



Influence of Headteachers' Discipline Strategies on Teacher Performance in Public Primary Schools in Masinga Sub-County, Machakos County, Kenya

Gerald Kasyula Mutua & Reuben Kenei
School of Education
Mount Kenya University
Email: mutuagerald@gmail.com

Abstract: Teacher discipline strategies adopted by headteachers play a key role in ensuring improved classroom pedagogy, syllabus coverage, learner environment, and, above all, teacher performance in schools. However, in Masinga Sub-county, teacher performance in many public primary schools is low. Many teachers do not complete their syllabus on time, rarely participate in co-curricular activities, and produce learners with low academic grades in examinations. Thus, this study sought to assess the influence of teacher discipline strategies on teacher performance in public primary schools. This study adopted a mixed methodology and applied a concurrent triangulation research design. The target population was 1420 respondents, comprising 140 headteachers and 1280 teachers, from which a sample of 315 respondents was determined using Yamane's Formula. Stratified sampling was used to create two different strata based on the number of zones in Masinga Sub-county. This comprised 35 headteachers and 280 teachers. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically based on study objectives and presented in narrative form, whereas quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and inferentially using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25) and presented using tables. The study revealed that many teachers do not cover syllabus in time, and this has caused low academic performance in KCPE. However, teacher discipline strategies adopted by headteachers have not been fully effective. Thus, headteachers should adopt sound disciplinary approaches for teachers and support staff aimed at improving their work morale and not dampening their spirit of commitment.

Keywords: Public, Primary schools, Discipline strategies, Headteachers, Teacher performance

How to cite this work (APA):

Mutua, G. K. & Kenei, R. (2025). Influence of headteachers' discipline strategies on teacher performance in public primary schools in Masinga Sub-County, Machakos County, Kenya. *Journal of Research Innovation and Implications in Education*, 9(2), 21 – 29. <https://doi.org/10.59765/jriie.9.3.3>.

1. Introduction

Headteachers are at the heart of the learning process and strongly influence the kind of education which children receive at school and eventually their learning outcomes. To achieve this, they often adopt a multiplicity of teacher discipline strategies. Discipline strategies in educational settings are central to creating a conducive teaching and learning environment. In the words of Hattie and Clinton (2021), principals in secondary schools across various countries and regions implement a range of discipline strategies to manage teachers' behavior and improve their

performance. Teacher performance, often evaluated based on student outcomes, engagement, and classroom management, can be influenced significantly by the disciplinary approaches adopted by school leadership. In the United States, Sugai and Simonsen (2022) posit that a strong emphasis is placed on structured approaches such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), which encourage a proactive approach to discipline that fosters teacher autonomy while addressing issues of misconduct. Secondary school principals implement these strategies to maintain an orderly environment conducive to effective teaching. These

strategies, when adopted and supported by school leadership, are associated with improved teacher performance as they reduce burnout and increase job satisfaction.

In France, the approach to teacher discipline is influenced by centralized educational policies, with school principals often employing hierarchical management styles to enforce discipline. According to Tanguy (2021), the French educational system places considerable responsibility on principals to enforce discipline, and this often involves a top-down approach that can sometimes limit teachers' autonomy. However, research shows that when principals adopt a more collaborative approach to discipline, it positively influences teacher performance by creating a supportive and collegial environment (Moser, 2023). In Nicaragua, a context characterized by political instability and under-resourced schools, principals focus on discipline strategies that are resource-efficient and culturally relevant. According to Hernández and Sánchez (2024), principals in Nicaragua often rely on community-based approaches, incorporating local norms and values into the discipline strategies. Teachers in these environments tend to perform better when discipline strategies are not only fair but also contextually appropriate, fostering a sense of belonging and respect among the teachers (Martínez, 2022). However, the extent to which these teacher discipline strategies contribute towards teacher performance in public primary schools is yet to be fully explored. According to World Bank (2024), teacher performance entails teachers' timely coverage of the syllabus, effective participation in co-curricular activities and producing learners with quality grades in internal and national examinations. In other words, teacher performance determines how much and how well children learn and the extent to which their education translates into a range of personal, social and developmental benefits.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, teacher discipline strategies are often shaped by the unique challenges of each country. In Nigeria, principals adopt a combination of punitive and restorative disciplinary strategies, with an increasing shift towards positive behavior reinforcement in response to rising concerns about teacher motivation and performance (Okonkwo, 2024). Principals in Nigeria emphasize strict adherence to rules, but they also recognize the importance of addressing teachers' psychological needs to reduce absenteeism and improve job performance (Bamidele, 2024). Similarly, in South Africa, where the apartheid legacy has had a lasting impact on the educational system, school principals focus on inclusive disciplinary strategies that emphasize dialogue and conflict resolution. According to Erasmus and Olckers (2023), teachers in South Africa tend to perform better when principals foster a sense of community and shared responsibility, which can only be achieved through fair and participatory disciplinary methods. In Rwanda, principals emphasize discipline strategies that align with the country's post-genocide

