Gender differences in decisions on student disciplinary behaviours by disciplinary panels of selected Kenyan secondary schools

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Abstract

The study investigated gender differences in decisions on student disciplinary behaviours by selected Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels which may be due to composition of disciplinary panels, perceptions of students presenting with disciplinary behaviours and behaviour expectations of students on the basis of school categories. The study employed mixed methods approach and collected both quantitative and qualitative data using questionnaire and interview protocol. Participants of the study comprised seventy-eight disciplinary panel members (45 makes and 33 females) of ten secondary schools. The results revealed gender differences in decision making behaviours by members of Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels, gender differences in the perceptions of students presenting with disciplinary behaviours and differences between single-sex schools and coeducational schools on presenting disciplinary behaviours perceived to negatively affect disciplinary tones of schools, the latter possibly to indicate gender differences in behaviour expectations of students depending on categories of schools.

Due to escalating violent behaviours of secondary school students, in Kenya, public secondary schools were directed to evolve appropriate responses to their students' problem behaviours. The Kenyan Ministry of Education (2005) directed all public schools to review and or overhaul all the rules and regulations for governing students' behaviours as well as the methods and procedures for administering minor and severe disciplinary measures, as stipulated in the Kenya Education Act of 1967 (Aloka, 2012). Each Kenyan public secondary school is also to make available to each student a booklet of school rules and regulations where it is clearly stipulated standards of behaviours expected of students in schools, how the standards are to be achieved, the sanctions for breaking school rules and the rewards for good behaviours (Aloka, 2012). Further effort at ensuring the implementation of schools' policies on student behaviours is the requirement that each school should have disciplinary panel or committee made up of a small group of teachers. The role of a Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panel is not dissimilar to the stated by Bridge House (2012) which is to ensure that students adhere to the expected norms of conduct including orderly school and classroom behaviours. As also opined by Yahaya, Ramli, Hashim, Ibrahim, Rahman and Yahaya (2009) each Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panel is to

develop procedures for monitoring students' behaviours and for dealing with breaches of disciplinary policies and to prevent occurrences of unacceptable behaviours. Furthermore and consistent with the assertion by Gillborn, Nixon & Rudduck, (1993) and Hue (2007) each Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panel is to positively manage students' behaviours and ensure that students live by rule-guided behaviours and with greater sense of control over their behaviours.

The review of relevant literature that follows feature discussions on schools' role in student behaviour development, the basis for the use of small group of teachers to make decisions for the management of student behaviours in schools, decision making process in small groups, dimensions of presenting student disciplinary problems on which decisions are made and the bases for gender differences in decisions.

Literature review

According to Williamson and Briggs (1975), the most important mission of any school is that of the development of appropriate attitudes, values, intellectual and moral commitments in students. Hiutt (1997) also contends that schools have responsibility to help individual student develop a vision for life as well as character, a sense of direction and competency. Taking the perspective of student development theory Benson (2009) states further that all institutions of learning, including secondary schools, have responsibility for the overall development of their students including the development and facilitation of students' minds as well as their comprehensive self-development for the production of forward-looking leaders to spearhead their nation's development in the years to come. This "whole person" development perspective of students as argued by Benson is consistent with Bojuwoye's (1997) earlier contention that education institutions have greater roles than just providing for the academic needs of their students but that they also are obliged to partake in the non-academic aspects of student development including behaviour development. It is further contended that schools are expected to graduate students with attributes of high cognitive proficiency, mature social and emotional skills as well as a repertoire of human relationship skills that ensure collaborative working together with others from diverse backgrounds and with capabilities to practice healthy behaviours (Bridge House, 2012).

For attending to the various aspects of student development Hue (2007) asserts that schools have systems, including academic curricular programmes, pastoral care or school guidance and counselling services, sports and recreation programmes as well as school disciplinary procedures. For instance, the school curricular offerings are meant for the academic development of students while school disciplinary procedures (managed by disciplinary panels) are meant for the behavioural development of students. Martin (2006) notes further that these school systems are linked, that is, teaching, learning and behavioural development are all closely intertwined. Many other studies (Bryk, & Driscoll, 1988; Watkins & Wagner, 2000; Steer Report, 2005) have also confirmed the inter-connectedness of the school systems and that these linking together of the various systems make for stronger sense of communal organization which leads a school to having less difficult behaviours among students. Thus, an important rationale for making teachers to be members of a school disciplinary panel is the recognition of the inter-connectedness of the various systems

2

of the school as well as an emphasis on the role of teachers which is not just that of cognitive or academic development of students alone but also that of behavioural development of students (Department of Education, 2011). Moreover, recognizing the link between the various systems of a school is not only an acknowledgment of the interconnectedness of the various aspects of development but also that these aspects are developed together with the same personnel and or resources and not in isolation of one another (Bryk, & Driscoll, 1988; Sergiovanni, 1994; Watkins & Wagner, 2000).

Furthermore, in terms of making small groups of teachers (which are described as disciplinary committees or panels) play the role of managing student behaviours in schools, Gunnarsson (2010) asserts that the employment of a small group of members of an organization to make decisions for the management of the organization is a very common phenomenon in many organizations, especially in settings such as law, religion, psychology, sociology and business. Freedman (2007) and Friedkin (1999) have also reported this tendency in education settings where small groups of teachers or academic staff are constituted to make decisions on selection of students for admission and selection of course programmes to study. Several advantages are associated with employing small groups of people for making decisions in comparison to leaving decisions to individual chief executives of organizations. For instance, Eisenfuhr (2011) contends that group decisions, as opposed to individual decisions, have the advantage of being arrived at after critical consideration of alternatives and by consensus. The contention by Bojuwoye (2002) is that a greater number of approaches and alternatives to the solution of a problem usually feature in groups rather than with individual standing alone. The complexity of many organizations makes decision making process to require specialized knowledge in numerous areas not possessed by a single person and many units of an organization (even school) are involved in implementing decisions, thus making necessary decisions by small groups of people more superior to those made by individuals (Zarate, 2009; Lunenburg, 2010; Bonito, 2011). These considerations, therefore, support the rationale for the employment of a small group of teachers constituting a school's disciplinary committee or panel for making decisions for the management of student behaviours.

