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Extensiveness of Community Policing Mobilizing Strategy towards Improvement of Students' Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Moshi

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Abstract:

The study examined the extent to which community policing mobilizing strategy improves student discipline in public secondary schools in Moshi district council. Using a convergent design within a mixed-methods approach and guided by problem-oriented policing (POP) theory, the research targeted 61 heads of public secondary schools, 1059 students, 482 teachers, and 34 ward community police officers. The sample included 6 schools, 6 heads, 48 teachers, 106 students, and 4 police officers, selected through simple random and total population sampling. Data were collected via questionnaires for quantitative data and interview guides for qualitative data. The study ensured validity through expert review and tested reliability using Cronbach's alpha technique, whereby coefficients of $r = 0.881$ for teachers and $r = 0.750$ for students were obtained. Reliability for qualitative data was established through peer debriefing and triangulation. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, and means, and data were presented using tables, while qualitative data were analyzed through thematic development and presented in narrative form and direct quotations. Ethical principles such as research clearance, informed consent, confidentiality, and proper citations were strictly followed. The findings highlight that, to a considerable extent, community policing is a highly effective strategy in promoting student discipline and fostering a culture of respect, responsibility, and safety in schools. The study concluded that expanding community policing initiatives can, to a large extent, significantly improve student discipline, respect for authority, and the overall culture of safety and security in schools.

Keywords: Community policing, mobilizing strategy, students' discipline, public secondary schools

1. Introduction

Student discipline plays a pivotal role in shaping the educational environment, influencing both the overall learning atmosphere and individual student outcomes. Discipline refers to adherence to school rules and regulations, aimed at managing student behavior and promoting self-discipline. Effective disciplinary strategies are crucial for maintaining order, encouraging positive behavior, and supporting academic achievement (Gerlinger et al., 2021). In the context of student behavior, discipline involves the development of self-control, responsibility, and respect for oneself and others. It fosters the internalization of values and principles that encourage positive attitudes, strong work habits, and appropriate social interactions. As such, discipline helps students cultivate self-regulation, understand their social and behavioral responsibilities, and contribute to a safe, respectful, and orderly school environment. However, despite the acknowledged importance of discipline in educational and social contexts, student indiscipline remains a significant challenge in secondary schools worldwide.

In the United States, school indiscipline manifests through behaviors such as bullying, smoking, unauthorized use of mobile phones, theft, drug abuse, alcohol consumption, vandalism, sexual assault, and verbal abuse (Leijten et al., 2019). Similar patterns of indiscipline are reported in Ghana, including truancy, tardiness, involvement in cult activities, substance abuse, verbal and physical aggression, theft, rioting, sexual misconduct, and other undesirable behaviors (Gyapong & Subbey, 2021). In Kenya, public secondary schools have experienced significant unrest, including arson, violent attacks, bullying, and drug abuse (Opere et al., 2019). Likewise, Tanzania has faced various forms of indiscipline among secondary school students, including verbal abuse toward females, physical altercations and assaults on teachers, refusal to follow instructions, bullying, harassment, sexual violence, and substance abuse (Dwyer, 2019). Despite the prevalence of these issues, addressing indiscipline in schools remains a topic of ongoing debate, with limited coordinated efforts among educators and stakeholders to implement fair and effective strategies that both curb indiscipline and support students in achieving their educational goals.

Indiscipline in schools, particularly in Moshi District Council in the Kilimanjaro region, has reached alarming levels, with incidents such as sodomy, rape, and arson disrupting the learning environment. These behaviors not only harm students but also have long-term implications on their emotional, behavioral, and social development. Such incidents emphasize the urgent need for effective interventions to create safe, supportive learning environments. The fact that young students are becoming involved in criminal activities raises significant concerns about the effectiveness of current disciplinary measures and the broader societal issues contributing to such behavior.

Community policing has emerged as a promising solution to address the rising challenge of school indiscipline. Rooted in partnership, proactive engagement, and problem-solving, community policing aims to foster trust between law enforcement and school communities. By involving police officers in school activities and promoting preventive programs, this approach seeks to address not just the symptoms of indiscipline but its underlying causes. Community policing has shown potential in creating a safer school environment by building relationships with students and staff, thus contributing to a culture of discipline (Javdani, 2019; Golann & Jones, 2021; Broll & Howells, 2019). Despite the importance of maintaining discipline in schools, indiscipline among secondary school students remains a significant global challenge.

