was a joint effort for all members of the society. Today, most children go to school from a very early age and therefore spend most of their time away from their parents. Thus, the issue of discipline is mostly left to the teachers and their heads; schools therefore, have to ensure those who go through it come out as disciplined members of the society (Ezekwensili, 2007).

The aim of education is the production of good men and women. The education of the will is more important than the education for the intellect for the worth of a man is determined by his will. It is therefore the responsibility of the school heads to maintain discipline in their schools even though such an important task should not be left alone for the school heads to handle. Principals in public and private secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District are required to use disciplinary methods in enforcing students' discipline as their counterparts in other parts of the state. Such disciplinary measures may include punishment, use of school rules and regulations and the use of reward management. These measures from observations seem not to be effective in Edo North Senatorial District and this call for serious concern.

In Nigeria, principals encounter various challenges while enforcing students' discipline in schools. The challenges could include political interference, parents' interference, restrictions by law, lack of support by supervisors, teachers being poor role models, inappropriate knowledge of disciplinary actions, humiliation by students and school owners' interference. These challenges hamper the smooth running of the school system especially in the enforcement of students discipline in schools. The ranking of these challenges is equally of importance in finding out the challenges mostly encountered by principals in enforcing students' discipline. This ranking helps to appreciate the degree of the challenges in their occurrence in the day to day administration of schools.

Many parents who are politicians or have link with notable politicians often meddle in the affairs of the school administration. Many politicians interfere in the running of schools in their constituencies for political reasons and often do not allow principals to instill discipline in students as it ought to be. Most members of parliament will not protect principals who may hold political opinions contrary to their own. Some parents are known for issuing threats to principals who take out some disciplinary actions against their children especially those who hold positions in the society. As a result of some of them being influential, they use their position to intimidate and threaten the principals and therefore preventing them from taking appropriate disciplinary measures against their children and this erodes the authority of the school principals. Such instances the researcher had witnessed in a school in the year 2009 where a parent of a student the researcher had given a punishment came with three brothers of the student to issue threats. It was observed that a parent once slapped a principal of a school in Auchi for allegedly punishing her daughter for always coming late to school.

It was equally observed in Dagbala secondary school that, another principal was beaten up by the parents of a student that was punished by a teacher. Even some parents end up getting principals arrested and arraigned before judges. Such embarrassing situations have made it difficult for principals and teachers in public and private secondary schools to enforce discipline. Okumbe (2001) asserted that due to threat from influential parents, principals may

suspend taking disciplinary measures like suspension for the fear that such parents may have their appointments terminated and the student readmitted unconditionally. Such an occurrence could send a wrong signal to the other students since the principal is handicapped in the application of disciplinary action.

Restriction by law, the outlawing of corporal punishment in school made teachers/principals to become very cautious to avoid being accused of assaulting their students for some teachers have been ridiculed, humiliated and fined in the court of law for disciplining students. For the fact that teachers and principals are taken to court in the process of taking disciplinary action on rude students are restricted to few alternative disciplinary measures and this often result to ineffective measures like ignoring a student's misconduct altogether (Al-Jarrah & Khasawneh, 2013).

Furthermore, school principals loose their respect and honour when they are found guilty or when cases are judged in favour of students and their parents or when principals are made to pay fines as damages done to students. According to Okumbe (2008), appropriate disciplinary measures must be used on indisciplined students. The measure can either be preventive or corrective. Head teachers (principals) have a very important role to play in maintaining discipline in schools. They can achieve this by setting the moral tone of the school and through their remarkable influence on teachers and students.

Inappropriate knowledge on the part of the principals in the enforcement or management of discipline in public and private secondary schools has been a hindrance in enhancing students' discipline in schools. Many principals in public secondary schools are often said to be more committed in enforcing students' discipline in schools than principals in the private schools. It has also been observed that many principals in private schools do pamper their students because they must have to remain in business. Ascertaining if a difference exist in school ownership and enforcement of discipline problems become a worry in secondary schools. The administrative experience of principals to a large extent may help in overcoming some of these challenges as observations had shown that the number of years a principal spends in administration is symbolic with the ability to handle stress and challenges (Zubair, Hamid, Fahad, Farah & Sayira, 2012). Sex of principal as a factor is important to be reckoned with. Male principals may be able to handle challenges better than female principals may do.