Klein and Olbrecht (2011), however, are of the view that what makes group decisions more superior to individual decisions is the existence of the phenomenon of group polarization, a small social group tendency that makes discussions in a small group process to intensify convergence of group opinions. Group polarization is the tendency for group members' pre-meeting average position to be amplified in their post-meeting collective decision (Isenberg, 1986; Zhu, 2009). According to Meyer (1989) and Kim and Park (2010), group polarization is the result of a shift from individually made pre-group meeting decisions to post-group meeting decision concerning a group task. In any social group the assumption is that members would hold individual pre-group meeting opinions or decisions concerning a group task before such task is discussed in a group meeting (Friedkin, & Johnsen, 2011). However, Friedkin and Johnsen (2011) state argued further that during such group meeting the tendency is for members to select or to settle for one option from a set of alternatives presented to the group and to collectively consider that option to be the choice of the group.

3

The dynamic interactions in the group process is said to be responsible for group polarization phenomenon. This is because, as members discuss a group task, new or additional information, ideas or opinions are shared leading to gaining better perspectives, better understanding, or comprehension of the group task which in turn encourages or persuades group members to shift from their pre-group meeting individually made decisions to post group meeting collective decisions (Browman, 2005; Conkie, 2007). New or additional information becomes even more persuasive when provided by group members perceived to be experts in or eye- witnesses to the subject matter being discussed in the group and who are also perceived more likely to be providing true, credible or authentic information (Browman, 2005; Conkie, 2007). Moreover, not only are members of a small social group influenced by persuasive arguments, as argued above, but also by social comparison, the tendency for each individual member of a small group to feel a need for solidarity with other members rather than be odd one out and, therefore, elect to align with or support other members (Grodzki, 2011; Keyton, 2000). According to the social comparison theory, each individual member of a small social group is constantly motivated for approval by others (Grodzki, 2011) as he/she perceives and presents him/herself in socially acceptable or desirable manner to other members of the group (Isenberg, 1986). Aronson, Wilson and Akert (2002) and Boyer (2012) also state that each individual member of a social group tries to compare him/herself with other members of the group and, therefore, readjust his/her initial individual response or position in the direction of the dominant positions by the other group members.

Apart from the recommendation that a small group of teachers be constituted as disciplinary panel to make decisions for student behaviour management in order to benefit from the advantages of group decisions, the American Federation of Teachers (2010) also suggest the employment of the techniques of prevention and intervention by school disciplinary panels in order to achieve maximum success. Prevention focuses on stopping the problem behaviours from occurring and it consists of strategies for creating a structured or organized school environment with characteristics that ensure feelings of safety or security, trust, comfort as well as stability. Monitoring of student behaviours is another strategy that constitute preventive role of school disciplinary committees and it involves assisting students to develop individual behaviour plans and learning to track especially more serious problem behaviours. School disciplinary committees also intervene in student problem behaviours by teaching alternative behaviours, by identifying skills lacking in the students which are responsible for the student problem behaviours and by providing training in skills to enable them to have greater sense of control over their behaviours (American Federation of Teachers, 2010). Moreover, since rules that deal with human actions will eventually be broken the requirement is for some sort of punishment or sanction to be applied for misbehaviours (Yahaya, *et al*, 2009). Hence, an important role of school disciplinary panels is to prescribe appropriate punishment for school rules violations by students. Squelch (2000) contends that, although disciplinary procedures in school are essentially about positive behaviour management aimed at promoting appropriate behaviours and developing self-discipline or self-control in students, school disciplinary panels are also involved in prescribing sanctions or punishment. Punishments are actions taken in

4

responses to inappropriate behaviours in order to correct or modify the behaviours and to restore harmonious relations in the school (Joubert, de Waal & Rossouw, 2004).

Essentially student behavior management, in schools, has two very important goals, namely to ensure the safety of staff and students and to create an environment conducive to learning and teaching (Joubert, de Waal, & Rossouw, 2004). Mabena and Prinsloo (2000) assert further that the aim of student behaviour management is essentially to protect the fundamental rights of every member of the school so that members of such school can feel safe and secure within the school environment and for the facilitation of the smooth process of teaching and learning, According to the Department of Education (2011), student behaviour management is geared towards assisting students to live by rule-guided behaviours, to exercise greater control over their behaviours and to respect the rights of others and live amicably with members of the school community. Students are expected to show respect and courtesy towards teachers, school authorities and other fellow students as well as to be an embodiment of the core values of the school which revolve around respect for self, for the school, community and the environment as well as to have integrity, compassion and accountability or trust and responsibility (St Cyprina's School, 2010).

