



CONCERNS AND ISSUES IN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS: BASES FOR PROGRAM INTERVENTION

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive-qualitative study used phenomenology to determine concerns and issues on school discipline of private schools in Iloilo, to be utilized as the basis for program intervention during the school year 2024 -2025. Based on the results of the in-depth interview with the participants, it was found that several concerns affecting school discipline were identified, including bullying, vaping, vandalism, stealing, lateness and absenteeism, and behavioral defiance. Several issues affecting school discipline were also identified, like ineffective sanctions and interventions, lack of teacher involvement and support, lack of discipline authority, ambiguity in roles and processes, inconsistent rule enforcement, and poor parental communication and community engagement. Also, several management strategies for addressing concerns and issues in school discipline were identified, including strengthening classroom management, encouraging student responsibility and leadership, enhancing teacher engagement, regular school personnel meetings, strengthening parental and community engagement, spiritual and behavioral support, and school system enhancement.

Keywords: *Concerns and Issues, School Discipline, Private School, Program Intervention*

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INTRODUCTION

Concerns and issues in school discipline are the main obstacles to creating a school environment conducive to learning and achieving harmonious relationships among community members. School problems are issues that learner experiences that affect their performance in school. The severity of the concern and issue needs a course of action.

Discipline problems may be due to emotional stress from anger, worry, fear, shame, or embarrassment. These emotions could result from student frustration with non-completion of program activities, failing a test, disagreement with another student, worry over paying school fees, or anxiety resulting from family problems. Students reprimanded in front of others for any reason may feel embarrassed as an emotional reaction.

Njoroge and Nyabuto (2021) found that numerous factors influence students' discipline, including insufficient support services and guidance and counseling, substandard food quality, inadequate learning materials, strained teacher-student relationships, neglect of students' grievances, and an unresponsive administration.

For teachers—particularly those who are new to the profession—maintaining discipline presents a considerable challenge. School heads often devote a substantial portion of their time to addressing disciplinary issues.

The primary goal of school discipline is to establish a safe, structured, and positive learning environment. This objective is typically achieved by implementing rules and strategies designed to address misbehavior while also fostering students' self-regulation skills (Li et al., 2021). School regulations are created in collaboration with the community to uphold

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acceptable standards of conduct and attire. Students are expected to adhere to these rules at all times, whether on school premises or while representing the institution. Such regulations not only promote discipline and focus on academics but also safeguard the school's reputation and prepare students to follow societal rules in the future. Moreover, the Department of Education underscores that the administration of school discipline must uphold the child's inherent dignity and align with the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Additionally, the Department enforces a strict zero-tolerance policy against all forms of child abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination, bullying, and related offenses (DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012).

In this respect, discipline rules are also seen as an element in ensuring compliance with the normal order. Considering the problems caused by student misbehaviors and the resulting discipline problems, it can be said that they reduce the effectiveness of education and negatively affect the school atmosphere, students' success, and socialization. They also endanger school and student security (Akpınar & Özdaş, 2021). For this reason, to better understand the disciplinary issues at school becomes more important. However, despite clear school policies on discipline, it is undeniable that issues affecting student behaviors are still the most important concerns of the school.

Maintaining discipline in school is critical for teachers and school heads to understand why problems occur, how discipline problems are prevented, and what to do when a problem occurs, as school discipline and practices are critical parts of creating a school's overall climate. Due to these observations, this study was conducted.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the research methodology utilized in this study. It describes the research method, research design, participants, sampling design, research instrument, data-gathering procedures, and data analysis approach. This study aimed to explore concerns and issues related to school discipline and use the findings to develop a program intervention.

Research Method

The research method utilized in this study was qualitative research using in-depth interviews.

Fraenkel and Wallen (2007) stated that the descriptive method is used to describe a given situation as fully and carefully as possible.

During the interview, the interviewer and interviewee will be allowed to sit together at a distance and think about the series of questions about a certain issue. The aim is to get the main or the necessary views of the participants on a particular issue in a social context through the responses of the participants to the questions.

Research Design

The study used a phenomenological research design. Phenomenology can be considered a philosophical approach to undertaking qualitative research. Its goal is to understand how others view the world, and how this view may vary from commonly held views by focusing on a person's subjective interpretations of what she experiences. It is done

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by interviewing the subjects to learn their impressions and is frequently used in psychology, sociology, and social work.

According to Smith (2023), phenomenology is the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view. The central structure of an experience is its intentionality, its being directed toward something, as it is an experience of or about some object. An experience is directed toward an object by virtue of its content or meaning (which represents the object) together with appropriate enabling conditions.

Participants of the Study

The study participants were two selected learners, two teachers, two school heads, and two parents from a selected private school within Iloilo City. The same number of participants will also be chosen from a private school in the Province of Iloilo, with a total of 16 participants.

Sampling Design

The study utilized a purposive sampling design. As defined by Nikolopoulou (2023), purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling technique in which units are deliberately selected based on specific characteristics relevant to the study. In other words, participants or cases are chosen intentionally to ensure they possess the qualities necessary to achieve the research objectives. Also known as judgmental sampling, this method depends on the researcher's discernment when identifying and selecting individuals, cases, or events that can provide the most insightful information. It is a widely used technique in

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qualitative and mixed methods research, particularly when informative cases must be identified, or resources are limited.