rebuilding efforts, focusing on restorative justice practices. As researchers like Mbonyinshuti and Ntigurirwa (2023) note, when school principals implement strategies that emphasize restorative justice and reconciliation, teachers are more likely to engage with their work, leading to enhanced performance and lower turnover rates. In Kenya, the strategies adopted by principals in secondary schools vary depending on the region. In Kisumu County, where teachers face challenges related to community expectations and resource constraints, principals adopt more empathetic and student-centered discipline strategies. These approaches have been shown to improve teacher morale and job satisfaction, directly enhancing teacher performance (Ochieng & Obondo, 2024). This implies that such teacher discipline strategies are key contributors to teachers' timely syllabus coverage, participation in co-curricular activities and producing learners with quality grades in examinations. However, despite these initiatives and strategies, teacher performance has been low. For instance, in Masinga Sub-county, many teachers do not cover syllabus in time which has occasioned low performance among their students. This corroborates the findings of a report authored by the Ministry of Education (2024) which shows that, in many public primary schools in Masinga Sub-county, teachers rarely undertake timely coverage of the syllabus and learners register dismal grades in national examinations. MoE (2024) further notes that only 61.9% of teachers do complete syllabus in time and have 53.7% of their learners register low grades in national examinations (KCPE). Despite this state of affairs, much was yet to be done to interrogate teacher discipline strategies adopted by headteachers influence teacher performance in public primary schools, hence the study.

1.1 Research Objectives

The study sought to address the following objectives:

1. To assess the status of teacher performance in public primary schools in Masinga Sub-county.
2. To examine the influence of headteachers' discipline strategies on teacher performance in public primary schools in Masinga Sub-county.

1.2 Research Hypothesis

The study tested the following null hypothesis:

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant influence of headteachers' discipline strategies on teacher performance in public primary schools in Masinga Sub-county.

2. Literature Review

Teacher discipline entails ensuring that teachers adhere to set a code of conduct by relevant government agencies since smooth operation of any school largely depends on

the level of discipline among its teaching staff. Tshabalala, Zano and Gazimbe (2020) observe that teachers, like any other employees in primary schools, are expected to act in a responsible manner and perform their duties as expected. In other words, successful achievement of the school objectives requires all teachers to adhere strictly to necessary behavior patterns for good performance. According to Ndibalema (2023), common indiscipline behaviours by teachers may include; absenteeism from school and lesson, lateness, non-preparation of lesson notes, failure to mark pupils exercise books, noncompletion of school records such as diaries, registers, pupils' results, involvement in examination malpractices, illegal collection of monies from parents and pupils, unapproved study leave with pay, drinking, drug taking and sexual immorality. These are serious threats to all tiers of our educational system, because teachers are the expected professionals, entrusted with the responsibility to conserve the future and destiny of the nation. In keeping with these assertions, Ornstein and Hunkins (2024) opine that the successful realization of quality education in primary schools requires the teacher's ability to adhere to curricular objectives. To comply with this requirement of teacher performance in primary schools, administrators should ensure that teachers are utilizing state frameworks, Ministry of Education curriculum guides, scope and sequence charts, and course outlines to assist them in planning instruction. In a study conducted in AkwaIbom, Ekpo and Bassey (2021) revealed that lesson plans should have a clearly defined objective that is appropriate to the class learning level and consistent with established district, school, department, or grade level curriculum standards for expected achievement. Further, plans should incorporate the needs, interests, and special talents of pupils in the class and include enrichment or acceleration activities for pupils who complete basic tasks early. Activities in the lesson should revolve around the acquisition of new learning. Ekpo and Bassey (2021) further suggested that planning should include a timeline so the teacher can monitor the pace of instruction to ensure that the intended curricular objectives are taught and mastered in the allocated time. Administrators should verify that a variety of ongoing assessment measures are being utilized by the teacher to monitor the achievement of intended objectives. Information from these measures should be used to make adjustments to the pace, objectives, or sequence when necessary.