In Tanzania, the "Polisi Jamii" community policing initiative, launched by the Tanzania Police Force in 2006, aimed to address rising crime rates and school-related disciplinary issues (Yegon, 2020). This initiative, combined with the establishment of the Police Gender and Children's Desk in 2009, sought to provide a confidential space for victims of sexual violence and to address broader issues of violence against children and women (Mlay, 2020). The increasing number of crime-related disciplinary cases in schools further highlighted the need for such initiatives. However, the long-term impact of these efforts on improving school discipline remains unclear.

National and international frameworks play a significant role in addressing indiscipline in schools. UNICEF (2022) emphasizes the importance of establishing school discipline committees, safety desks, and counseling services, which are supported by national policies such as the Education and Training Policy (URT, 2014) and the Law of the Child Act (URT, 2009). These policies focus on protecting students' welfare and creating structured environments to guide behavior. However, despite these efforts, indiscipline remains a challenge, calling for more integrated and innovative approaches, such as the incorporation of community policing into the school discipline structure.

Notwithstanding the implementation of various frameworks and policies, indiscipline in Moshi schools is increasingly becoming crime-related, with incidents such as arson linked to negative peer influences and deteriorating student relationships (Mwananchi, 2020; 2021). The persistence of these issues highlights the challenges in maintaining order and safety in schools, particularly in areas like Moshi District Council. Although community policing has been proposed as part of the solution, there remains a critical gap in information on its effectiveness in mobilizing students to adhere to the established guidelines, particularly in cases where indiscipline escalates into criminal behavior.

Despite various efforts to tackle school indiscipline on both local and global scales, it continues to be a significant issue. Measures such as establishing discipline boards, improving school scouts, and creating safety and security desks have been implemented to guide student behavior (Schaffnit et al., 2019). Although it is a promising approach, the prevailing crime-related incidents in schools suggest that more comprehensive strategies may be needed. Uncertainty surrounds the effectiveness of community policing in fully addressing school discipline issues. The question of whether community policing can achieve its long-term goals of fostering safer, more positive learning environments remains critical as schools continue to face the challenge of maintaining discipline, hence exerting societal pressures.

2. Statement of the Problem

The disciplinary challenges among students in secondary schools, particularly in Moshi District Council, have been a persistent concern for educators, parents, and the broader community (Luwumba et al., 2022). Issues such as truancy, drug abuse, bullying, arson, sodomy and vandalism have been reported, undermining the educational environment and overall student well-being (Cardwell et al., 2021). Traditional disciplinary measures implemented by schools have often proven inadequate in addressing these complex and multifaceted issues. As a result, there is an increasing interest in community policing mobilizing strategy as a potential solution to enhance students' discipline.

Community policing mobilizing strategy involves collaborative efforts between law enforcement, school administrations, parents, and community members to create a supportive and secure environment that fosters positive behavior among students (Mangai et al., (2023). The strategy is built on principles of trust, cooperation, and proactive engagement, aiming to prevent disciplinary problems before they escalate (Imam, 2022). Despite the theoretical benefits, the extent of community policing mobilizing strategy in improving students' discipline in public secondary schools within Moshi District Council remains largely unexplored. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the extensiveness of community policing mobilizing strategy and its impact on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Moshi District Council.

3. Research Questions

This research study sought to answer the question:

- To what extent does community policing mobilizing strategy improve student discipline in secondary schools in the Moshi district council?

4. Significance of the Study

This research sought to provide valuable information to teachers and students in public secondary schools, particularly in Moshi district council, by examining community policing mobilizing strategy aimed at promoting secondary students' discipline. Furthermore, through the school's feedback, the study is expected to help CP improve its strategies for

student discipline. The findings of the study would be beneficial to policymakers, such as the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MoEST), and the President's Office Regional Authority and Local Government (PO-RALG) for the insights produced by this study can be used in developing effective policies and decisions concerning students' discipline. Additionally, this study contributed to the existing body of knowledge and served as a foundation for future researchers interested in investigating community policing strategies towards student discipline.

5. Theoretical Framework

Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) is the theory that was developed by Herman Goldstein in the 1990s. The core principle of POP is to move beyond just reacting to individual calls for service and to proactively identify and resolve the underlying issues that lead to repeated crimes and disorders in a community. The theory focuses on identifying and addressing the root causes of specific crimes or disorderly problems within a community, including disciplinary issues in schools, rather than just reacting to incidents as they occur. In the context of public secondary schools in Moshi District Council, POP could involve collaboration between the local police force, school administrators, students and teachers to devise comprehensive solutions to issues affecting the safety and well-being of students. This approach aims to proactively mitigate the root causes of schools' indiscipline, which fosters a safer and more conducive learning environment for students.

Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) has the potential to improve the efficiency of community policing tactics concerning students' discipline in Moshi district by emphasizing the exploration of root causes, allowing for precise interventions. The approach involves creating strategies that are specifically tailored to the local context, thereby increasing their effectiveness. However, the theory has pointed out that it can be criticized due to its complexity as it demands expertise and coordination. This could be challenging in communities lacking access to specialized personnel. Despite its shortcomings, the Problem-Oriented Policing theory remains valuable in the context of the effectiveness of community policing strategies aimed at improving students' discipline in the Moshi district council. POP encourages collaboration and partnership between law enforcement agencies, schools, community organizations, and other stakeholders. By working together, these entities can leverage their respective resources and expertise to implement comprehensive strategies that promote positive behavior among students.

6. Review of Empirical Studies

This section consists of reviewed empirical studies, which are organized in themes consistently elicited from the research questions. The review covers research done outside Africa, in Africa, East Africa, and Tanzania. These studies helped the researcher to understand the problem in detail and study research approaches and instruments for data collection, analysis, and interpretation. They also helped the researcher to establish the knowledge gap that necessitated the current study.

McMillen et al. (2019) conducted a study on Chicago's Safe Passage program, which aimed to enhance student safety during school travel by deploying civilian guards along specific routes. The program was initiated in the 2009-2010 school year and expanded to 140 schools by 2015-16. By utilizing over 10 years of geocoded Chicago police reports and school-level data, the researchers examined the program's impact on crime rates and school absenteeism. The findings indicate that the program was a cost-effective policing alternative that directly influenced crime rates and student outcomes. Through analysis of spatial and temporal variations in program implementation, the study revealed an average reduction of 14% in violent crime rates and an estimated 2.5 percentage point decrease in school absenteeism. However, the study focused on civilian security without involving students. Therefore, this study explored the extent to which community policing mobilizing strategy involves students to improve discipline in public secondary schools in Moshi Rural District.

Weisburst (2019) studied the impact of funding for school police on student discipline and long-term education outcomes. The study provided the first quasi-experimental estimate of funding for school police on student outcomes, leveraging variation in federal Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grants. The study exploited detailed data on over 2.5 million students in Texas and found that federal grants for police in schools increased middle school discipline rates by six percent. Further, it was found that low-income students and Black and Hispanic students experienced the largest increases in discipline. The study aimed to examine how these factors contributed to the reduction of school violence, taking into account the racial/ethnic compositions of schools and crime levels in their locations. While effective in curbing school violence, the study lacked emphasis on student involvement in addressing discipline issues. This study addressed this gap by examining the extent of student engagement in community policing strategies in Moshi Rural District.

Groves (2020) studied the impact of ex-activists of student movements on their educational environment, which is a relatively unknown aspect of student mobilization. The study focused on how the exciting educational institutions and the experience acquired in collective actions and protests were introduced in professional spheres. It used the case of Spanish teachers to see how the spirit of the 1960s influenced professional mobilization in the Spanish Education system in the 1970s and 1980s. The study began with contemporary discussions regarding professions and advocacy. It explored this notion across several professions, culminating in how it was used with regard to teachers' professionalism. The next section of the article looked at the students' movement in Spain and how it combined international demands with the national struggle against the dictatorship. The relationship between the students' movements and the mobilization of primary and secondary education was also focused on. The study addressed systemic issues, promoted diversity, and empowered students to have a voice in shaping their educational experience. Despite studying mobilizing students towards activism, little focus was put on collaboration and positive relationships between law enforcement and the school

communities, which necessitate addressing disciplinary issues through community-oriented and collaborative approaches to enhance a safer and more supportive school environment. Hence, the current study investigated the extent to which community policing mobilizing strategy improves students' Discipline in public secondary schools in the Moshi district council.