A number of indications exist in the literature dictating the dimensions of student behaviours and or associated factors on which school disciplinary panels are to make decisions. These dimensions can be gleaned from statements and documents by the American Federation of Teachers (2010), Department of Education (2011), St Cyprian's School (2010), Yahaya, Ramli, Hashim, Ibrahim, Rahman and Yahaya (2009) and these dimensions are:

1.   the types of presenting disciplinary behaviours – (whether or not the disciplinary behaviours are perceived   as   acceptable,   mild,
unacceptable or very serious infractions as stipulated in the school's policy on student behaviours);
2.   the general evaluation of the behaviour characteristics of the misbehaving students – (whether or not misbehaving students are seen as   first   or   habitual offenders, whether misbehaving students continue to offend after warnings or offences made in error, ignorance or mitigated by extenuating circumstances);
3.   the effects of the presenting disciplinary behaviours on the relationships of misbehaving students with others–(whether or not the problem behaviours are considered to have caused harm, violate the rights of other students or teachers or generally have caused disruptions in amicable interpersonal relationship); and,
4.   the effects of the presenting disciplinary behaviours on the disciplinary tone of the school - (whether or not disruptive behaviours have affected the disciplinary tone of the school, have contribute to unsafe school environment, constitute embarrassment to the school or have painted the school's image in rather very negative manner).

These dimensions of presenting student behaviour problems, notwithstanding, other factors also operate during disciplinary hearings to influence disciplinary panel decisions. Literature reveals that gender composition of the panels, gender composition of the school (depending on the school category) and the gender of the

5

students presenting with disciplinary behaviours also play significant influences on the decisions of school disciplinary panels. For instance, Hatala and Case (2000) and Venkatesh, Moriris, and Ackerman (2000) found the tendency for women members of a small group to be more affected by the environment and to want to search for more information and dedicate more time to decision making process than men and the consequence is for women to easily change their pre group meeting decisions upon getting relevant information from other group members. Assertion by Lazarraga, *et al* (2007) is that men are dominant, assertive, objective and realistic when dealing with group tasks and these make them experience relatively little shift in their decisions as compared with women.

In terms of gender differences in the exhibition of disciplinary behaviours by adolescents, study finding is that problem behaviours in schools are significantly higher among male than female students (Simons-Morton, Crump, Haynie, & Saylor, 1999). Drew and Watkins (1996) found that boys report a higher incidence of unruly behaviours (use of foul language, dishonesty and cheating, habitual failure to bring textbook and stationery to school, physical violence, and gang disturbance) than girls. Malete, (2007) also found school boys rated themselves higher than girls on aggression, uses of alcohol and drugs and the carrying and using of dangerous weapons. The contention by Wheldall and Beam (1998) is that teachers and school administrator tend to perceive boys to be more disruptive than girls because the two genders have different symptoms of disruptive behaviours. In this connection Kann and Hanna (2000) assert that boys generally exhibit externalizing behaviours such as stealing, lying, fighting, and destructiveness, whereas girls generally display internalizing behaviours such as anxiety, shyness, withdrawal, hypersensitivity and physical complaints. Kann and Hanna (2000) argue further that adults tend to be more aware of boys' misbehaviours because they are disruptive, whereas they overlook girls' behaviours because they are not as aggressive or disruptive.

The contention of Lumney and Webster- Stratton (1996) is that expectations of parents, teachers and peers often are responsible for gender differences in the perceptions of adolescent student problem behaviours as behaviours considered appropriate for one gender may be considered dysfunctional for another. For instance, girls are socialized to be more passive and appeasing whereas boys are socialized to be more active and aggressive. Streimatter's (1986) assertion is that boys are socialized or expected to defy rules and this expectation also underlies the tendency of public schools to establish behaviour norms and policies that are tended to be breached more often by boys. Hill and Lynch (1983) and Crouter, Whiteman, McHale and Osgood (2007) also confirm gender differences in the treatment of adolescent male and female children especially during gender socialization or gender attitudinal development with independence encouraged in boys and compliance in girls.

Gender composition of student population of a school has also account for differential decisions on presenting student disciplinary behaviours. Riordan, Faddis, Beam, Seager, Tanney, DiBiase, Ruffin & Valentine, (2008) found that teachers from single-sex schools perceived disciplinary behaviours among students to be less serious as compared with the same behaviour problems when they occur in co- educational

6

schools. Study by Donatelli & Schnees (2010) found that students in single-sex classes are perceived to have more appropriate behaviours and fewer disciplinary problems when compared with students in co-educational classes. Riordan's (1990) study findings revealed that single-sex schools display more ordered classroom behaviours than co-educational schools. Single-sex schools tend to create structured or organized school environments with high sensitivity to behaviours associated with sex in comparison with the less structured and more liberal attitudes to sex issues in coeducational schools giving the impression that single-sex schools provide students with a better and healthier educational experience (Bastick, 2000; Donatelli, & Schnees, 2010).

Goals of the Study

As revealed by the literature, many organizations make use of small groups of their members to make important decisions for the management of the organizations (Lunenburg, 2011). In schools, a small group of teachers, described as disciplinary panel, is also constituted to make decisions for the management of student behaviours instead of leaving such decisions to the school principal alone. However, while there have been a lot of studies on group polarization in decision making in many settings, there is paucity of literature on group polarization in decision making by small groups in education context, especially s e c o n d a r y s c h o o l s . Therefore, first rationale for the study was to ascertain evidence of group polarization or the tendency for discussions on student disciplinary behaviours by Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels to intensify convergence of opinions. A major rationale for the study, however, was to carry out meta-analysis of factors in the dynamic interactions, during disciplinary hearings, among members of the Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels which may be responsible for group polarization. Therefore, the objectives of this study were:

5. Examination of gender differences in the decisions by Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels which may have been because of the gender composition of the disciplinary panels;
6. Exploration of gender differences in decisions by Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels which may be due to behaviour expectations of adolescent boys and girls (and hence behaviour expectations of secondary school students (depending on the school categories based on the gender compositions of student populations);
7. Investigation of gender differences in decisions by Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels which may be due to gender differences in the perceptions of students presenting with disciplinary behaviours