Okumbe (2008) asserted that training improves workers effectiveness in discharging their functions. The ultimate responsibility for all school discipline lies with the school head. The enhancement and the smooth running of the disciplinary system depends on a well defined basic policies established by the heads or the principals. It is difficult for teachers and principals to enforce discipline on the students who will occasionally or intentionally cause disruption, ridicule and humiliate teachers.

At Jagbe secondary school in Etsako west local government area of Edo State, it was observed that a corps member was stabbed b a student on his way home for the punishment the principal gave the student for insulting the corps member. From observation, a teacher was beaten up by a group of students he punished in one of the schools in Akoko Edo local government area of Edo State. The researcher observed in one of the private schools in Auchi, that a student slapped a teacher. In another school at Iyora community, three students deflated the tyres of their principal's car for disciplining them that day (Zubair, Hamid, Fahad, Farah & Sayira, 2012). Even some community youth members walked tirelessly to

seeing a principal been transferred or removed from school for expelling a rude student from the school. Such embarrassing situations have made it difficult for teachers and principals in public and private secondary schools to enforce discipline.

However, there are various punishments approved by law in various states. For example, the following are the disciplinary measures approved by Edo State in enforcing students' discipline (Edo State Ministry of Education, 2012) as flogging, kneeling down, rebuking, cutting of grasses, sitting on wall, copying of passage, standing in front of the class, inviting parents or guardians to schools, picking litters out of class, suspension and expulsion.

The experience of principals is central to this study. Principals who have spent more than ten (10) years in the post of administration in school are said to be more proficient in handling issues pertaining to students' discipline in secondary schools than principals with less experience that is principals that have spent below ten (10) years in administration. Equally, the sex of principals is an important variable to be considered in discussing disciplinary challenges in schools. Female principals tend to be very afraid in meting out punishment on students as a way of discipline (Akomolafe, 2012). It is against this backdrop that this study intends to investigate the challenges encounter by schools' principals in enforcing students' discipline in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District.

Statement of the Problem

Disciplinary problems in secondary schools have taken new dimension. Principals of school are now being faced with varying challenges in enforcing students' discipline such as school owners' interference, parents' interference, political interference, restriction by law and fear of assault from students. Disciplinary issues are major challenges in schools and often times disrupting the effective administration of schools. Achievement of educational goals to a large extent depends on students' discipline. No meaningful development can thrive in an atmosphere devoid of peace. Discipline is an important component of human behaviour. It helps not only to regulate people's reactions to various situations but also regulates human conducts and relations with others (Adigwu, 2004). The success of the school system lies on it.

However, observations had shown that principals in their line of duty to enforcing students' discipline in schools are faced with many challenges ranging from political interference, school owners' interference, fear of attack, students drug addiction among others. Some school principals and teachers have been physically abused because they want to enforce discipline in schools. According to Murithi (2010), principals are faced with many challenges in schools in the enforcement of students' discipline which if not checked can make the educational system bleak.

Principals play key roles in the maintenance of students' discipline in secondary schools. It becomes worrisome the spate of the educational system now devoid of discipline and most worrisome is the way parents of students support their children when they misbehave. School owners are not left out in this regard as they often time threat the issue of students on business oriented mode without due consideration about what the teachers felt. Do principals and teachers now leave the students to do whatever they like? The bible in Proverbs 13:24 says: "he who spares his rod of discipline hate his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently and punishes him early". It is also of concern how the challenges encountered are ranked which is one of the gaps to be filled in this study. It against this background therefore,

that this study investigates challenges encounter by schools' principals in enforcing students discipline in both public and private secondary schools in North Senatorial District of Edo State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide this study.

1. What challenges do principals encounter in enforcing students discipline in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?
2. How are these challenges ranked by principals in Secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?
3. Is there any difference between the challenges encountered by private and public secondary schools' principals in enforcing students discipline in Edo North Senatorial District?
4. Is there any difference between the challenges encountered by male and female principals in enforcing students discipline in public and private secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?
5. Is there any difference between the disciplinary challenges encountered by more experienced and less experienced principals in enforcing of students discipline in public and private secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between principals of public and private secondary schools in the challenges they encounter in enforcing students discipline in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female principals of secondary schools in the challenges they encounter in enforcing students discipline in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District.
3. There is no significant difference between more experienced and less experienced principals of secondary schools in the disciplinary challenges they encounter in enforcing students discipline in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District.

