

# Journal of Education

ISSN Online: 2616-8383



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**ISSN: 2616-8383**

## The Relationship between Rules and Regulations and Students' Discipline in Public Schools in Eldama Ravine Sub-County, Baringo Kenya

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**How to cite this article:** Jeruto, W., Gichohi, P. & Mwenda, E. (2021). The Relationship between Rules and Regulations and Students' Discipline in Public Schools in Eldama Ravine Sub-County, Baringo Kenya. *Journal of Education*, 4(3), 93-104.

### Abstract

Schools offer education that is supposed to shape the moral behaviour of students by ensuring compliance to rules and regulations. However, students often do not follow these rules and regulations. This study assessed the influence of rules and regulations on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Eldama Ravine Sub-County, Baringo, Kenya. Bandura self-efficacy theory was used. A descriptive survey was applied to collect data from 14 public secondary schools. The respondents were 215 teachers and 4,515 students. Forty-three teachers were sampled using a simple random sampling technique. Seventy-six students were sampled using stratified and purposive sampling techniques. Two sets of questionnaires were utilized to collect data; one for students and another for teachers. A pre-test was conducted in Batolimo boys' high school in Baringo North Sub-County. School principals/deputies were also interviewed accordingly. The data were analyzed using SPSS to get descriptive statistics such as median, frequencies and percentage. Inferential statistics such as model summary, ANOVA and regression coefficients were used and results given using tables. The study attested that there was a problem with the present rules and regulations. This was because students were aware of the consequences of breaking the rules but still chose to be indisciplined. Hence, the study recommends that the teachers devise creative ways that could be used to offer alternative punishments to students. This study is relevant to school management since they can note the issues raised and develop various platforms such as class meetings that students get a chance to express what they feel needs to change on rules.

**Keywords:** Rules and regulations, Discipline, Public schools, Eldama Ravine Sub County, Baringo Kenya.

## 1.0 Introduction

School discipline is defined as a system consisting of conduct, punishment and behavioural strategies that are used to regulate students and keep the school in order and control (Umar, 2014). Prevalence of violence has been common in most schools in the world. Maphosa and Bhebhe (2019) pointed out that in the United Kingdom; learners are generally noisy, rowdy and disrespectful to educators. The use of foul language and disrespect towards teachers has also been confirmed in the United States of America (Lochan, 2012). Cases of students' indiscipline have been rampant in Africa. For example, in Nigeria, acts of indiscipline, including truancy, hooliganism, disrespect for school authority, cheating in examination and drunkenness, are common (Okoson, 2010). In Ghana, Danso (2010) described the high rate of indiscipline and lawlessness in education institutions. Things have not been any better in Uganda, where many academic and criminal indiscipline cases have been reported, which involves gambling, smoking Marijuana, drug abuse, and sneaking from schools (Bindhe, 2012).

In Kenya, indiscipline in secondary schools has become a persistent problem. The number of schools experiencing indiscipline has been on the rise. Committee on Education and Research [CER] (2019) provided the analysis results of student unrest and violence in Kenya secondary schools. Waithaka (2017) revealed that had not only secondary school indiscipline issues caused property destruction but also caused bodily harm to people and, in some cases leading to death. There are different methods used to instil discipline among students. Diverse literature has cited these methods, such as manual work, guidance and counselling, peer guidance, suspension, expulsion and corporal punishment (Chitalu & Phiri, 2020; Kambuga, 2018). Corporal punishments examples include canning, mob-beating of the hardcore student by several teachers, slapping, punching, pinching, pulling, pouring cold water on a student as a way of punishing them for taking regular baths, among others (Mweru, 2010; Takahashi et al., 2020).

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Through the Ministry of Education and other bodies such as the Teachers Service Commission and School Boards of Management, the government of Kenya has put concerted measures to ensure students of secondary schools' follow school rules and regulations all the time. This is in the understanding that when they do so in secondary schools, it is directly correlated with academic performance and paramount in bringing up responsible citizens.

In spite of the crucial role played by good discipline in achieving optimal academic outcomes in secondary schools, the status of following rules and regulations in Kenya's secondary schools remains inferior (Committee on Education and Research, 2019). Onsoti (2018) attributed the menace to peer pressure, resulting in students absconding set down rules just to make their friends happy and attain social recognition among peers.

According to Onditi (2018) and Onsoti (2018), abolishing corporal punishment led to students looking down on the school's rules and regulations, hence deteriorating indiscipline among students. Despite introducing these alternatives to corporal punishment, cases of indiscipline are prevalent in most public secondary schools in Eldama Ravine Sub-County, Baringo County. This study purposes to assess how rules and regulations affect students' discipline in public schools in Eldama Ravine Sub-County, Baringo, Kenya. The hypothesis to be tested is;

$H_0$ : Rules and regulations do not affect students' discipline in public schools in Eldama Ravine Sub-County, Baringo, Kenya.