Method

The study adopted the mixed methods research design to collect and analyze data as well as to integrate findings and to draw inferences using both quantitative and qualitative approaches in a single study (Tashakori & Creswell, 2007). According to Morgan (2007), mixed methods design addresses the concern of both quantitative and qualitative researchers since all human inquiry involves imagination and interpretation, intentions and values and, therefore, must necessarily be grounded in empirically embodied experience. Within the mixed methods design the study adopted the Concurrent Triangulation Model by which both the quantitative and qualitative data

are collected and analyzed at the same time (Hanson, Plano Clark & Creswell, 2005). This model was adopted since, in order to establish the existence of group polarization, there was need to estimate quantitatively shifts or changes from pre-disciplinary hearing individually made decisions to post-disciplinary hearing group decisions. Adopting mixed methods approach also enabled the researchers to obtain qualitative data, through interviews, related to the reported experiences by disciplinary panel members particularly regarding factors they considered might have influenced their decisions.

Participants

The population for the study comprised teachers of Kenyan secondary schools who were members of their schools' disciplinary panels. The study was however, limited to teachers in secondary schools in Rongo district of Kenya because of the constraints of time and cost involved to complete the study. Further delimitation of the study resulted in selection of ten secondary schools of the district by the employment of stratified random sampling procedures in order to draw representative samples from the three categories of secondary schools in Rongo district of Kenya. A total number of disciplinary panel members from the ten secondary schools selected for the study was 78 made up of 45 males and 33 females, with 39 drawn from five coeducational schools, 23 from Boys' Only schools and 16 from Girls' Only schools. Eight of the selected schools had 8 members in each of their disciplinary panels while the remaining 2 schools had seven members each.

Data Collection

For the quantitative data collection, two different questionnaires were use and these include the Demographic Questionnaire for collecting demographic information regarding gender, age, years of teaching experiences, and school categories (affiliations) and the Modified Choice Dilemma Questionnaire for quantitative estimations of the shifts or changes from pre to post disciplinary hearing decisions in order to establish evidence of group polarization in disciplinary hearings.

The original Choice Dilemma Questionnaire, MDCQ, was developed by Stoner (Ronay & Kim, 2006) and is among the most frequently used techniques for estimating, in quantitative terms, changes in decisions by individuals before and after group deliberations or meetings (Appelt, Milch, Handgraaf & Weber, 2011). The questionnaire has response options for rating decisions by choosing between the odds of 1, 3, 5, 7 or 9 in 10 chances (Freedman, 2007). The respondents of this study were requested to rate their decisions taking into consideration the four dimensions of the presenting student disciplinary behaviours, that is, the types of presenting student disciplinary behaviours, the characteristic tendencies of the misbehaving students, the effects of the disciplinary behaviours on the relationships between the misbehaving students and others and the effects of presenting student disciplinary behaviours on the disciplinary tones of the schools.

The respondents completed the MDCQ before and after the disciplinary hearing meetings to indicate their decisions on the presenting student disciplinary behaviours presented at the disciplinary hearing meetings. The estimated differences, in quantitative terms, between the pre and post disciplinary hearing decisions were then

8

calculated. The validity of the instruments was ascertained by making clear statements regarding decisions on presenting student disciplinary behaviours and the dimensions associated with the disciplinary behaviours on which decisions were to be made. Further confirmation of validity was done by a panel of judges who are psychologists and experts in group procedures. The internal reliability co-efficient estimated for the Modified Choice Dilemma Questionnaire by Cronbach's alpha was 0.608. The internal consistency reliability estimates for the Follow Up Questionnaire was also calculated and reported to be Cronbach's alpha of 0.695.

In-depth individual one-on-one semi-structured interviews were employed for gathering qualitative data on the participants' experiences of disciplinary hearings. Twenty participants were interviewed on their experiences of disciplinary hearings particularly regarding their experiences of the dynamic interactions among members of the disciplinary panels and the factors which participants considered to have influenced their decisions on presenting student disciplinary behaviours during disciplinary hearings. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001) qualitative interview is a commonly used data collection method in research. Interview process allows researchers to observe and ask questions thus providing opportunity to look at issues as if through the eyes of the participants (Bojuwoye & Akpan, 2009). Interview also is a relatively natural conversation for the collection of richer, fuller more genuine and more realistic information (Orodho, 2006). The semi-structured interviews allowed researchers to follow up ideas, to probe responses and investigate motives and feelings of participants (Bell, 2005; Eliahoo, 2011). The interviews were recorded and transcribed for data analysis.

Procedure
Ethical clearance for the study was first obtained from University of the Western Cape Senate Research Ethics Committee. Permission to conduct the study in the selected Kenyan secondary schools was also sought from the Ministry of Education, Kenya, and from the authorities of the schools involved in the study. Introductory visits were made to the selected secondary schools, in Rongo district of Kenya, to provide information on the nature of the research including the purpose of the study and the conditions for participation. This information was provided to groups of potential participants both orally and in writing. Further ethical principles by which the process of data collection was framed include assuring the participants of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, voluntary participation, informed consent, consent to electronic recording of interviews and permission to withdraw at any stage of the study.

The first phase of data collection involved administration of the Demographic Questionnaire and the M odified Choice Dilemma Questionnaire, MDCQ, The MDCQ was administered twice - before and after the disciplinary hearing meetings. The first administration was for participants to indicate their pre-disciplinary hearing individually made decisions on the student disciplinary behaviours presented at the disciplinary hearing meetings. The second administration was after the disciplinary hearing meetings for the participants to indicate their post-disciplinary hearing decisions. The administration of the questionnaires took approximately 15 minutes and done immediately before and immediately after the disciplinary hearing meetings.