METHOD AND PROCEDURES

The descriptive research design based on survey method was adopted for the study. It was classified as survey because its major concern was an examination of the challenges encountered by principals in enforcing students discipline in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District of Nigeria without manipulating the variables of the study. The method also allowed the researcher the opportunity to use a representative sample of a group (principals) that accurately captured the entire population of principals in secondary schools in the study area which was used to draw a general conclusion.

Population of the Study: The population of the study comprised all principals in public and private secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District of Nigeria. The total population was two hundred and eighty six (286) principals comprising one hundred and ninety eight (198) principals in public and eighty eight (88) principals in private secondary schools respectively.

Sample and Sampling Technique: The sample for the study was made up of one hundred and seventy two (172) principals in public and private secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District. This sample comprised 60% of the entire population of principals of secondary schools in the study area. The population was divided into strata and from each stratum, 60% was selected to represent the study. The sample was derived using the simple random sampling technique using the balloting system which was drawn after the population had been stratified according to local government area. This process was carried out by dropping ballots in a basket and picking them one after the other with replacement and on each process recording the score until the last number was selected. This was done to ensure equal representation and avoid bias.

Instrument of the Study: The research instrument used was the questionnaire which was titled: Challenges Encountered by Principals in Enforcing Students Discipline Questionnaire (CEPESDQ). The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section "A" and Section "B". Section "A" dealt with the demographic variables of the respondents such as sex, school ownership and years of experience of principals while section "B" focused on challenges encounter by principals in enforcing students discipline in secondary schools. Section "B" looked at the various challenges that principals encounter in enforcing students discipline in secondary schools and the principals were asked to tick the challenges encountered by them accordingly in the discharge of their duties. Section B comprised 10 items. Each of the 10 items comprised 3 sub items making a total of 30 items which was rated on four point scales of "Strongly Agree" (4 points), "Agree" (3 points), "Disagree" (2 points) and "Strongly Disagree" (1 point).

Validity of the Instrument: The instrument was validated by experts who are senior lecturers in the Department of Educational Foundations and Management of Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma. This was done by way of ensuring clarity of items in the questionnaire. The suggestions and corrections by them were incorporated into the final draft.

Reliability of the Instrument: The split-half reliability method was adopted for this study. This was done by administering copies of the questionnaire to a group of twenty (20) principals in Edo Central Senatorial District. The data collected was split into two equal halves using odd and even numbers in the questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to establish the reliability coefficient. Spearman Brown formula was used to step up the reliability coefficient. The reliability coefficient was 0.81.

Administration of the Instrument: The instrument was administered on the respondents who were given some time for the completion, and retrieved on the spot to ensure high rate of return. It took the researchers two weeks to complete the exercise.

Method of Data Analysis: The method that was used to answer Research Questions 1 was mean and standard deviation, research question 2 was percentage while the hypotheses were

tested using t-test of independent sample. A mean score of 2.5 and above was regarded as agreed below 2.5 was disagreed.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What challenges do principals encounter in enforcing students discipline in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?

Table 1: Challenges principals encounter in enforcing students discipline in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District.

S/ N	PRINCIPALS' CHALLENGES IN SECONDARY SCHOOL	N	Scores	Mean	SD	Ranking	Remarks
1	School owners' interference	172	1636	9.51	2.328	1	Agreed
2	Fear of assault	172	1636	9.51	2.328	1	Agreed
3	Inappropriate knowledge of disciplinary actions	172	1474	8.57	2.169	3	Agreed
4	Political interference	172	1470	8.55	1.865	4	Agreed
5	Parents' interference	172	1436	8.35	1.878	5	Agreed
6	Teachers being poor role model	172	1424	8.28	2.061	6	Agreed
7	Humiliation by students	172	1374	7.99	1.870	7	Agreed
8	Lack of support by supervisors	172	1372	7.98	1.968	8	Agreed
9	Drug abuse by students	172	1272	7.40	1.769	9	Agreed
10	Restriction by law	172	1264	7.35	2.129	10	Agreed

Table 1 showed the analysis of challenges encountered by principals in enforcing students discipline in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District. All the ten items in the questionnaire had a mean score of above 2.5 which was the bench mark set for this work and as such were agreed to in the analysis. From the analysis the challenges encountered by principals of secondary schools included: Political interference, parents' interference, restriction by law, lack of support by supervisors, Teachers being poor role model, inappropriate knowledge of disciplinary actions, Humiliation by students, school owners' interference, Fear of assault and drug abuse by students.

