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CHAPTER EIGHT
DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

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Introduction
There are different levels at which people understand the word discipline especially as it appears to us in common use. Discipline as a concept also means different things to different schools of thought. Sometimes a very strict person is seen as a disciplined person. For others, if a person conforms to or obeys rules and regulations in a given system such a person is also considered as a disciplined person. But the term discipline is much wider than these. The term may also be confused with ‘order’, ‘morality’ and ‘class management’ and therefore wrongly used. However each given application reveals something more about the term.

In a school setting and especially in the classroom, discipline may be measured by the extent to which the children are self-controlled and willingly apply themselves to the tasks appointed by their teacher. Neat rows of children sitting up straight with arms folded suggest the orderliness of the parade ground (Farrant. 2000). The real test may be whether they can go into real life keeping to the plans, and on reach to targets given them.

In this write up we shall attempt a definition of discipline, look at discipline and the Nigerian nation, since independence, attempt the types of discipline alongside the forms of discipline. Look at discipline in an organization alongside self-discipline and discipline in a school/classroom situation. We shall then conclude with a word for school managers and teachers on how to maintain discipline in their schools and thus sustain effective and efficient learning and decorum.
The Meaning of Discipline

Coordinated steps taken by human beings to achieve certain aims and goals in life could be described as steps in the direction of discipline. Discipline for Omorogbe (2000) is basically concerned with the training of the mind, body or the moral faculties to be able to judiciously subject our minds and body to authority and self-control. For Orhungur (2003), Discipline is teaching one specific ways to behave that make it enjoyable for others to be around them. This involves the training of the mind and body or behaviour to produce self-control, habit or obedience, order and good conduct. Thus for Shishima and Apenda (2004) when one is morally good, one is at the same time disciplined. One thus has the character of doing the right thing at the right time.

In this case one has to be honest. That is not given to stealing, cheating, telling lies, quarreling, gossiping, corrupt, indulging in drug abuse, secret cults etc. one has to do one’s duties by law that means one has to perform all functions obliged to morally.

Discipline like moral philosophy deals with the critical and systematic reflection on the principles for determining, approving or otherwise the qualities of human behaviour, it focuses on human conduct, that is, what is right or wrong. It is an evaluative science which examines human behaviour.

The need for discipline in Nigerian schools has becomes very urgent. This is as a result of the decaying moral standards in the Nigerian society with its attendant consequences of juvenile delinquency, child abuse, embezzlement, corruption, indiscipline, cults and occultism, drug abuse etc. All these vices have led to socio-political cum religious and economic stagnation in the Nigerian Nation. The image of the country is thus bartered abroad. As a result this course becomes not only very relevant but very urgent.

Discipline embodies many ideas such as self-respect, self control obedience, loyalty, humility, patience, fairness,
Every individual sets for himself an ideal form of life image which he seeks to attain. This ideal picture of life results from a multiplicity of attitude which is either grafted in his nature or simply borne out of experience in the individual’s contact with his environment. As goals, motives and their cognates are ascribed to groups and other social units. Values have come to be regarded as things possessed not only by individuals but also by human groups. The value system of a people is relevant when issues of discipline and indiscipline are discussed. Value systems apply to the way people think, they also stress the way people behave. It is worthy of note that the prevailing influence of western culture and values on Nigerian values and culture is enormous. Nigerian traditional values abhor indiscipline perpetrated through greed, corruption, drug addiction, dishonesty, adultery, disrespect, cultism, 419.

Since independence, the issues of discipline and the vice of indiscipline orchestrated on corruption have been constantly addressed in this country. The introduction of religious and moral instructions in schools was to teach the younger generation the basic principles of morality so as to develop a corruption free mind of the young. During the period of the administration of President Shehu Shagari, 1979-1983, the government launched the Ethical Revolution. The aim of the program was to introduce some discipline in the lives of both public and private servants in the country who had become very corrupt.

In the regime of Muhammad Buhari and Tunde Idiagbon, who were both military officers, the War Against Indiscipline (WAI), was launched nationwide and in the program people were compelled to comply with certain accepted moral and legal norms as indiscipline had at this point become the bane of the Nigerian society.

When General Ibrahim Babangida was the head of state of the country from 1985, he re-introduced the same
program under the name Mass Mobilization for Social and Economic Recovery (MAMSER). This was more elaborate and systematic in handling issues of indiscipline in the country as state officers were created to handle the project at the grass roots. General Sani Abacha introduced War Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAI-C). The goals and aims of this program were same as those of the program introduced under Buhari/Idiagbon regime. The Obasanjo regime of 1999ff tackled the problem of indiscipline through the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), as well as the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) which is twin programs aimed at curbing corruption in the country and subsequent administrations have sustained the tempo and use of same parastatals.