A similar study conducted in Morocco by Sanae, Fatiha, Abdelrhani, Kamal and Adel (2023) in which they indicated that teachers should utilize district-adopted materials and appropriate supplemental materials to meet individual student's academic needs and learning styles. Teachers should be encouraged by administrators to participate in recommending texts and supplementary materials and developing curriculum so they can utilize their knowledge of pupils' skills, needs, and interests in selecting a product that will more closely meet the needs of pupils in the school. According to Okeke (2024), the teacher belongs to a special class (sub-group) saddled

with the responsibility of molding the child into a functional adult who will contribute to national development. This implies that teachers are role models whose actions, beliefs, sense of humor, self-discipline, and bearing are all lessons that are presented to pupils throughout the education experience. In Kenya, following the disappointing examination results for high-stakes examinations for the primary and secondary schools prompted a Presidential Commission of Inquiry to investigate the reasons behind the low levels of learner performance (TSC Image, 2024). The findings of the Commission of Inquiry were that the poor performance of pupils was in part attributed to the rising indiscipline among teachers through absenteeism and drunkenness, including drinking beer with pupils, vending activities to get extra income and failure to observe social distance with learners of the opposite sex. To mitigate these disciplinary challenges among teachers, during training at colleges, student teachers are oriented to several disposition standards related to professionalism to which they are to adhere to while discharging their duties (Mabagalas, 2022).

In the same token, teachers code of conduct developed by the TSC (2024) stipulates among other things that every teacher has a responsibility to comply with the provisions of the code that include: carry out duty with dignity; demonstrate honesty and impartiality in the conduct of duty; non-engagement in wrongful conduct in furtherance of personal benefits; observe official working hours; be punctual and meet deadlines; not absent from duty without proper authorization or reasonable cause; and develop and maintain relevant professional records to enhance efficient and competent performance of duty. Despite the training and the existence of the teachers' code of conduct, teachers still engage in misconduct, this interferes with the discharge of their duties and impact negatively on pupils' achievements. In Masinga Sub-county, the situation is similar to teachers' indiscipline and adherence to curriculum objectives is a course for ineffective realization of teacher performance in primary schools.

For example, a study carried out in Masinga Sub-county by Chirchir, Manduku and Makero (2024) established that cases of teacher indiscipline are on the rise. However, Chirchir et al (2024) have not revealed how teacher discipline strategies adopted by the headteachers influence teacher performance in primary schools.

Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the assertive discipline theory whose proponents were Lee Canter and Marlene Canter in 1976, aimed at creating a structured environment where teachers set clear boundaries and expectations for students. The theory is premised on the idea that a positive, supportive environment can be maintained by enforcing clear rules and consequences. Although it was initially designed for student behavior, its principles can be extended to the professional environment of schools,

particularly when examining the strategies headteachers use to discipline teachers and their subsequent impact on teacher performance. This theory holds that assertiveness does not mean aggression or being harsh; instead, it emphasizes being firm, direct, and clear with expectations, ensuring that there are appropriate consequences for behaviors that deviate from the desired norms.