Sikhwari et al. (2019) studied the factors influencing students' academic achievement in rural South Africa. The major challenge that educational institutions in South Africa faced was the success of students in their studies. The long-term plan to increase the participation rate in education in South Africa highlighted the need for educational institutions to investigate the factors that influence students' success. A qualitative design was used. Data were collected by means of a questionnaire with open-ended questions. The ten respondents (5 males and 5 females) for the study were conveniently selected from a historically black institution of higher learning in South Africa. The data were analyzed through content analysis. The results indicated that students' academic achievements were influenced by various factors, such as self-motivation, self-discipline, peer support, and lecturers' teaching approaches. This study had its attention centered on the positive and inclusive educational atmosphere that can contribute to a conducive learning environment. It asserted that students may feel more motivated and engaged when they perceive the learning environment as a safe and respectful space. The reviewed study hardly delved into students' mobilization strategy towards improving personal discipline. Thus, the current study focused on the extent to which Community Policing mobilizing strategy improves students' discipline in public secondary schools in Moshi Rural district council.

The study by Philemon and Mkulu (2020) aimed to explore the impact of motivation on student retention in public secondary schools in Rorya District, Tanzania. The study was based on Maslow's Hierarchy of needs theory of motivation. The study adopted a mixed research approach and an explanatory sequential design. The sample size of one hundred and twenty-six (n=126) respondents obtained through stratified random sampling, purposive, snowball and simple random sampling techniques was involved. Questionnaires, unstructured interviews and a document review checklist were used to collect data. Validity and reliability were checked. The result of test-retest was 0.87. The validity of the tools was ensured by sending them to education foundations' research experts. Therefore, the instruments were valid and reliable. Data were analyzed through descriptive statistics with the help of SPSS version 20 and the content analysis approach. The findings indicated that motivation greatly influenced secondary school students' retention. The study recommended that the teachers and all educational stakeholders should actively participate in motivating students to continue with the school by ensuring a safe, active parenting role as well as a supportive and conducive environment for students' successful completion of their studies. Students need care, love, and respect to remain at school until completion. When students are motivated, there is often better communication between teachers, parents, and students. This study focused on collaborative efforts that can provide the necessary support systems to ensure students stay on track and remain in school. On that account, minimal focus was put on involving strategies like school community policing and collaborative problem-solving. That being the case, the current study focused on Community Policing mobilizing strategy and the extent to which it brings improvement of discipline in public secondary schools in Moshi district council.

7. Summary of Reviewed Studies and Demonstration of Knowledge Gap

The empirical studies that were reviewed encompassed a global scope, including regions both within and outside of Africa, with a specific focus on East Africa and Tanzania. It was noted that the majority of these studies were actually conducted outside of Tanzania. In terms of methodology, the predominant approaches utilized were descriptive survey, survey, quasi-experimental, and case study, with a smaller number employing a mixed-methods design. Additionally, it was observed that a significant portion of the reviewed empirical studies employed qualitative-method design, thereby potentially limiting the generalizability and transferability of their findings.

Upon closer examination, certain empirical studies were found to exhibit conflicting elements within their research parameters, which could potentially compromise the validity of their conclusions. Specifically, concerns were raised regarding the use of inappropriate methodology, sampling procedures, and data collection instruments, all of which cast doubt on the credibility of the study findings. Consequently, the present study sought to address these methodological gaps by implementing a convergent design, utilizing relevant sampling procedures, and employing appropriate data collection instruments.

Furthermore, it was observed that the existing literature inadequately addressed certain key areas, such as mobilizing students to cultivate values that deter crime-oriented indiscipline. Therefore, the current study investigated the Extensiveness of a Community Policing Mobilizing Strategy towards Improving Students' Discipline in Secondary schools in Moshi District Council.

8. Research Methodology

This study employed a convergent design under a mixed research approach. The purpose of using this design was to collect both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously and compare the results to obtain a more complete understanding of the research problem. The researcher mixed the two databases by merging the results during interpretation to ensure the two data sets conform. The design enabled the researcher to collect a large amount of data from a variety of respondents for a short period of time (Nair & Prem, 2020). This study targeted 61 head of schools, 482 teachers, 1059 students, 34 ward police officers. Random sampling and total sampling techniques were employed to sample respondents who participated in this study.

The study involved 6 public secondary schools, 6 heads of schools, 48 teachers, 106 students and 4 ward community police officers. This sample size corresponds to approximately 10% of the entire population, as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2021). Data were collected using questionnaires and an interview guide. Data collection

instruments were validated by research experts from the educational planning and administration department. A pilot study was conducted in two public secondary schools. The reliability of questionnaires for Likert-type items was estimated using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient whereby $r = 0.881$ for teachers and $r = 0.750$ for students were obtained while reliability for qualitative data was established through peer debriefing and triangulation. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, particularly frequencies, percentages, and means, with the aid of SPSS version 22. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically according to Creswell and Creswell's (2018) suggestion of six steps whereby data were organized and prepared for analysis, read or looked into, coded and then description and themes were generated, interrelated and lastly, interpretation was made. Quantitative data were presented using tables, while qualitative data were presented through narration and direct quotations. The study adhered to research ethical principles throughout the research process.