The in-depth individual one-on-one interviews, for collecting qualitative data, were carried out after the disciplinary hearing meetings in rooms within the premises of the selected school with locations and physical structures that ensured confidentiality of information and privacy of the participants. Each interview session lasted between 30 to 45 minutes with a total of ten interview sessions in all. The participants were given an opportunity to ask questions during the interviews and were debriefed after the interview sessions.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed by use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Estimated pre-disciplinary hearing and post-disciplinary hearing decisions by different subgroups of participants were determined and compared using the Paired Samples t-tests and analysis of variance with probability established at $P < 0.05$. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically, that is, by first familiarizing ones' self with data, generating initial codes, searching for and reviewing themes, naming themes, categorizing themes and finally producing the report (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). The quantitative and qualitative data were integrated at the discussion stage.

Results

The study investigated gender differences in student behaviour management decisions by selected Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels by investigating gender differences in decision making behaviours by members of the Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels, differential behaviour expectations of students on the basis of school affiliations (or categories of secondary schools in Kenya) and differential perceptions of students presenting with disciplinary behaviours. The results are presented below.

To find out gender differences in Kenya secondary school disciplinary hearing decisions the study first established if there was evidence of group polarization in the processes of disciplinary hearings. This was done by obtaining quantitative estimates of pre and post disciplinary hearings response scores as well as the quantitative estimates of the differences between the two response scores for each gender group. These estimates were obtained from the pre and post disciplinary hearing meetings' mean response scores on the Modified Choice Dilemma Questionnaire, MCDQ. The results are presented in Table 1 which displays information regarding the descriptive statistics of the pre and post disciplinary hearing meetings' mean response scores on the MCDQ and the estimated differences between the pre and post disciplinary hearing meetings' mean response scores.

Table 1: Pre- and post-disciplinary hearing mean response scores and estimated mean differences by participants based on their gender groups.

Dimensions of presenting disciplinary behaviours on which decisions were made	Gender	N	Pre and post disciplinary hearing mean response scores		Estimated differences between the pre - and post mean response scores
			Pre	Post	
Types of presenting disciplinary behaviours	Males	45	6.64	5.25	1.39
	Females	33	3.29	6.02	2.73
Behaviour characteristics of misbehaving students	Males	45	4.87	4.07	0.80
	Females	33	3.35	5.67	2.32
Effects of disciplinary behaviours on the relationships between misbehaving students and others	Males	45	5.13	2.59	2.54
	Females	33	2.60	6.59	3.99
Effects of disciplinary behaviours on the school disciplinary tones	Males	45	5.98	2.56	3.42
	Females	33	2.20	5.77	3.57

The information displayed in Table 1 indicates that changes from pre to post disciplinary hearings decisions did occur among Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels thus providing evidence of group polarization in disciplinary hearing decisions by Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels. The table also shows that female members of the Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels made greater changes from pre to post disciplinary meeting decisions than their male counterparts in all the four dimensions of presenting student disciplinary behaviours on which decisions were to be made.

Further analysis of data was carried out to determine if gender differences observed in the disciplinary panel decisions were statistically significant. This was done by performing a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the participants' mean response scores on the MDCQ. The ANOVA results revealed statistically significant differences between the male and female mean response scores $F(1,76) = 13.96$, $p < 0.05$ (see Table 2). This, therefore, confirmed that gender differences were evident in the Kenya secondary schools disciplinary panel decisions and to possibly indicate evidence of differences in the behaviours of male and female members of the Kenyan disciplinary panels during disciplinary hearings.

Table 2: ANOVA summary results of the differences in the pre and post disciplinary hearings' mean response scores of male and female respondents

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between groups	437.91	1	437.91	13.96	0.000*
Within groups	2383.89	76	31.37		
Total	2821.80	77			

* $P < 0.05$

Further analysis of data was performed to determine which of the four dimensions of the presenting student disciplinary behaviours contributed more to gender differences in the disciplinary panel decisions. A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) of between subjects was performed on the participants' mean

11

response scores on MCDQ. The results of the MANOVA revealed statistically significant differences in the changes from the pre to post disciplinary hearing decisions of male and female members of the disciplinary panels on two of the four dimensions of the presenting student disciplinary behaviours on which disciplinary panel decisions were m a d e .

Significant gender differences occurred with regard to decisions on the types of presenting student disciplinary behaviours [F (1, 76) = 9.51; P =0.000, P< 0.05], and the behaviour characteristics of misbehaving students who appeared at the disciplinary hearings [F(1, 76) = 19.30; P = 0.003, P < 0.05]. Gender differences in disciplinary panel decisions on the basis of the other two dimensions of the presenting student disciplinary behaviours were not statistically significant. This may be indications of the different perceptions of disciplinary behaviours and or different behaviour expectations of boys and girls by the panel members.

Table 3: Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) tests of between subjects for gender differences in changes in mean response scores from pre to post disciplinary hearing meetings