At the core of this theory, there are numerous principles. This further holds that teachers must explicitly outline their expectations for both behavior and performance. For teachers, this could include expectations about their professional conduct, timeliness, and collaboration. Clear communication reduces ambiguity and fosters accountability. The effectiveness of assertive discipline lies in the consistency with which rules and consequences are enforced. Whether a teacher or student violates an established norm, a predictable, fair response must follow. In a school setting, consistency ensures that headteachers' disciplinary actions are not seen as arbitrary, fostering trust and respect from staff members. Assertive discipline encourages authority figures to adopt a stance of respectful firmness, rather than being permissive or overly authoritarian. It promotes positive reinforcement for compliance and appropriate consequences for violations, aiming to correct behavior rather than punish it. In the same token, the theory highlights the importance of recognizing and reinforcing good behavior and effort. In a school setting, headteachers who employ assertive discipline often acknowledge the positive actions of their teachers, whether it be for timely submission of work, collaborative teaching, or excellence in classroom management. Lastly, assertive discipline involves making sure that all involved parties understand the consequences for behavior. In a professional context, when a teacher does not meet expectations, it could lead to corrective actions, while successful adherence to professional standards might be rewarded with praise or opportunities for career advancement.

In the context of this study, this theory was applicable since it underscores the fact that headteachers who adopt assertive discipline strategies apply these principles when managing teacher behavior and performance. These applications can vary but generally revolve around setting clear expectations and maintaining professional conduct through consistent application of consequences. This theory underscores the fact that a structured, supportive environment that combines clear expectations with consistent, fair consequences helps to reduce ambiguity and anxiety among teachers, allowing them to focus on improving their practice. Teachers are more likely to perform better when they know exactly what is expected of them and when there is a clear process for addressing issues. When teachers are supported through professional development opportunities, they gain the tools needed to improve their teaching methods, classroom management skills, and interpersonal interactions. This, in turn, contributes to improved

overall performance and job satisfaction. Additionally, by creating an environment of fairness and respect, headteachers who implement assertive discipline foster a culture of accountability, where teachers are motivated to take ownership of their performance. When disciplinary actions are consistent and fair, teachers are more likely to feel valued and respected, leading to a more positive and productive school environment. By applying the principles of assertive discipline, headteachers can create a fair and supportive environment where teachers understand what is expected of them and are held accountable for their performance. This study was also guided by the teacher performance theory whose proponent was Medley (1982). This theory is premised on the idea that teaching is both an art and a science, requiring a blend of content knowledge, pedagogical skills as well as interpersonal abilities. One of the core principles is the emphasis on reflective practice. Teachers are encouraged to continually assess their methods and effectiveness, seeking improvement through self-evaluation and feedback from peers and supervisors. This theory encompasses a variety of principles and applications that are critical in understanding the dynamics of educational environments. This theory posits that teacher effectiveness is not solely determined by their knowledge or skills but is significantly influenced by their ability to engage students, foster motivation, and create a conducive learning atmosphere. The belief that teachers play a pivotal role in shaping student outcomes through their performance reflects their pedagogical strategies, emotional engagement, and interpersonal relationships with students.

One of the foundational principles of teacher performance theory is the importance of teacher enthusiasm and self-efficacy. Another key principle is the holistic evaluation of teacher performance. This involves assessing not just student outcomes, but also the teacher's ability to create a conducive learning environment, engage students, and adapt to diverse learning needs. This theory also underscores the importance of professional development. It advocates ongoing learning opportunities for teachers to enhance their skills and stay updated with the latest educational research and methodologies. This principle is closely tied to the belief that teaching is a dynamic profession requiring continual adaptation and growth. In practice, this theory is often used to guide the development of teacher evaluation systems. This theory informs teacher training programmes, ensuring that new teachers are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in the classroom.

Professional development programmes often draw on the principles of this theory, offering workshops and courses designed to address specific aspects of teaching performance, such as classroom management or differentiated instruction. Thus, this theory is relevant in that it underscores the vitality of its principles of reflective practice, holistic evaluation, and continuous

professional development are integral to improving teaching effectiveness. In other words, it influences teacher evaluation systems, training programmes and ongoing professional development efforts, all aimed at enhancing the quality of education and student success. Its applications in educational settings underscore the necessity for teachers to engage in continuous professional development and to adopt pedagogical strategies that foster a supportive learning environment.