Research Question 2: How are these challenges ranked by principals in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?

In Table 1, the ranking of the challenges encountered by principals in enforcing students discipline in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District was presented. Among the challenges, school owners' interference and fear of assault were ranked same and took the first ranked position. Next was inappropriate knowledge of disciplinary actions as 3rd, political interference as 4th, parents interference as 5th, teachers being poor role model as 6th, humiliation by students as 7th, lack of support by supervisors as 8th, drug abuse by students as 9th while restriction by law was raked 10th and the last. It meant therefore that school owners'

interference and fear of assault were the highest challenges encountered by principals while restriction by law was the least.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between principals of public and private secondary schools in the challenges they encounter in enforcing students discipline in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Table 2: T-test analysis of school ownership in enforcing students' discipline

School Ownership	N	Mean	SD	df	t-calculated value	t-table value	Sig.	Remark
Public	95	86.55	10.029	170	3.570	1.960	0.087	Ho is rejected
Private	77	80.77	11.022					

Table 2 showed the analysis of t-test of the difference between principals of public and private secondary schools in the challenges encountered in enforcing students' discipline. The calculated value of -3.570 was higher than the table value of 1.960. Table 2 showed that the t-test calculated (3.570) was significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. The mean value of public school was higher than that of private schools. It indicated that public secondary school principals encountered more challenges in enforcing students discipline than their counterpart in private secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between male and female principals of secondary schools in the challenges they encounter in enforcing students discipline in Edo North Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Table 3: T-test analysis of male and female principals challenges in enforcing students discipline

Sex of Principals	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-calculated value	t-table value	Sig.	Remark
Male	74	82.36	10.727	170	0.939	1.960	0.349	Ho is retained
Female	98	83.94	10.831					

Table 3 indicated that the t-calculated (0.939) is not significant at 0.05 level of significance because the calculated was lower than the table value. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained. The conclusion was that male and female secondary school principals encountered the same challenges in Edo North Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between more experienced and less experienced principals of secondary schools in the challenges they encounter in enforcing students discipline in Edo North Senatorial Districts.

Table 4: T-test analysis of years of experience in enforcing students' discipline

Years of experience of principals	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-calculated value	t-table value	Sig.	Remark
Below 10 years	99	85.81	11.569	170	3.732	1.960	0.000	Ho is rejected
Above 10 years	73	79.82	8.564					

The t-calculated (3.372) was higher than the table value of 1.960 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. It meant that principals who had less experience in school administration encountered more challenges in enforcing students discipline than their counterparts who were more experienced in Edo North Senatorial District, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION

This study found out that principals in secondary school in Edo North Senatorial District encountered 10 different challenges in enforcing students discipline in schools. The challenges encountered by principals of secondary schools included: political interference, parents' interference, restriction by law, lack of support by supervisors, teachers being poor role model, inappropriate knowledge of disciplinary actions, humiliation by students, school owners' interference, fear of assault and drug abuse by students. The study showed that these factors constrained secondary school principals in enforcing students' discipline which has made it difficult in instilling moral values in the students. The country today needs moral teachings in schools to inculcate discipline and good virtues in the young ones in order to curtail vices in the society. The finding of this study could be as a result of the terrain and the lifestyle of the people where this study was conducted. It could also be as a result of the loss of moral values in the society where discipline has been thrown to the dogs and people no longer have regards for school principals as it used to be years back.

The result of this study corroborates that of Murithi (2010) who revealed that the challenges encountered by principals in enhancing students' discipline range from humiliation by students, resistance from some parents, students strikes, political interference, drug abuse, teenage pregnancies, divergent cultural values and age gaps. The study of Bosire, Sang, Kiumi and Mungai (2009) also revealed that headship experience and parental input were major challenges faced by principals in enforcement of students' discipline in secondary schools.