9. Presentation, Interpretation and Discussion of Findings

The study aimed to assess the extent to which community policing strategies mobilize students to improve discipline in secondary schools within the Moshi District Council. To address this research question, data were collected from teachers and students using questionnaires, while school heads and ward police officers were interviewed. A five-level Likert scale served as the unit of analysis, with the following designations: 1 = Very Low Extent (VLE), 2 = Low Extent (LE), 3 = Moderate (M), 4 = High Extent (HE), and 5 = Very High Extent (VHE). Results are presented in terms of frequencies (F) and percentages (P). The percentage rates were categorized as follows: $\leq 20\%$ = extremely minority, 21-49% = minority, 50-59% = moderate, 60-69% = majority, 70-89% = very high majority, 90-99% = extremely majority, and 100% = overwhelming majority (Taherdoost, 2019). Mean scores were interpreted as follows: 1.5 = very low, 1.5 to 2.5 = low, 2.5 to 3.5 = moderate, 3.5 to 4.5 = high, and 4.5 to 5 = very high. Each scale item reflected the level of discipline improvement facilitated by community policing strategies (Almohtadi & Aldarabah, 2021; Hutchinson & Chyung, 2023). The responses from teachers and students are summarized in table 1.

S/N	Statement	Resp	VLE		LE		M		HE		VHE		Mean
			F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
1	Students are aware of community policing in our school	TR	0	.0	2	4.2	11	22.9	23	49	12	25.0	3.9
		ST	0	.0	7	6.6	23	21.7	39	36.8	37	34.9	4.0
2	Community policing provides students with an awareness of the discipline	TR	0	.0	1	2.1	12	25.0	18	37.5	17	35.4	4.0
		ST	0	.0	3	2.8	21	19.8	36	34.0	46	43.4	4.1
3	Community policing activities foster a sense of responsibility among students	TR	0	.0	1	2.1	17	35.4	17	35.4	13	27.1	3.8
		ST	0	.0	4	3.8	29	27.4	46	43.4	27	25.5	3.9
4	Students' discipline has increased due to community policing awareness	TR	0	0	1	2.1	13	27.1	19	39.6	15	31.3	4.0
		ST	2	1.9	3	2.8	21	19.8	38	35.8	42	39.6	4.0
5	Students demonstrate greater respect for others and teachers due to community policing	TR	0	.0	1	2.1	8	16.7	23	47.9	16	33.3	4.1
		ST	6	5.7	7	6.6	25	23.6	35	33.0	33	31.1	3.7
6	Community policing enhances students' consciousness about school rules and regulations	TR	1	2.1	0	.0	13	27.1	15	31.3	19	39.6	4.0
		ST	3	2.8	3	2.8	19	17.9	36	34.0	45	42.5	4.1
7	Students have become more considerate of safety and security through community policing	TR	0	.0	1	2.1	8	16.7	19	39.6	20	41.7	4.2
		ST	1	.9	2	1.9	16	15.1	36	34.0	51	48.1	4.2

S/N	Statement	Resp	VLE		LE		M		HE		VHE		Mean
			F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
8	Community policing activities help to improve students' self-discipline	TR	0	.0	1	2.1	18	37.5	14	29.2	15	31.3	3.8
		ST	1	.9	3	2.8	30	28.3	39	36.8	33	31.1	3.9
9	Community policing awareness provides Students' willingness to be involved in school discipline affairs	TR	0	.0	0	.0	11	22.9	23	47.9	14	29.2	4.0
		ST	1	.9	5	4.7	27	25.5	39	36.8	34	32.1	3.9
10	Community policing programs contribute to shaping students' values related to discipline	TR	0	.0	2	4.2	13	27.1	17	35.4	16	33.3	3.9
		ST	0	.0	4	3.8	23	21.7	37	34.9	42	39.6	4.1
Grand Mean												3.9	

Table 1: Teachers' (TR) and Students' (ST) Responses on the Extent of Community Policing Strategy Mobilize Students toward Improving Student Discipline (N=24 And 96 Respectively)

Source: Field Data (2024)

Table 1 presents the responses from teachers (TR) and students (ST) regarding the extent to which the community policing strategy improves students' discipline, based on the participation of 48 teachers and 106 students. The responses are categorized into five levels: Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1, Low Extent (LE) = 2, Moderate (M) = 3, High Extent (HE) = 4, and Very High Extent (VHE) = 5. Each response includes its corresponding frequency (F) and percentage (%), along with the mean score for each statement. This structured approach allows for a clear analysis of perceptions regarding the effectiveness of community policing in enhancing discipline among students.