3. Methodology

This study adopted a mixed methodology and applied a concurrent triangulation research design. The target population was 1420 respondents, comprising 140 headteachers and 1280 teachers, from which a sample of 315 respondents was determined using Yamane’s Formula. This consisted of 35 headteachers and 280 teachers. A questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from teachers, whereas interview guides were used to gather qualitative data from headteachers. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically based on study objectives and presented in narrative form, whereas quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and inferentially using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Analysis in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25) and presented using tables. In this study, an ethical clearance certificate was obtained from Mount Kenya Ethical Review Committee (MKU

ERC) before embarking on data collection processes. The researcher undertook to keep private any information given by the respondents that touched on their personal life. The researcher assured the respondents that no private information would be divulged to a third party. The nature and the purpose of the research were explained to the respondents by the researcher. The researcher explained to the respondents the procedure that would be followed during the data collection so that they could participate willingly. The raw data collected were filed for easy reference. Once the data were analyzed, computer printouts were filed while soft copies were stored in storage devices such as CDs and flash discs.

4. Results and Discussion

In this section, findings of the study as per the objectives are outlined besides highlighting presentation of findings as well as discussions.

4.1 Response Rates

In this study, 280 questionnaires were administered to teachers out of which 258 questionnaires were filled and returned. At the same time, 30 headteachers were interviewed. This yielded response rates shown in Table 1;

Table 1: Response Rates

Respondents	Sampled Respondents	Those Who Participated	Achieved Return Rate (%)
Headteachers	35	30	85.7
Teachers	280	258	92.1
Total	315	288	91.4

Source: Field Data (2025)

Table 1 shows that headteachers registered a response rate of 85.7% while teachers registered 99.5% as a response rate. On average, this yielded a response rate of 91.4%, which affirmed the assertions of Creswell (2018) that a response rate above 75.0% is adequate and of suitable levels to allow for the generalization of the outcomes to the target population.

4.2 Status of Teacher Performance in Public Primary Schools

The study sought to assess the status of teacher performance in public secondary schools in Masinga Sub-county. This was measured by assessing how often teachers cover syllabus in time and KCPE performance between 2020 and 2024. Results are shown in Table 2;

Table 2: Frequency of Syllabus Coverage by Teachers in Public Primary Schools

Frequency of Timely Syllabus Coverage by Teachers	Number of Teachers	
	f	%
Often	72	29.3
Rarely	136	55.3
Never	38	15.4

Source: Field Data (2025)

Table 2 shows that most of the teachers, 136(55.3%), rarely cover syllabus in time, 72(29.3%) often do whereas 38(15.4%) never do. During the interviews,

headteachers also stated that most teachers do not cover syllabus in time. Headteacher, H1, noted;

In my school, I have had cases where teachers do not cover syllabus in time to accord pupils adequate time for revision.

These findings corroborate the assertions of Hofman and ve Hofman (2023) that, in the Netherlands, a performing or competent teacher is regarded as one who is able to cover syllabus in time and teach a particular subject very well that is, one who perceives his or her teaching competence and believe that they can exert a positive effect on pupils' achievement. In the same token, a study

carried out by Kamau (2021) highlights that delays in syllabus coverage are most notable during the third term, with many teachers struggling to complete the content before national exams. This trend has been linked to teachers' tendency to focus on exam-centric topics and neglect other essential areas, leading to an incomplete educational experience for pupils. The researcher further sought to assess the status of performance in KCPE for the last five years (2019-2023) as an indicator of teacher performance. Results are shown Table 3;

Table 3: Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools in Masinga Sub-county between 2019 and 2023