The relationship in the findings of this study and those of the researchers mentioned above could be as a result of the similarities in culture and behaviour of the people since the studies were carried out in Africa. The study has shown that the challenges encountered by principals are major causes of moral decadence in schools which is a reflection of the loss of moral values in the society. To entrench discipline in schools therefore, the principals must be empowered by enabling laws and any interference by the public whether they are parents, students, politicians must be condemned by all so that the school can produce persons that will be useful to themselves and the society.

The result of this study also revealed that among the challenges encountered by principals in enforcing students' discipline in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District, school owners' interference and fear of assault were ranked highest while restriction by law was ranked lowest. The ranking orders of the challenges were: school owners' interference and fear of assault were ranked highest taking first and second position followed by inappropriate knowledge of disciplinary actions as 3rd, political interference as 4th, parents interference as 5th, teachers being poor role model as 6th, humiliation from students as 7th, lack of support by supervisors as 8th, drug abuse by students as 9th while restriction by law was ranked 10th and the last. School owners' interference, fear of assault, inappropriate knowledge of disciplinary actions by teachers and school heads and political interference were among the first four

challenges. It meant that owners of schools especially private schools do not give enough power to the principals to carry out disciplinary measures in schools. Fear of assault and poor knowledge of disciplinary actions on the part of school heads are equally major constraints. The result of this study could be as a result of the pattern of education operational in the country whereby there are many choices of schools for children. Most times when they misbehave and are sent out of one school, they easily have access to another. Moreso, is the rate at which private schools seek clients and would not want to lose any student.

This finding corroborates that of Al-Jarrah and Khasawneh (2013) who found out that the challenges countered by school heads were of different forms and caused by different problems ranging from qualifications, experience and school support. This means that the challenges encountered do not rank same but comes in various degrees and shades and they all pose major challenge to effective administration of secondary school.

This study equally revealed that public secondary school principals encountered more challenges in enforcing students discipline than their counterpart in private secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District. The responses of the subjects during this investigation showed that public secondary school principals are exposed to attacks and humiliations in the bid to enforcing discipline among students. They reported several cases of attacks from students and their family members, parents in the community and even influential politicians who often times threaten the safety of their jobs. Although private secondary school principals are not without these challenges, the most prevailing challenges they encounter is school owners' interference that always want to maintain high enrolment rate and as such would not want to lose any student.

The result of this study has bearing with the finding of Ajibola and Ali (2014) who found out that disciplinary problem in schools is of great concern. It was seen that disciplinary issues range from school to school especially public and private schools. Akomolafe (2012) in a study also found out that there is moderate level of administrative effectiveness in public schools while there is high level of administrative effectiveness in private secondary schools. It is however important not to take issues of discipline in school with levity either public or private schools for the attainment of the goals of the education sector.

The result of this study revealed that male and female secondary school principals do not differ in the challenges encountered in enforcing students discipline in Edo North Senatorial District, Nigeria. This was because there was no statistical significant difference in the challenges encountered by male and female principals in secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District of Nigeria. The result of this study could be as a result of the fact that administrative workings in all schools are the same whether it is headed by male or female administrators. Meanwhile, the challenges in most schools are similar irrespective of the sex of principal in that school.

The result of this study has bearing to the finding of Barter (2001) who revealed that principals and teachers irrespective of their sex display equality in ability and personal quality. It further emphasized that challenges faced by principals are the same in schools though these challenges may vary from school to school due to cultural differences. It is imperative that principals irrespective of sex should devise measures to tackling challenges envisaged in enforcement of students' discipline in secondary schools for attainment of secondary school goals.

However, the findings of Ikoya (2009) and Adigwu (2004) contradict the finding of this study. They revealed in their findings that male principals tend to do better at management of students' discipline in schools. Although the challenges they face could be similar, male principals were observed to be better at handling the challenges experienced in secondary schools. The reason for this finding could be as a result of the difference in culture where the studies were conducted. However, the challenges principals face in enforcement of students' discipline are major worries to the attainment of educational goals if not checked by all stakeholders of the education system like the government, parents, Ministries of Education among others.