The findings from table 1 suggest that a substantial extent of both teachers (72.9%) and students (77.4%) rated community policing as effective to a high extent in providing students with an awareness of school discipline. The mean scores of 3.9 for teachers and 4.0 for students further reinforce this positive perception, indicating that the initiative has succeeded to a considerable extent in achieving its goal. However, a small percentage of respondents, 2.1% of teachers and 2.8% of students indicated that the effectiveness of community policing in raising discipline awareness was to a very low extent, highlighting a gap that may require targeted interventions to address the needs of this minority group.

Similarly, the researcher, during a face-to-face interview with one Ward Police Officer 3 and one head of school 1, had the following put forth respectively:

Many students are aware of community policing in schools and understand their role in maintaining discipline. My visits to schools to teach about community policing have manifested a positive impact. In my three years of training, I have been emphasizing good discipline and avoiding negative peer groups. I am pleased to see positive changes in the schools I have visited. Students embrace the principles of community policing and become advocates for positive change. (WPO 3, personal communication, 12 March, 2024)

On the other hand, the head of school 1 said:

After the coming of community policing in our school, we are now witnessing the improvement of discipline like substance use and bullying have rarely been reported recently. Several programs with the help of police have been established, such as workshops on anti-bullying and seminars on the effects of substance use. Our school has had training on crime awareness for all students so that they should avoid indulging themselves in crime and focus on academic issues. (HoS 1, personal communication, 1 March, 2024)

Both the insights from the Ward Police Officer and the head of the school indicate that the teaching of community policing has yielded positive results in improving discipline within schools. Students have played a crucial role in maintaining a safe and secure environment while remaining academically focused. The community policing training program emphasizes the development of good discipline and encourages students to resist negative peer influences, thereby reducing the likelihood of students transitioning from school to police custody. Police officers have observed favorable changes in the schools they visit, noting that students not only embrace the principles of community policing but also actively promote positive transformations within their communities.

These findings align with research by Weisburst (2019), which demonstrated that federal grants for police in schools led to a six percent increase in middle school discipline rates following training in community policing for over 2.5 million students in Texas. Additionally, the study supports Social Bond Theory, as articulated by Travis Hirschi (1969) in his seminal work "Causes of Delinquency." Hirschi's theory posits that strong social bonds to family, school, and other social institutions serve as protective factors against delinquent behavior, reinforcing the importance of community engagement in fostering student discipline.

Data presented in table 1 reveal that a substantial majority of teachers (70.9%) and students (75.4%) rated the extent to which community policing awareness has contributed to increased student discipline as high or very high. In contrast, a small minority, comprising 2.1% of teachers and 4.7% of students, rated this effect as very low. The mean score

for both groups was calculated at 4.0, indicating that community policing awareness initiatives are effective in enhancing students' discipline, as reflected in the high percentage of positive ratings from both teachers and students. However, the concerns raised by the minority who perceived the impact as very low highlight the need for ongoing evaluation and improvement of this strategy to maximize its effectiveness.

During interviews with the heads of schools 2, the head of school 5 said:

The initiative of community policing in our school and their education has challenged the normal school disciplinary culture. It was normal for students to abscond the classes, engage in substance use, confront school staff, bullying and violence. The staff has experienced positive changes in students' behavior, where most of the students now display obedience and practice discipline. The impact of their message has been instrumental in cultivating a more respectful and responsible school environment (HoS 2, personal communication, 11 March, 2024).

Another Head of school 5 said:

The coming of the community policing initiative to our school created awareness of crime-oriented indiscipline through teaching what crime is and where indiscipline acts can mount to crime. The efforts can be credited to the valuable insights shared by the police officers, who emphasized the negative consequences of indiscipline (HoS 5, personal communication, 18 March, 2024).