However, purposive sampling also carries inherent risks, primarily the potential for research biases that may compromise the validity of the findings. These biases can stem from the observer's own perceptions and judgments, which may inadvertently influence the selection process.

Research Instrument

The research instrument utilized in the study is a researcher-made interview schedule.

The interview schedule had three major questions focusing on issues and concerns on school discipline.

Voice and video recorders were used for data gathering and documentation, depending upon the permission of the participants.

Validity of the Research Instrument

Prior to the determination of the validity of the interview schedule made by the researcher, the adviser, the Dean of the Graduate School then a panel of jurors who are considered for their expertise in the field of research, testing, and assessment, and English, were requested to validate each question for review and modification.

Validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, correctness, and usefulness of inferences a researcher makes. In content-related evidence of validity, the content and format must be consistent with the definition of variables and a sample of the subject to be measured and is also helpful in validating the items in the questionnaire (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2007).

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Comments, corrections, and suggestions of the panel of validators regarding the interview schedule were considered using the appropriate form of Good and Scates (Appendix A).

Data Gathering Procedures

Permits from the adviser, Dean of the Graduate School, Office of the District Supervisors, School Heads, and individual participants were obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally went to the schools/communities/places convenient on the part of the participants to conduct the interview.

The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with the participants. Before the interviews, participants were encouraged to sign a waiver or provide permission for their involvement in the study. A voice and video recorder was used to capture the interviewees' responses to ensure accurate data collection. After completing the series of interviews, the researcher consolidated all collected data for analysis.

Data Analysis

The information gathered were analyzed using thematic approach.

Thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data. According to Maguire & Delahunt (2021), a thematic analysis aims to identify themes, such as patterns in the data that are important or interesting and use these themes to address the research or say something about an issue. This is summarizing, analyzing and interpreting the data gathered and making sense of it.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study was conducted to determine the concerns and issues on school discipline of private schools in Iloilo as the basis for program intervention during the school year 2024 - 2025.

The research method utilized in this study is a qualitative method, using in-depth interviews, and the research design is phenomenological research.

The participants of the study were the two selected learners, two teachers, two school heads, and two parents from a selected private school within Iloilo City, and the same number of participants were also chosen from a selected Province of Iloilo with a total of 16 participants.

The research instrument utilized in the study was a researcher-made interview schedule. Voice and video recorders were also used for data gathering and documentation, depending upon the permission of the participants.

A panel of experts validated the interview schedule and considered all comments and suggestions relative to the validation of the tool.

Permits from the advisers, School President/Principal, Discipline officers, and individual participants were obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally went to the schools/community/place convenient on the part of the participants to conduct the interview, and virtual instruction was done prior to the interview.

The researcher consolidated all the collected data after a series of interviews.

The information gathered was analyzed using a thematic approach.

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The following were the findings of the study:

The in-depth interviews with the participants identified several concerns affecting school discipline, including bullying, vaping, vandalism, stealing, lateness and absenteeism, and behavioral defiance.

Moreover, several issues affecting school discipline were identified, such as ineffective sanctions and interventions, lack of teacher involvement and support, lack of discipline authority, ambiguity in roles and processes, inconsistent rule enforcement, and poor parental communication and community engagement.

It was also found out based on the results of the in-depth interviews with the participants, several management strategies for addressing concerns and issues in school discipline were identified, including strengthening classroom management, encouraging student responsibility and leadership, enhancing teacher engagement, regular school personnel meetings, strengthening parental and community engagement, spiritual and behavioral support, and school system enhancement.

Based on the findings, the following insights were drawn:

Persistent bullying, vaping, and vandalism show that current interventions are ineffective, requiring stricter enforcement and student-centered solutions.

Stealing, lateness, and absenteeism persist due to weak deterrence and lack of accountability, highlighting the need for stronger enforcement.

Inconsistent discipline and overloaded staff create a chaotic environment, emphasizing the need for clearer structures and support.

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Weak school-community communication hinders effective discipline, stressing the importance of stronger collaboration.

Clear expectations, consistent rule enforcement, and proactive teacher engagement create a structured and supportive learning environment.

Student leadership, intrinsic motivation, and strong parent-school collaboration foster accountability and reinforce discipline both in and out of school.

Continuous improvement of disciplinary strategies, clear role designations, and holistic student support ensure an effective and fair discipline system.

Conclusion

In the light of the findings and insights arrived in this study, the following recommendations were forwarded:

Enforce stricter monitoring and consequences for bullying, vaping, and vandalism with student-centered interventions.

Enforce stricter monitoring and consequences for bullying, vaping, and vandalism with student-centered interventions.

Strengthen supervision, accountability, and peer mentorship to curb stealing, lateness, and absenteeism.

Clarify staff roles, provide discipline training, and support teachers for consistent rule enforcement.

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Improve parent-school communication and community collaboration for stronger discipline support.

Empower student leaders to promote responsibility and peer-driven discipline.

Continuously refine disciplinary strategies and ensure holistic student support.

A copy of the program intervention should be given to the Schools Division Office, Regional Office, and Central office for them to approve and implement.

If a copy of this program intervention would not be approved, school principals are encouraged to implement these in a local arrangement bases only.

A similar study is also encouraged to be conducted in the future and consider other variables not used nor mention in the study.

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