## **2.0 Theoretical Review**

Bandura self-efficacy theory was established by Bandura (1982). This theory postulates that a person's belief in their self-potent of achieving a specific goal played a significant role towards achieving that goal. However, if a person does not believe in self-potent in attaining a plan, they do not reach the goal. This theory helps to understand intrigues on rules and regulations as measures to achieve discipline among secondary school students. Bandura (1982) advocated for an inner push towards ensuring tasks are completed instead of an outer motivation by someone else to complete a given task.

This theory was adopted in this study because various stakeholders such as the government through the ministry of education are expected to ensure that the learning process has not been affected due to poor discipline from students. These stakeholders play different roles, which aim to ensure that students get acquainted with what is expected of them in the learning process. When a new student joins a school, teachers expose them to rules and regulations they are expected to abide by. One item covered in the orientation is the kind of punishments applied in handling different offences; in many cases, a student is given a copy. When a student reads and understands the rules, they modify their behaviour so as to fit in the school environment.

## **2.1 Empirical Review**

Rules and regulations are codes of conduct that guide a group of people in an environment sharing a common goal (Murage et al., 2019). In a secondary school, students registered in the institution share a common goal of gaining a secondary school education. Since various types of students come from different backgrounds, there is a need to set code conducts of do's and don'ts within the school environment. Other learning institutions have different sets of school rules and regulations that govern students. The relevance of these school rules and regulations depends on how well the students follow and comprehend them. At the entry into the institution, students are introduced to these school rules and regulations through orientation programs and always being reminded during various meetings such as school assemblies. Various studies have been done on the influence that rules and regulations had on student's discipline.

In developed nations, Fuente et al. (2020) assessed the influence of self-regulation and regulatory teaching on strategies for coping with academic stress in undergraduate students. Fuente et al. (2020) collected data from 944 university students in America. The study discovered that students were facing academic pressure due to changes in the learning process, such as online learning and poor time management skills. There was a need to assess the applicability of various rules and regulations on the indiscipline cases on psychologically disturbed students, especially those whose close relatives had been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. A report by the Maryland State Department of Education [MSDE] (2019) documented various reforms on student's discipline regulations set up by various learning institutions in Maryland and how that influenced student discipline. MSDE (2019) noted that there were poor regulations whereby pupils such as in 9<sup>th</sup> grade had been suspended close to one year due to fighting in school; lack of educational follow-ups to students who were in suspension; and long processes of appeals for students who wished to be accepted back to school.

Further in developing nations, Matovu (2020) in Uganda examined various school management mechanisms used in ensuring discipline prevails in the upper primary level. A cross-section survey was utilized to obtain a sample of 291 P3-P7 pupils, 40 prefects, nine teachers, and nine chairpersons of the discipline committee in 11 primary schools. Matovu (2020) concluded that

school rules and regulations control pupils' discipline in the basic upper level in primary school. Nevertheless, the study complains of school management not emphasizing proper implementation and monitoring of pupils' compliance with the rules and regulations. Maingi et al. (2017) investigated the impact of the formulation of rules in schools on improving students' discipline in Makueni county public secondary schools. The study sampled 100 principals, 387 teachers, and 398 students using stratified and simple random methods. Maingi et al. (2017) found out that the students were not involved in rules formulation hence frequent student unrest.

### **3.0 Research Methodology**

A descriptive survey research design was applied to collect data from 14 public secondary schools in Eldama Ravine Sub-County in Baringo, Kenya. The respondents were 215 teachers and 4,515 students. The teachers were sampled using a simple random sampling technique. This sampling method was used to get 20 percent of the entire number of teachers from the target population to retain a sample of 43 teachers. The students were first sampled using a stratified sampling method. Second, the purposive sampling technique was then used only to include students who were class prefects for uniformity to obtain 76 students. Both self-administered questionnaires and interview guides were utilized to collect data. Teachers answered one self-administered questionnaire, and students answered the other questionnaire. School principals/deputies were interviewed accordingly. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as median, frequencies and percentage. Inferential statistics such as model summary, ANOVA and regression coefficients were used to analyze the data. SPSS was used to analyze the data, which was presented using tables and graphs.

## 4.0 Results and Discussions

### 4.1 Response rate

The study generally issued 109 questionnaires to all the respondents. The overall returned questionnaires in total were 95(87%). Out of the 43 administered questionnaires to teachers, 29(68%) questionnaires were returned. Out of 76 questionnaires issued to students, 66 (87%) were returned. According to Saldivar (2012), when response rates are above 60%, they are considered adequate, while above 70% are considered very good.