Information gathered from the Heads of Schools suggests that the visits by police officers and their educational efforts regarding community policing have had a significant impact on student behavior. The awareness instilled in students has led to notable positive changes, with the majority exhibiting increased obedience and practising discipline. The messages conveyed by the officers were instrumental in cultivating a school environment characterized by respect and responsibility. These findings align with the research by Groves (2020), which established a relationship between community policing training for students and subsequent behavior change. Furthermore, the study is consistent with the Social Learning Theory proposed by Albert Bandura (1963), which underscores the significance of observing, modelling, and imitating the behaviors, attitudes, and emotional responses of others. According to this theory, individuals acquire new behaviors through observation and imitation, highlighting the role of social interactions in the learning process.

Data presented in table 1 indicate that a substantial majority of teachers (81.9%) and a majority of students (64.1%) rated the extent to which community policing has fostered greater respect for others and teachers as high. Conversely, a small minority, comprising 2.1% of teachers and 12.3% of students, rated this effect as very low. The mean score for both groups was 3.7, suggesting that community policing initiatives are extensive and highly effective in promoting respect among students, as evidenced by the high percentage of positive ratings from both teachers and students. However, the concerns raised by the minority who rated the impact as very low highlight the necessity for ongoing evaluation and improvement of these initiatives to ensure sustained positive outcomes.

During the interviews, the head of school 2 and Ward Police Officer 4 stated:

The community policing training provided in our school, along with other contributing factors, plays a significant role in shaping student discipline and fostering a sense of respect among themselves and the staff. We used various strategies to address students' discipline, yet there were no significant improvements in school discipline. Currently, I have witnessed positive changes in students' behaviour and reduced friction between teachers and students. Although not every student has undergone a complete transformation, we express gratitude for those who have embraced the positive changes, considering the challenging circumstances we faced previously (HoS 2, personal communication, 11 March, 2024).

On the other side, the Ward community police officer "4" said that:

The impact of the police training is evident due to a supportive environment from students. Currently, whenever I visit schools in my ward of domain, I get cherished by students, which signifies respect and love, contrary to the previous reaction (WPO 4, personal communication, 29 March, 2024)

Insights from the head of school and the ward community officer indicate that the community policing training implemented in the district has had a significant impact on shaping student discipline and fostering responsible citizenship. The interviewer noted positive changes in student behavior during their visit to the school. While not all students have undergone a complete transformation, there is a commendable acknowledgment of those who have embraced positive changes, especially in light of past challenges. The findings align with the research by Mazerolle et al. (2020), reflecting a positive shift in the overall school environment, where students are increasingly taking responsibility for their behavior and demonstrating a commitment to maintaining discipline. This underscores the effectiveness of the discipline committee's initiatives and the role of community policing in creating a conducive and responsible learning atmosphere.

Additionally, the study aligns with Social Control Theory, developed by Travis Hirschi in 1969, which posits that individuals' relationships, commitments, values, norms, and beliefs play a crucial role in discouraging deviant behavior. When individuals feel a strong connection to their community and its institutions, they are more likely to conform to societal norms and rules, thereby enhancing overall discipline within the school setting.

Data presented in table 1 reveal that a substantial majority of teachers (77.1%) and a majority of students (68.9%) rated the extent to which community policing awareness has fostered students' willingness to engage in school discipline affairs as high. In contrast, a small minority of teachers (22.9%) and students (25.5%) rated this willingness as moderate. The mean scores of 4.0 and 3.9 for both teachers and students suggest that community policing awareness positively impacts students' readiness to participate in disciplinary matters. However, the variations in perspectives and the presence of a moderate extent category highlight potential areas for improvement and indicate the need for tailored approaches to further enhance student engagement in disciplinary processes.

During an interview with the ward community police officers, one officer noted:

We recognize that behavioral changes do not occur overnight, and we are committed to ensuring that the topics presented genuinely influence their behavior in alignment with the principles of community policing which fosters students' willingness to be involved in school discipline affairs (WPO 3, personal communication, 12 March, 2024).

Another Community Police Officer 4 said:

By providing students with opportunities to participate in these activities, we are fostering a positive environment that reinforces the values and teachings of community policing training. Through these endeavors, we aim to create a lasting impact on their behavior, encouraging them to become responsible and engaged citizens (WPO 4, personal communication, 18 March 2024).

The information from both ward's community police officers suggests that students have demonstrated a significant change in behavior by refraining from crime-oriented indiscipline. By providing opportunities for students to engage in community policing, schools are fostering a positive environment that reinforces the values of safety and security. The overarching goal is to create a lasting impact on student behavior, encouraging them to develop into responsible and engaged citizens.