Source	Estimated measures regarding shifts in the pre and post disciplinary hearing decisions on the bases of factors associated with disciplinary problems	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected model	Types of presenting disciplinary behaviours	30.84	1	30.84	9.51	0.003
	Behaviour characteristics of misbehaving students	82.11	1	820.11	19.30	0.000
	Effects of disciplinary behaviours on misbehaving students and others relationship	6.00	1	6.00	1.96	0.165
	Effects on disciplinary behaviours on school disciplinary tones	14.91	1	14.91	3.17	0.059
Intercept	Types of presenting disciplinary behaviours	861.61	1	861.61	265.59	0.000
	Behaviour characteristics of misbehaving students	648.06	1	648.06	152.28	0.000
	Effects of disciplinary behaviours on misbehaving students and others relationship	689.08	1	689.08	225.93	0.000
	Effects on disciplinary behaviours on school disciplinary tones	824.75	1	824.75	175.55	0.000
Gender	**Types of presenting disciplinary behaviours**	30.84	1	30.84	9.51	0.003*
	Behaviour characteristics of misbehaving students	82.11	1	82.11	19.30	0.000*
	Effects of disciplinary behaviours on misbehaving students and others relationship	6.00	1	6.00	1.96	0.165
	Effects on disciplinary behaviours on school disciplinary tones	14.91	1	14.91	3.17	0.059
Error	Types of presenting disciplinary behaviours	246.55	76	3.24		
	Behaviour characteristics of misbehaving students	323.43	76	4.25		
	Effects of disciplinary behaviours on misbehaving students and others relationship	231.79	76	3.05		
	Effects on disciplinary behaviours on school disciplinary tones	357.04	76	4.69		
Total	Types of presenting disciplinary behaviours	1212.00	78			
	Behaviour characteristics of misbehaving students	1144.00	78			
	Effects of disciplinary behaviours on misbehaving students and others relationship	964.00	78			
	Effects on disciplinary behaviours on school disciplinary tones	1252.00	78			
Corrected Total	Types of presenting disciplinary behaviours	277.38	77			
	Behaviour characteristics of misbehaving students	405.53	77			
	Effects of disciplinary behaviours on misbehaving students and others relationship	237.79	77			
	Effects on disciplinary behaviours on school disciplinary tones	371.94	77			

Data analysis was carried out to determine differences in disciplinary panel decisions on the basis of the three categories of Kenyan secondary schools. The selected secondary school disciplinary panel members' pre and post mean response scores as well the estimated differences in mean response scores on the MDCQ for each category of schools were calculated on the basis of the four dimensions of presenting student disciplinary behaviours on which decisions were to be made. The results are presented in Table 4 which displays information relevant to the descriptive statistics of mean response scores obtained on MCDQ.

Table 4: Pre and post disciplinary hearing mean response scores and the differences in the mean response scores before and after disciplinary hearing meetings by categories of schools.

Dimensions of student disciplinary behaviours on which decisions were made	School affiliations	N	Pre and post disciplinary hearings mean response scores		Estimated differences between the pre and post group scores	Std Error
			Pre-	Post-		
Types of presenting disciplinary behaviours	Boys' only schools	23	7.12	3.56	3.56	0.386
	Girls' only schools	16	3.45	6.83	3.38	0.668
	Co-educational schools	39	7.52	4.07	3.45	0.375
Behaviour characteristics of misbehaving students	Boys' only schools	23	2.54	7.43	3.89	0.492
	Girls' only schools	16	4.53	8.03	3.50	0.476
	Co-educational schools	39	7.45	3.93	4.22	0.251
Effects of disciplinary behaviours on relationships between misbehaving students and others	Boys' only schools	23	4.34	7.95	3.91	0.625
	Girls' only schools	16	3.46	7.54	4.08	0.636
	Co-educational schools	39	7.56	3.52	4.04	0.654
Effects of disciplinary behaviours on school disciplinary tones	Boys' only schools	23	5.45	6.39	0.94	0.456
	Girls' only schools	16	5.05	5.47	0.42	0.698
	Co-educational schools	39	4.95	7.39	2.44	0.561

Information displayed in Table 4 reveals that major differences in the changes from pre to post disciplinary hearing decisions by the three categories of schools were with regard to the effect of the presenting student disciplinary behaviours on the disciplinary tones of the schools. Differences in the changes from pre to post disciplinary hearing meetings decisions on the other dimensions of presenting student disciplinary behaviours (types of presenting disciplinary behaviours, behaviour characteristic of misbehaving students and effects of the presenting student disciplinary behaviours on relationships of misbehaving students to others) appear relatively very small.

Table 5: Tests of between subjects for pre and post disciplinary hearing shifts in decisions among panel members based on school affiliations

Source	Estimated measures regarding shifts in the pre and post disciplinary hearing decisions on the bases of factors associated with disciplinary problems	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected model	Type of the disciplinary problem	12.35	2	6.17	1.74	0.181
	Behaviour characteristics of the offender	18.41	2	9.20	1.78	0.175
	Effect of problem on the disciplinary tone of the school	28.18	2	14.09	3.07	0.052
	Effects of disciplinary problem on the victim	9.20	2	4.60	1.51	0.227
Intercept	Type of the disciplinary problem	767.79	1	767.79	217.27	0.000
	Behaviour characteristics of the offender	588.14	1	588.14	113.94	0.000
	Effect of problem on the disciplinary tone of the school	737.84	1	737.84	160.97	0.000
	Effects of disciplinary problem on the victim	591.46	1	591.46	194.06	0.000
School affiliation	Type of the disciplinary problem	12.35	2	6.176	1.74	0.181
	Behaviour characteristics of the offender	18.41	2	9.206	1.78	0.175
	Effect of problem on the disciplinary tone of the school	28.18	2	14.09	3.07	0.049*
	Effects of disciplinary problem on the victim	9.20	2	4.60	1.51	0.227
Error	Type of the disciplinary problem	265.03	75	3.53		
	Behaviour characteristics of the offender	387.12	75	5.16		
	Effect of problem on the disciplinary tone of the school	343.76	75	4.58		
	Effects of disciplinary problem on the victim	228.58	75	3.04		
Total	Type of the disciplinary problem	1212.00	78			
	Behaviour characteristics of the offender	1144.00	78			
	Effect of problem on the disciplinary tone of the school	1252.00	78			
	Effects of disciplinary problem on the victim	964.00	78			
Corrected Total	Type of the disciplinary problem	277.385	77			
	Behaviour characteristics of the offender	405.538	77			
	Effect of problem on the disciplinary tone of the school	371.949	77			
	Effects of disciplinary problem on the victim	237.795	77			