### 4.2 Descriptive statistics of Rules and regulations

The main objective was to determine the influence of rules and regulations on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Eldama Ravine Sub-County, Baringo, Kenya. The specific issues investigated included examination rules, classroom rules, dining rules and grooming rules. These questions were asked in the form of questionnaires and interview, whose results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Rules and Regulations- Students**

Statements on Rules and Regulations N=66	1	2	3	4	5	Median
Availability of rules and regulations manual	2(3%)	6(9%)	0(0%)	11(17%)	47(71%)	5.0
There is a teacher responsible to effect rules	0(0%)	3(4%)	1(1%)	6(10%)	56(85%)	5.0
Fair disciplinary system	1(1%)	5(7%)	0(0%)	10(15%)	50(77%)	5.0
Annual reviews of rules and regulations	9(16%)	10(15%)	2(2%)	29(43%)	16(24%)	4.0
Anonymous reporting indiscipline cases by students	34(52%)	20(30%)	2(3%)	10(15%)	0(0%)	2.0
Rules and regulations improve discipline	2(3%)	6(9%)	0(0%)	12(18%)	46(70%)	5.0

Table 1 show that most respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the sentiments. The most agreed statement indicated that teachers were responsible for enforcement of rules and regulations in the school (median of 5), availability of rules and regulations manual (median of 5), and fair disciplinary system (median of 5). The statements that were not agreed upon included anonymous reporting of indiscipline cases by students (median of 2.0). This meant that students avoided reporting other students anonymously since the school system did not ensure the secrecy of the reporters. When these reporter student identities were revealed, other students hated them hence stigmatized them. Essentially, Bindhe (2012) documented that the students felt that the

school system was not supportive enough to students who reported indiscipline cases of their fellow students.

The respondents were also required to state some of the causes for not following rules and regulations in their schools. The respondents indicated that the rules in place were too oppressive to students; lack of robust strategies to punish the students who have broken the rules; lack of timely review of rules whereby there are ancient rules that are no longer applicable. Duckworth and Allred (2012) also found out similar results that temper levels in the classroom rose when students felt oppressed by the rules.

The respondents were further asked to suggest what they thought should be done on rules and regulations to improve students' discipline in secondary schools. The majority noted the need to involve students in drafting new rules and regulations; there should be friendly rules on extra curriculum activities such as sports and social clubs to reduce tension among students; the management should widely consult with other schools to investigate the strength of their rules towards shaping student's behaviour. A report by CER (2019) also concluded that unfair rules were a significant cause of violence in schools located in Kenya. However, Kepueja (2014) had a different opinion than school rules are not meant to be fair but just and corrective.

The study had a separate questionnaire specifically answered by teachers. Table 2 shows the results.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Teachers**

Statements on Rules and Regulations N=29	1	2	3	4	5	Median
Knowledge on the consequences of indiscipline	0(0%)	1(3%)	1(3%)	3(10%)	24(84%)	5.0
Constant reminder to follow rules	1(3%)	2(7%)	0(0%)	4(14%)	22(76%)	5.0
Clear guidelines to staff on indiscipline punishment	2(7%)	1(3%)	13(45%)	6(21%)	7(24%)	4.0
High motivation to teachers to help students to be disciplined	0(0%)	4(14%)	1(3%)	15(52%)	9(31%)	4.0
Involvement of students in making rules and regulations	1(3%)	3(10%)	0(0%)	3(10%)	22(76%)	5.0
Implementation and evaluation of rules and regulations	22(76%)	6(21%)	1(3%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	1.0

Table 2 indicates that consequences of being disciplined in the school environment were well articulated and known among students (median of 5). In addition, there is a constant reminder to follow the rules (median of 5). Nevertheless, the respondents strongly disagreed that there was straightforward implementation and evaluation of rules and regulations by the school management (median of 1). Chitalu and Phiri (2020) support these results by stating that

implementing non-corporal punishment techniques was not as strong as the previously used corporal punishment techniques. This was majorly attributed to the lack of precise guidelines on how to implement non-corporal punishments.

The study interviewed school principals on various related questions on rules and regulations. The first question required them to clarify the frequency of reviews on rules and regulations policies. The average review ranged from 4 to 5 years. According to principals, an interval of 5 years was realistic to ensure consistency of the current rules. Kiprop (2012) contradicts these results by indicating no approved timeline to review the rules and regulations; however, the ministry of education advocates that there should be rules every time. Kosgei (2020) sharply disagrees with Kiprop (2012), that as time changes, so should the rules.

Respondents were asked to describe how they ensured that students were fairly punished when breaking the rules and regulations. The responses included having a local tribunal of teachers before punishment is issued; categorizing punishments based on the rules broken; involving and informing student's parents when major punishments are being issued. The respondents were also required to highlight the sources that were used in drafting rules and regulations. The sources named were the ministry of education's directives and stakeholder's contributions. Lochan (2012) indicates that students' negative perceptions of discipline change when they notice there is fairness in the administration of punishment. According to Lochan, fairness comes about when various sources are consulted when drafting rules in a school setup.