These findings align with the research by Sosiden and Viraek (2021), which asserts that community policing activities can help students cultivate various character traits, including discipline, patriotism, cooperation, respect for diversity, and a strong work ethic. Furthermore, the study resonates with the Empowerment Theory established by Julian Rappaport (1981), which emphasizes the process through which individuals gain control over their lives and engage democratically within their communities. This process involves enhancing self-efficacy, fostering a sense of control, and developing critical awareness, ultimately leading to active participation in social and community activities.

Data presented in table 1 reveal that a substantial majority of teachers (81.3%) and students (82.1%) rated the extent to which community policing has made students more considerate of safety and security as high. In contrast, a small minority of teachers (16.7%) and students (15.1%) rated this consideration as moderate. The mean score of 4.2 for both groups indicates that community policing awareness has had a positive impact on students' willingness to engage in school discipline affairs.

While there is a strong consensus regarding the effectiveness of community policing, there remains an opportunity to enhance students' consideration of safety and security further. The overall positive perception of community policing initiative underscores their potential to foster student engagement and elevate safety awareness within the school environment.

During the interview, Ward Community Police Officer "2" provided valuable feedback, highlighting a significant shift in the community's attitude toward law enforcement. Officer "2" remarked:

The students now see police officers as partners in their safety efforts rather than opponents. This positive shift in attitude underscores the success of our initiatives aimed at building trust and nurturing constructive relationships between the police and the community (WPO 2, personal communication, 17 March, 2024).

Another WPO 1 said:

The students have begun to view the police as allies in maintaining a safe environment rather than adversaries. This encouraging change in perspective highlights the effectiveness of our efforts to foster trust and cultivate positive interactions between law enforcement and the school community. (WPO 1, personal communication, 15th March, 2024)

Insights from both Ward Police Officers suggest that students' willingness to report incidents such as child abuse is a positive indicator of change. This shift implies that students have significantly altered their perceptions of the police, viewing them as allies in ensuring safety rather than adversaries. This change in attitude is attributed to successful efforts to build trust and foster positive relationships between law enforcement and the community (Meares, 2022).

The findings align with Community-Oriented Policing Theory, developed by Herman Goldstein (1979), which emphasizes the importance of cultivating positive relationships and partnerships between police officers and the communities they serve. The primary goal of Community-Oriented Policing (COP) is to enhance public safety and improve the quality of life for residents by addressing the root causes of crime and disorder rather than merely responding to incidents after they occur.

The data presented in table 1 indicate that the mean score of 4.0 from teachers' and students' responses suggests a high level of awareness of community policing initiatives within their schools. Additionally, a mean score of 3.9 indicates that community policing activities were actively promoted in these schools. Furthermore, the data show that a mean score of 4.1 reflects that community policing contributed to increasing students' awareness of school rules and regulations. The mean score of 3.9 suggests that community policing activities also played a role in improving students' self-discipline. The findings highlight that, to a considerable extent, community policing is a highly effective strategy in promoting student discipline and fostering a culture of respect, responsibility, and safety in schools. The study concluded that expanding community policing initiatives can, to a large extent, remarkably improve student discipline, respect for authority, and the overall culture of safety and security in schools.

10. Conclusion and Recommendation

10.1. Conclusion

The findings indicate that both teachers and students perceive community policing as having a significant positive influence on various aspects of student discipline. The overall mean score of 3.9 suggests a general agreement that community policing effectively engages students in improving their behavior. The slightly higher mean scores in several areas from both groups reflect a strong consensus on the benefits of community policing in promoting awareness, responsibility, respect, self-discipline, and active participation in school disciplinary matters. Although some variability in mean scores exists, the overall findings underscore the important role community policing programs play in strengthening the disciplinary environment in schools.

10.2. Recommendation

It is recommended that community policing units strengthen their communication and awareness programs by implementing regular workshops, campaigns, and updates to ensure that both teachers and students remain informed and engaged. Additionally, community policing units should enhance collaboration with students by establishing structured feedback mechanisms to encourage student participation in school safety and discipline efforts. Schools, as the primary implementers, should organize safety and security workshops, equipping students with the necessary knowledge to maintain a secure environment. Lastly, schools should integrate community policing programs into their long-term disciplinary strategies, ensuring sustained improvement in student behavior while fostering a respectful and responsible school culture.

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