*$P < 0.05$

Further analyses of data were carried out to determine if the differences in the changes from pre to post disciplinary hearing decisions by the disciplinary panels of the three categories of schools were statistically significant. Both the test of between subjects and the Post Hoc Multiple Comparison test were performed on the pre and post disciplinary hearings mean response scores on MCDQ. The results of the tests of between subjects (Table 5) revealed no statistically significant differences in the different sample group changes in decisions from pre to post disciplinary hearings among disciplinary panels of the three categories of schools on three dimensions of presenting student disciplinary behaviours. The types of presenting student disciplinary behaviours [$F (2, 75) = 1.74$; $P > 0.05$], the behaviour characteristics of misbehaving students [$F(2, 75) = 1.78$; $P > 0.05$] and the effects of disciplinary behaviours on relationships between misbehaving students and others [$F (2, 75) = 1.51$; $P > 0.05$]. The differences in the changes from pre and post disciplinary hearing decisions by the disciplinary panels of the three categories of schools were significant

14

with regard to decisions on the effects of student disciplinary behaviours on the disciplinary tones of the schools [F (2, 75) = 3.07; P = 0.049, P <0.05] – see Table 5. The Scheffe's Post Hoc Multiple Comparison test results (see Table 6) also revealed differences in the changes from pre to post disciplinary hearing decisions by the three categories of schools on the effects of student disciplinary behaviours on the disciplinary tones of the schools. This could be an indication that different categories of schools perceive presenting student disciplinary behaviours differently o r that different categories of schools have different behaviour expectations for their students especially when it comes to considering the effects of presenting disciplinary behaviours on the disciplinary tones of the schools.

Table 7: Scheffe's Post Hoc results on shifts from pre to post disciplinary hearing decisions based on school categories and effects of disciplinary behaviours on disciplinary tones of the schools.

Factor	(I)School category	(J)School category	Mean differences in shifts in decisions (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Effects of the problem on the disciplinary tone of the school	Boys' only	Co-educational	1.50*	1.241	0.000*
		Girls' only	0.52	1.312	0.297
	Co-educational	Boys only	1.50*	1.241	0.000*
		Girls' only	2.02*	1.406	0.000*
	Girls' only	Boys only	0.52	1.312	0.297
		Co-educational	2.02*	1.406	0.000*

*P< 0.05

Qualitative data were collected by interviews regarding perceptions of disciplinary behaviours, students presenting with disciplinary behaviours or expectations regarding appropriate or inappropriate behaviours for different genders of students by Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panel members. Results of analysis of interview transcripts revealed that disciplinary panel members considered boys to exhibit more problem behaviours than girls. More boys than girls were reported to exhibit generally open or externalizing aggressive behaviours whereas girls were reported to exhibit secretive or internalized and less aggressive behaviours. Disciplinary behaviours reported to have been exhibited mostly by boys include drunkenness or alcohol abuses, bullying, fighting, possession of dangerous weapons (knives) unauthorized uses of cell phones and unexcused absence from school, in that declining order, Major problem behaviours reported to be exhibited mostly by girls include not completing homework assignment, unauthorized uses of cell phones, unexcused absence from school and bullying, in that declining order of frequencies.

When asked about what behaviours would be tolerated or not tolerated by boys or girls or in Boys' Only or Girls' Only schools, behaviours such as vandalism, fire-setting or destruction of properties and substance abuses were considered inappropriate and would not be expected of girls whether in Girls' Only schools or Co- educational Schools. Participants reported that misbehaviours not perceived to be aggressive (such as unauthorized absence from school) if exhibited by girls could be overlooked whereas boys misbehaviours perceived to be aggressive and disruptive could not be tolerated. All panel members irrespective of their category of school affiliation reported that student behaviours perceived to be disrespectful to teachers and school

15

authorities or behaviours perceived to put their schools in disrepute or likely to embarrass the schools are considered unacceptable behaviours, whether exhibited by girls or boys. Panel members reported that due to the nature of boys they might not be surprised when boys were reported to have breached school rules especially against behaviours such as bullying, fighting and unexcused uses of cell phones, but that they would, however be surprised if girls were reported to exhibit extreme aggressive behaviours such as setting fire to school buildings or were caught drunk from abuse of alcohol.

Discussion

The study revealed that male and female members of Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels behaved differently regarding their decisions during disciplinary hearing meetings. Results of the study revealed that female members of the disciplinary panels appeared to respond more to the dynamics of the disciplinary panels and therefore made greater changes from their pre disciplinary hearing individually made decisions to post disciplinary hearing group decisions than their male counterparts. Male disciplinary panel members probably influenced and persuaded their female counterparts to shift from their pre disciplinary hearing individually made decisions to post disciplinary hearing group decisions. This may be because men, relative to women, are more assertive, controlling and aggressive in their attempt to persuade people to go along with them when making decisions (LePine, *et al*, 2002; Lizárraga, *et al*, 2007; Apesteguia, *et al*, 2011). Study findings by Liu, *et al*, (2007) also revealed that, when women perform a group decision-making task, they foster cooperation and connection within the group, and tend to reserve their opinions and compromise their stands to complete the task while men, tend to contribute somewhat independently and ignore other's idea, hence women's willingness to be easily influenced to change decisions when compared with men.