The finding of this study showed that principals who have less experience in school administration encounter more challenges in enforcing students discipline than their counterpart principals who are more experienced in school administration in Edo North Senatorial District, Nigeria. The reason for this finding could be as a result of the fact that more experienced principals are more knowledgeable in the application of disciplinary measures in schools. They are more acquainted with the rules guiding students' discipline and as such are able to avert some acts that would have flared up and probably resulted in attacks. They are able to manage crisis situations even when parents or families of any aggrieved student(s) come threatening. The less experienced principals may not be able to manage situations as earlier mentioned and thus prone to more challenges in enforcing students' discipline in schools.

CONCLUSION

Principals of public and private secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District encountered challenges in enforcing students' discipline. Among these challenges are school owners' interference, political interference, drug abuse by students, restriction by law and inappropriate knowledge of disciplinary actions. School owners' interference is the most challenging factor while restriction by law is the least.

Public secondary school principals encountered more challenges in enforcing students' discipline. Male and female principals had similar challenges while less experienced principals again encountered more challenges than the experienced principals. It is therefore concluded that challenges faced by principals in enforcement of students' discipline are issues that need urgent attention by all stakeholders of the education sector for the realization of education goals and the building of good spirited and morally conscious citizens who will contribute optimally to national development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made.

1. Principals of secondary schools should develop coping strategies towards addressing challenges faced in the enforcement of students' discipline such as Reality Therapy (RT) (involves teachers helping students make positive choice by making clear connections between students behaviour and the consequences) and Discipline with

Dignity (DD) (students should be treated in a calm serious way even in difficult situations with honest and light moral standard).

2. School owners whether public or private should not interfere in the line of duty of principals as these relate to enforcement of students' discipline.
3. Communities where schools are cited should ensure they protect the principals and teachers in such areas from the molestation or attacks from any individual or group in that community or outside the community. This will help to encourage the principals and teachers to devote more attention to teaching the students.
4. Principals must continue to think about necessary avenues to upgrade themselves in school administration and equip themselves with the relevant sections of the law especially as they relate to discipline in schools. This will help them to do the right thing at the right time and avoid any court problems emanating from infringement on students' rights.

REFERENCES

- Ajibola, A.L. and Ali, A.H. (2014). Disciplinary measures in Nigerian senior secondary schools: Issues and prospects. *Journal of Research and Method in Education*, 4(3), 11-17.
- Akomolafe, C.O. (2012). A comparative study of principals' administrative effectiveness in public and private secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 3(13), 39-45.
- Al-Jarrah, F.N. K. and Khasawneh, H.Y.A. (2013). Problems faced by primary school teachers in irbid governorate as perceived by the school administrators. *European Scientific Journal*, 19(7), 166-184.
- Bosire, J., Sang, A. K., Kiumi, J. K. and Mungai, V. C (2009). The relationship between principals' managerial approaches and student discipline in secondary schools in Kenya. *An International Multi-Disciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*, 3 (3), 399-413.
- Daily Nation. (2004, February 16). *Parents' plea for expelled students*. In Daily Nation Nairobi, Kenya. Nation Media Group.
- Ezekwensili, O. (2007). Reinventing education. *Vanguard Newspaper, Daily Jan 4*, Pg 47.
- Ikoya, P.O. (2009). Gender difference in the application of preventive discipline practices among principals of secondary schools in Nigeria. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 20(1): 49-53.
- Ileri, E.R. (1992). *A study of pupils indiscipline faced by primary schools teachers in a Nairobi slum area: The case of Mathare primary schools*. University of Nairobi, Unpublished Thesis.
- Murithi, E.W. (2010). Challenges principals face in enhancing student discipline in secondary schools in Tigania District, Kenya. *A Thesis Submitted to Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Award of the Degree of Master of Education in Educational Management of Chuka University College*
- Okumbe, J.A. (2001). *Educational management: Theory and practice*. Nairobi: University Press.
- Okumbe, J.A. (2008). *Educational Management: Theory and practice*. Nairobi: Kenya Sunlitho Ltd.

- Osakwe, R.N. (2013). Principals' management techniques for resolving disciplinary problems in Nigerian public secondary schools. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(5), 52-57.
- Zubair, H., Hamid, K., Fahad, M., Farah, L. and Sayira, B. (2012). Analysis and evaluation of discipline issues in public and private sector institutions. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 1(1), 113-125.