The respondents were further required to explain how principals monitored whether students were following the rules and regulations. This question got interesting responses that included having CCTV cameras within the school compound; school prefects; and teaching and non-teaching staff. Maingi et al. (2017) contradicted the results in that aggressive behaviour among students is fueled when they are closely monitored. That is, where they do not have any freedom of expression hence feel like they are jailed. Maingi et al. (2017), Maryland State Department of Education [MSDE] (2019), and National Association of Secondary School Principals [NASSP] (2018), conclusively indicate that instead of a school investing a lot on monitoring breakers of rules, there should be more focus on proper orientation on these rules to the students.

### 3.4 Effect of rules and regulations on students' discipline in public secondary schools

In determining the effect of rules and regulations on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Eldama Ravine Sub-County, Baringo Kenya, a linear regression analysis was conducted. This analysis enabled the study to test its respective null hypothesis. Table 3 gives the results.

**Table 3: Model Summary of Rules and Regulations**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.896 <sup>a</sup>	.802	.797	3.22906	1.742

a. Predictors: (Constant), Rules and regulations

b. Dependent Variable: Student discipline

According to Table 3, the R-value was 0.896 with an R-square of 0.802. R-value indicated that there was a positive correlation between the student discipline and rules and regulations. This showed that rules and regulations contributed 80% towards student discipline. The remaining

20% were other elements not put into perspective in this study. Durbin-Watson value of 1.742 indicated that there is a positive correlation between rules and regulations and student discipline.

ANOVA was also done to establish the significance of the relationship that existed between chaplaincy and student discipline. These results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: ANOVA of Rules and Regulations**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.354	1	.354	2.034	.004 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	1251.220	121	10.427		
	Total	1251.574	122			

a. Dependent Variable: Student discipline

b. Predictors: (Constant), Rules and regulations

According to Table 4, the F-value of 2.034 and the significance level was 0.04. Therefore, since the p-value was less than 0.05, the model was significant; hence the study rejected the null hypothesis that rules and regulations do not affect students' discipline in public secondary schools in Eldama Ravine Sub-County, Baringo Kenya, and concluded that rules and regulations affected the students' discipline. Fekadu (2019) also got similar results that rules and regulations had recorded a major level of influence over student behaviour.

From these results in Tables 3 and 4, the school management was noted to have improved awareness of rules and regulations among students in the school. This awareness had improved discipline since students followed the rules. Therefore, teachers did not have to use corporal punishment when reminding the students to follow the school rules. However, they had relaxed in reviewing the regulations at least once a year. Much as monitoring and evaluation were being done, little was being changed on the evaluated results gotten. The schools had not put efforts in consultation with other peer schools on rules and regulations. This resulted in a school sticking to its own rules that could be made better by a simple act of direct consultations.

The study examined the regression coefficients of the model. Table 5 indicates the regression coefficient results.

**Table 5: Regression Coefficients of rules and regulations on students' discipline**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	17.898	4.420		4.050	.000
Rules and regulations	.122	.112	.196	1.089	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Student discipline

According to Table 5, rules and regulations counselling had a  $\beta=.122$  with a p-value of 0.002. The general model was  $Y= C+ \beta_1X_1+e$ . This is where Y was student discipline; C was constant;  $X_1$  was rules and regulations. When equated with the derived coefficient;

$$\text{Student discipline} = 17.898C+0.122X_4+4.420.$$

The results indicated that by adding one unit of  $X_1$  (rules and regulations), the Y (student discipline) was increased or decreased by  $17.898+0.122$ , respectively. The overall results show that the model is valid and is statistically significant. This finding implies that rules and regulation as an alternative to corporal should be emphasized and strengthened since it is statistically significant in addressing students' discipline in public secondary schools.

## 5.0 Conclusion

This study found that rules and regulations significantly affected students' discipline in public secondary schools in Eldama Ravine Sub-County, Baringo, Kenya. The study attested that there was a major problem with the present rules and regulations from the results obtained. This was because students were very aware of the consequences yet broke the rules due to many factors, such as the nature of the rules and punishment methods used in disciplining them. The study also found out that there was inconsistency in the frequency of reviews on rules and regulations by the management.

## 6.0 Recommendations

The teachers of public secondary schools should devise creative ways through which they can use to offer alternative punishments to students. In support of this, the Ministry of Education should develop various training and seminars to build capacity and introduce them to multiple alternatives to corporal punishments such as writing apology letters and providing a review report on a syllabus literature book. The ministry should go a step further to enact policies and procedures on punishing a student without causing body harm. The school management should have strict alternatives of punishments that are functioning so that students do not take the rules for granted. The students should encourage peer-to-peer awareness on the relevance of following rules and regulations at all times. The school management should develop various platforms such as class meetings that students get a chance to express what they feel needs to change on rules.

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