The differences in the decision making behaviours between men and women could also be because of the deference to men by women, related social norms and stereotypes transmitted in the form of values, traditions, and behavioural expectations in indigenous or traditional societies (Asiyanbola, 2005). In this regard Wamue-Ngare and Njoroge (2011) observe that such gender differences in decision making behaviours between men and women may be due to socialization of the females to conforming and to playing more dependent roles as expected in a patriarchal society as Kenya's. Even though female members of the Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels studied had similar professional and educational qualifications as well as teaching experiences, but for the fact that in typical traditional African society, like Kenya's, the power structure places men in an advantage over women and makes men's opinions superior over that of women while the latter must always play a subordinate role which enables men to dominate women in matters related to decision making .Lupton (2000) also asserts that decision making in traditional African societies is rarely inclusive of all family members, though not formally prohibited by rule consistent with this assertion is the contention by Asiyanbola (2005) that, in traditional African society, it is often presumed that women and children are represented by their husbands and fathers respectively and these gender roles as determined by culture are maintained or reproduced in occupations and organizations such as schools.

16

However, Maccoby (1998) holds a different view and refuted the commonly held belief that females are more easily influenced than are males in decision making. That, on the contrary, females are not necessarily more easily influenced by others than are males, but that female to male interactions are often influenced by conflict-avoidance tendency than male to male interactions.

The results of the study also showed that Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels perceived student disciplinary behaviours differently and held different expectations regarding student behaviours. Disruptive and aggressive behaviours (more physical, verbal and open or externalizing abusive behaviours) are associated with boys while less aggressive behaviours (involving less aggressive but more secretive actions or behaviours) are associated with girls. According to Wheldall and Beamen (1998) teachers and school administrators perceive boys to be more disruptive and aggressive than girls. According to Kann and Hanna (2000) this differential perception may be because boys generally exhibit more externalizing behaviours such as stealing, lying, fighting and destructiveness whereas girls generally exhibit internalizing behaviours such as anxiety, shyness, withdrawal, hypersensitivity and physical complaints. Greenwood (2002) also asserts that behaviours done openly are more identified with boys whereas more secretive behaviours are identified with girls. Kann and Henna (2000) contend that adults are more aware of boys' misbehaviours because they are disruptive but overlook girls' misbehaviours because they are not as aggressive or disruptive. Streitmatter (1986) also observes that expectations of teachers and parents are often responsible for differences in the perceptions of disruptive behaviours. It is further asserted that because girls are socialized to be more passive and appeasing while boys are typically socialized to be more active and aggressive it is usually taken for granted that boys would transgress the line of acceptability to generally behave in ways society stereotypically dictates they should. Streitmatter (1986) contend further that behaviour that is considered appropriate for one sex may be considered for another.

Appropriateness of behaviours for one sex and not for other may also be related to the contexts in which disciplinary behaviours are exhibited, as revealed by this study. Disciplinary panels from single- sex schools (Boys' Only and Girls' Only schools) differed significantly from disciplinary panels from coeducational schools especially with regard to student disciplinary behaviours perceived likely to embarrass the schools or have negative impact on the disciplinary tones of schools.

Literature does not reveal agreement with regard to which behaviours is appropriate or not appropriate for any particular category of schools. However, Riordan, Faddis, Beam, Seager, Tanney, DiBiase, Ruffin & Valentine, (2008) contention is that teachers from single-sex schools perceive disciplinary behaviours among students to be less serious as compared with the same behaviour problems when they occur in co-educational schools. Basstick (2000) and Donateli and Schnees (2010), on the other hand, state that single- sex schools (Boys' Only or Girls' Only schools) are particularly more sensitive to behaviours or attitudes associated with sex issues as compared with coeducational schools. Coeducational schools are reported to be more liberal about attitudes to sex issues whereas single sex schools are less tolerant of attitudes to sex

17

issues perceived as negative (Basstick, 2000; Donateli, & Schnees, 2010). This differential perceptions of behaviours associated with sex issues are often responsible for the tendency of single sex schools to create structured or organized school environments which often give the impression that single-sex schools provide students with better and healthier educational experiences. Study findings revealed that, because of the structures put in place to prevent student problem behaviours associated with growing awareness of secondary sexual characters in early adolescence, single-sex schools display more ordered classroom behaviours than coeducational schools (Riordan, 1990) and single-sex schools are perceived to have more appropriate behaviours and fewer disciplinary problems when compared with students in coeducational classes.

Conclusion

Student behaviour management in schools are geared towards the objective of ensuring a safe and secure environment which makes for conducive learning and teaching (Joubert, de Waal, & Rossouw, 2004). Creating a safe and secure school environment entails ensuring the protection of the fundamental rights of every member of the school (Mabena, & Prinsloo, 2000).

The results of this study regarding gender influences in decisions for the management of student behaviours by Kenyan secondary school disciplinary panels certainly have a lot of implications for achieving the objectives specified above. If students are expected to respect the fundamental rights of others or to show respect and courtesy towards teachers, school authorities and other fellow students these have implication for the evolvement of procedure that recognizes equal treatment irrespective of gender. If student behaviour management in schools is for students to live by rule- guided behaviours and to exercise greater control over their behaviours, have respect for self, for the school, community and the environment as well as integrity, compassion and accountability or trust and responsibility, then giving consideration for gender in decisions or in the perceptions of disciplinary behaviours or differential perceptions of students presenting with behaviour problems is likely to be counter productive to the objectives of student behaviour management in schools. The results of the study therefore has implications for training of teachers to better understand and appreciate their roles in the behaviour development of their students and to evolve measures that give considerations to the achievement of student behaviour management goals. Consideration should be given for the equal treatment of students despite the diverse nature of student behaviours and for effective management of the same. The challenge for schools generally, and disciplinary panels in particular, is to prevent over-gendered and under-gendered stereotypes from diverting them away from their student behaviour management roles but rather to make appropriate decisions which can assist students to evolve behaviours that can contribute meaningfully to their success in school and later in life.

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