KCPE Results in Mean Score (Marks)	Years of Examination				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	%	%	%	%	%
100-150 marks (Poor)	40.2	43.5	44.2	47.3	48.9
151-200 marks (Below Average)	36.9	35.1	34.9	33.5	32.5
201-300 marks (Fair)	15.4	15.1	14.8	13.7	13.4
301-350 marks (Good)	5.3	4.4	4.3	3.8	3.6
351-400 marks (Excellent)	2.2	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.6

Source: Field Data (2025)

Table 3 shows that academic performance of learners in KCPE has been on a downward trend for the last five years. These findings corroborate the findings of a report by MoE (2024) that the performance of learners in Masinga Sub-county in KCPE has been on a downward trend. These findings affirm the fact that low academic performance in many public primary schools has become a common phenomenon.

4.3 Teacher Discipline Strategies and Teacher Performance in Public Primary Schools

The study sought to establish how teacher discipline strategies adopted by primary school headteachers influence teacher performance. Results are shown in Table 4;

Table 4: Teachers' Views on the Influence of Teacher Discipline Strategies on Teacher Performance in Public Primary Schools

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Before any disciplinary action is taken, public primary school headteachers usually conduct investigations on affected teachers	51.6	7.1	3.2	25.4	12.7
In schools, warnings to teachers are common and has had negative effect on teacher performance	54.0	6.3	6.3	12.7	20.7
Headteachers often interdict teachers facing disciplinary issues which has lowered performance in public primary schools	59.5	5.6	3.1	27.0	4.8
To improve teacher performance in schools, headteachers rarely recommend disciplinary actions to be taken against errant teachers	33.3	3.2	3.1	54.8	5.6
Public primary school headteachers usually forward teachers' name to be removed from register after serious disciplinary cases	60.1	7.7	2.7	20.7	8.8

Source: Field Data (2025)

Table 4 reveals that 51.6% of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that, before any disciplinary action is taken, public primary school headteachers usually conduct investigations on affected teachers as did 7.1%

who agreed. However, 25.4% disagreed whereas 12.7% strongly disagreed. Slightly more than half (54.0%) of the teachers strongly noted that, in public primary schools, warnings to teachers are common and has had

negative effect on teacher performance while 6.3% agreed. However, 12.7% disagreed whereas 20.7% strongly disagreed. Most of the teachers (59.5%) strongly agreed with the view that headteachers often interdict teachers facing disciplinary issues which has lowered performance in public primary schools with only 5.6% in agreement. However, 27.0% disagreed whereas 4.8% strongly disagreed. A third (33.3%) of the teachers stated that, in order to improve teacher performance in primary schools, headteachers rarely recommend disciplinary actions to be taken against errant teachers while 3.2% agreed. Most of them (54.8%) disagreed whereas 5.6% strongly disagreed. Majority (60.1%) of the teachers stated that public primary school headteachers usually forward teachers' name to be removed from register after serious disciplinary cases while 3.2% agreed. However, 20.7% disagreed whereas 8.8% strongly disagreed.

These findings support the assertions of Teacher Service Commission (2024) that teachers code of conduct developed by the TSC stipulates among other things that every teacher has a responsibility to comply with the provisions of the code that include: carry out duty with dignity; demonstrate honesty and impartiality in the conduct of duty; non-engagement in wrongful conduct in furtherance of personal benefits; observe official working hours; be punctual and meet deadlines; not

absent from duty without proper authorization or reasonable cause; and develop and maintain relevant professional records to enhance efficient and competent performance of duty. In line with these assertions, these findings further lend credence to the assertions of Tshabalala et al (2020) that teachers are expected to act in a responsible manner and perform their duties as expected. In other words, successful achievement of school objectives requires all teachers to require effective disciplinary approaches and teachers must adhere strictly to necessary behaviour patterns for good performance. However, from the study findings, disciplinary strategies adopted by school heads have not been effective as teachers still engage in misconduct, this interferes with the discharge of their duties and impact negatively on pupils' achievements.