Nigerians as a people seem to have neglected morality for a long time, and within this period and keenly developed the vice of indiscipline and efforts must be made to curb this menace. However, we have to appreciate the fact that this problem has been with us for such a long time. A situation where corrupt practices are today carried out in the open and with such impurity makes the situation very difficult to be handled but constant re-orientation programs for the people shall one-day change the situation for the better. To understand this better let us consider;

**Types of Indiscipline**

Biblically, indiscipline which is characterized by bad conduct is akin to contemporary Nigerian Society. According to Buah (1999) when somebody deviates from formal behaviour or procedure, he is seen to be crude in behaviour or simply seen to be indiscipline. He explained such misconducts to include: corruption, dishonesty, false claims, foul language, insubordination, negligence, falsification of records, leakage of official secrets. Shishima, *et al* (2004) point out certain disciplinary modes which are common;
Social and elaborate me in the project at 'ar Against and aims of introduced regime of rough the C), as well on (ICPC) ion in the tained the d morality developed to curb this t that this situation open and cult to be he people letter. To

Situational discipline, Regular discipline or Supervisory discipline and Habituative discipline.

However, for the purpose of extension of this work, we have identified more of other forms of indiscipline in the Nigerian Nation. These include greed and corruption, drug abuse, examination malpractice, prostitution, abortion, sexual violence, homosexuality and lesbianism, cultism, political thuggery, religious conflicts. Corruption which is the mother of them all is a social phenomenon which manifests itself in various human actions, such as dishonesty, wickedness, selfishness, embezzlements, moral degeneration, bribery, insatiability, covetousness. A corrupt act can be characterized by immoral but non-violent action on the stronger party to accept or on the part of the weaker party to give, extra-official gratification in cash or in kind in order to induce right or wrong actions. This phenomenon is like an un-official ideology, Lingua Franca, which is spoken and understood in every nook and cranny of Nigeria.

Forms of Discipline

The word discipline comes in many forms. It carries negative and positive connotations. Positive discipline involves the creation of an attitude and an organization climate wherein employees willingly conform to established norms or rules and regulations. This is brought about through positive motivation, positive socialization which lays emphasis on expected behaviour rather than on prohibitions, and on reward rather than punishment. Negative discipline however involves the use of penalties or threats to elicit expected behaviour or compliance.

Discipline in an Organization

This is a question of devising appropriate rules of behaviour for employees and of providing fair and consistent means of enforcing them. Discipline in this sense therefore is
the state of employees’ self control and orderly conduct present within an organization. Disciplinary action occurs when standards are maintained by involving a penalty against an employee who fails to meet them. Fayol in Kerker and Anyam (2005) defines discipline in an organization as an obedient application of energy and respect, and the penalty evolved to correct deviations of poor performance through competent and fair supervision. It can also be explained in terms of order and compliance.

**Discipline of Self**

Aristotle in his time saw man as a ‘rational animal’. This means that human nature includes both rationality and animalist (Omoregbe 1993). The rational aspect in him is reason while the animal aspect consists of the numerous passions and desires generally referred to as the “lower emotions”. The animal aspect of man generally tends to bring man down to the animal level while the rational aspect tends to raise him to the rational, spiritual level. In other words, man’s reason has the duty of always controlling man’s passions, emotions, desires and appetites. This is precisely what is meant by discipline or more appropriately “self-discipline”. A man who is self-disciplined is a man whose reason successfully keeps his animal aspect in check. He is a man who exercises self control.

An indiscipline man on the other hand is a man who fails to exercise control over himself, that is, a man whose reason fails to keep the animal aspect to man in check. Such a man fails to control his passions, his emotions, his appetites or desires for food, for pleasure, for sex, for money, comfort of course these are not bad in themselves but are insatiable and tend to reduce man to the animal level when they are not checked by reason. A good leader should not condone indiscipline among those under him otherwise he cannot
make the system work, but he must first be self disciplined himself.

**School/Classroom Discipline**

This may be measured by the extent to which the children are self-controlled and willingly apply themselves to the tasks appointed to them by their teacher. Neat rows of children sitting straight with arms folded suggest the orderliness of the children. Likewise the test of a teacher's success in class management will be seen in his good relations with his students and in the fact that the activities of the school/classroom follow a plan that is both purposeful and efficient. The commonest types of school/classroom disorders may include; inattention and restlessness, noise, deliberate naughtiness and unexpected events.

Harmony in the school/classroom is dependent upon the ability of all to keeping of rules and good relations. Two laws of good school/classroom management may include; Prevention is better than cure and the second is that self control is better than imposed control.

**Conclusion**

In order that school managers and teachers might maintain decorum in schools and sustain a smooth learning atmosphere, it might be essential to point out that they must exercise good authority, maintain their dignity, be consistent, be firm, use punishments and rewards wisely, be self critical, be methodical, organize all routine matters, be punctual, know their job, be pre-emptive, be prepared, be energetic and enthusiastic and above all be God fearing and maintain a disposition of love at all times. Discipline is a virtue that must be imparted and sustained.
References