4.4 Inferential Analysis

To ascertain the influence of staff discipline strategies adopted by headteachers on teacher performance in public primary schools, data were further collected from the 9 out of the 30 sampled headteachers on how often (Very Often = 5, Often = 4, Sometimes = 3, Rarely = 2 and Never = 1) they motivate teachers and performance in KCPE in the year 2023. The results are shown in Table 5:

Table 5: How Often Headteachers Recommend Disciplinary Action against Teachers and Performance in KCPE

How Often Headteachers Recommend Disciplinary Action against Teachers	2023 KCPE Results
3	214
1	378
3	381
5	280
4	348
2	389
3	409
4	298
1	357

Source: Field Data (2025)

Table 5 shows that the higher the frequency with which headteachers undertake disciplinary actions against teachers, the higher the pupils' performance in KCPE. These results further corroborate the assertions of Tshabalala et al (2020) that teachers are expected to act

in a responsible manner and perform their duties as expected. The data in Table 5 were run through Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Test Analysis. Results are shown in Table 6:

Table 6: Relationship Between Frequency of Discipline Strategies and Performance in KCPE

		Frequency of Headteachers' Discipline Strategies	Performance in KCPE
Frequency of Headteachers' Discipline Strategies	Pearson Correlation	1	.713*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.031
	N	9	9
Performance in KCPE	Pearson Correlation	.713*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.031	
	N	9	9

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). Table 6 shows a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Test Analysis which generated correlation coefficients of $r = 0.713$ with corresponding significant level (p-value) of 0.027 which was less than the predetermined level of

significance, 0.05, that is, $p\text{-value} = 0.031 < 0.05$. Thus, the null hypothesis, H_01 , is rejected. This finding affirms the fact that headteachers' disciplinary strategies influence teacher performance in public primary schools.

4.5 Thematic Analysis

During the interviews, the headteachers concurred with most of the teachers who stated that, before any disciplinary action is taken, public primary school headteachers usually conduct investigations on affected teachers. Headteacher, H2, stated;

In my primary school I do not rush into taking disciplinary against any teacher or support staff. I always undertake investigations into what led a staff member to commit any mistake and offer warnings to the concerned staff. This is because when staff has many disciplinary issues, their work morale is lowered thus low teacher performance for the school.

Just like quantitative findings, these views further support the assertions of Teacher Service Commission (2024) that teachers code of conduct developed by the TSC stipulates among other things that every teacher has a responsibility to comply with the provisions of the code that include: carry out duty with dignity; demonstrate honesty and impartiality in the conduct of duty; non-engagement in wrongful conduct in furtherance of personal benefits; observe official working hours; be punctual and meet deadlines; not absent from duty without proper authorization or reasonable cause; and develop and maintain relevant professional records to enhance efficient and competent performance of duty. These mixed findings affirm the fact that teachers are expected to act in a responsible manner and perform their duties as expected. In other words, successful achievement of school objectives requires all teachers to require effective disciplinary approaches and teachers must adhere strictly to necessary behaviour patterns for good performance. In summary, the key finding of this study was that the dismal teacher performance of pupils in KCPE in public primary schools is attributed to the ineffective human resource management strategies adopted by school heads.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Teacher performance has been a challenge with many teachers not able to cover syllabus in time which has occasioned low academic performance of learners in KCPE. This has brought into question the effectiveness of teacher discipline strategies adopted by headteachers. The study found that headteachers adopt a multiplicity of disciplinary strategies against staff. These strategies include investigations, warnings, reprimands and recommendations for interdictions and eventual removal from teachers' register. However, these disciplinary strategies have not been effective since teachers still engage in misconduct, this interferes with the discharge

of their duties and impact negatively on pupils' achievements.

5.2 Recommendations

The study suggests that Headteachers should adopt sound disciplinary approaches for teachers aimed at improving their work morale and not dampening their spirit of commitment.

References

- Bamidele, O. (2024). Teachers' motivation and performance in Nigerian schools: A review of strategies. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 25(4), 125-138.
- Canter, L., & Canter, M. (1976). *Assertive discipline: A take-charge approach for today's educator*. Canter and Associates.
- Chirchir, J., Manduku, J. & Makero, S. C. (2024). The Effects of School Based Factors on Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools in Masinga Sub-county, Machakos Kenya. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 8(4): 1-6
- Creswell, J. (2018). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Ekpo, U.I. & Bassey, U. (2021). School location and headteachers' management of teachers' indiscipline in Akwalbom State secondary schools, Nigeria. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 2(6), 34-54
- Erasmus, B., & Olckers, P. (2023). Inclusive educational leadership in South Africa: A case study of secondary school principals. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 6(2), 45-60.
- Hattie, J., & Clinton, J. (2021). Identifying accomplished teachers: A validation study. Assessing teachers for professional certification. *The first decade of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards*, 2(11): 313-344
- Hernández, J., & Sánchez, M. (2024). Discipline strategies in Nicaraguan secondary schools: A cultural approach. *Journal of Latin American Education*, 13(3), 89-104.
- Hofman, W. H. A. & ve Hofman, R.H. (2023). Smart Management in Effective Schools: Effective Management Configurations in General and Vocational Education in the Netherlands." *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 47(4), 620-645.

- Kamau, L. (2021). *Impact of syllabus coverage delays on student performance in national exams*. Nairobi University Press.
- Mabagalas, S. (2022). Prevalence of professional misconduct in Nzega District, Tanzania Public primary Schools. *African Journal of Teacher Education*, 5(1), 45-54
- Martínez, A. (2022). Community-based disciplinary approaches in Nicaragua's schools. *Journal of Education and Culture*, 9(1), 15-30.
- Mbonyinshuti, R., & Ntigurirwa, G. (2023). Restorative justice in school discipline: A Rwanda perspective. *International Journal of Educational Leadership*, 11(2), 50-66.
- Medley, D. M. (1982). *Teacher effectiveness theory*. In H. E. Mitzel (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of educational research* (5th ed., pp. 1894-1903). New York: Macmillan.
- Ministry of Education (2024). *A report on academic performance of primary schools*. Machakos: Government Printer.
- Moser, H. (2023). The role of principals in enforcing discipline in French schools. *French Educational Review*, 8(1), 38-47.
- Ndibalema, P. (2023). Stakeholders' attitudes towards the prevalence and problems associated to primary school teachers' professional misconducts in Tanzania: The Case of Chamwino District. *Journal of International Academic Research for Multidisciplinary*, 3(7), 22-45.
- Ochieng, C., & Obondo, S. (2024). Disciplinary strategies and teacher performance in Kisumu County secondary schools. *East African Journal of Education*, 7(3), 202-213.
- Okeke, B. S. (2024). *Teaching in Nigeria. The bureaucracy of professionalism 2nd Edition*. Port Harcourt: Mercury International Publishing Nigeria.
- Okonkwo, D. (2024). Discipline strategies and teacher motivation in Nigerian schools. *Journal of African Educational Studies*, 13(4), 79-92.
- Ornstein, A. C., & Hunkins, F. P. (2024). *Curriculum: Foundations, principles, and issues* (8th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Sanae, H., Fatiha, K., Abdelrhani, E., Kamal, E. & Adel, T. (2023). *Major Factors That Influence School Failure in The Northern Region of Morocco (Fez-Boulemane as A Case Study)*. 7th World Conference on Educational Sciences, Novotel Athens Convention Center, Athens, Greece.
- Sugai, G., & Simonsen, B. (2022). Positive behavioral interventions and supports in schools: A framework for effective discipline. *Journal of School Psychology*, 50(4), 547-556.
- Tanguy, P. (2021). Educational leadership in France: The challenges of discipline and teacher performance. *Journal of Education Management*, 15(2), 22-36.
- TSC Image (2024). *TPAD Tool*. Machakos: Government Printer.
- Tshabalala, T., Zano, A., & Gazimbe, M.P. (2020). Challenges faced by school heads in handling teacher disciplinary issues in primary schools in Umguza District. *Nova Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(4), 1-6.
- World Bank (2024). *Transitions in Secondary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Equity and Efficiency Issues*. World Bank Working Paper 125, Washington, DC: World Bank.