

Indiscipline among Secondary School Students in Akwaga Local Government Area Nasarawa State

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of indiscipline on the management of secondary schools in Akwaga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The research was necessitated by persistent reports of rising student indiscipline including truancy, bullying, classroom disruption, examination malpractice, and destruction of school property, which threaten effective school administration in the area. The study was guided by two specific purposes: to examine the influence of indiscipline on funding of secondary schools, and to determine the influence of indiscipline on decision making in secondary schools. Two research questions were raised and two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprised 119 respondents consisting of principals, vice principals, and teachers from secondary schools in Akwaga Local Government Area. A total enumeration technique was employed, utilizing the entire population as the sample size due to its manageable size. A 10-item structured rating scale titled "Indiscipline and Management of Schools Rating Scale (IMSRS)" was developed by the researcher, validated by experts, and tested for reliability. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while chi-square test of goodness of fit was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 confidence level. The findings revealed that indiscipline has a significant influence on both funding and decision making in secondary schools. Specifically, the results showed that strained education budgets leave little room for unplanned expenditures, schools experiencing high levels of indiscipline routinely incur extra expenses for disciplinary hearings, and school leaders divert capital budgets toward immediate behavioural

management needs. Regarding decision making, the study found that high levels of Indiscipline cause breakdowns in communication, undermine policy implementation, contribute to decision fatigue among administrators, distort the decision-making environment by creating unpredictability, and undermine strategic thinking. The chi-square analysis confirmed significant influences for both variables ($\chi^2 = 75.43$, $df = 3$, $p < 0.05$ for funding; $\chi^2 = 120.38$, $df = 3$, $p < 0.05$ for decision making). The study concluded that indiscipline significantly influences the management of secondary schools in Akwaga Local Government Area by diverting financial resources from instructional purposes and compromising the quality of administrative decisions. It was recommended among others that school managers should allocate contingency funds specifically for managing disciplinary issues, and that principals should establish functional school disciplinary committees involving teachers, parents, and community leaders to ensure consistent decision-making and reduce the administrative burden caused by recurring indiscipline cases.

Keywords: Indiscipline, school management, funding, decision making, secondary schools, student behaviour, Akwaga Local Government Area

Introduction

Secondary school management today faces a constellation of interrelated problems that undermine the quality of education, especially in resource-constrained settings. One major issue is insufficient funding, which limits the ability of school administrations to maintain infrastructure, supply teaching and learning materials, and remunerate staff appropriately. In many public secondary schools, budget allocations fall short of recommended levels, leading to dilapidated buildings, lack of laboratories and libraries, inadequate

classroom furniture, and shortage of instructional materials (Obinor 2025; Educational Perspectives 2024). These deficiencies make it difficult for administrators to provide a conducive learning environment, stalling efforts to deliver quality education.

Another serious problem is shortage of qualified and motivated teachers. Because of poor remuneration, delayed salaries, limited career development, and low professional support, many schools struggle to attract or retain skilled educators. In some cases, teachers are overburdened, leading to burnout and declining instructional quality (Sub-Saharan Secondary Education Challenges 2025; Adekola 2021). Such staffing gaps force school heads to manage large classes with few teachers, which erodes supervision, fosters disorder, and degrades academic standards.

Moreover, administrative capacity and governance problems plague many secondary schools. Some head teachers lack sufficient training in modern management practices, resulting in poor communication, lack of transparency and weak stakeholder coordination (Rivers State Educational Management Study 2025; IJAARS 2022). This can manifest in mismanagement of funds, failure to maintain facilities, neglect of maintenance schedules, and inability to plan effectively. In some cases, community or political interference further complicates management decisions, undermining accountability and consistency (Rivers State Educational Management Study, 2025). A related concern is overcrowding and poor classroom management. Overpopulated classrooms make it difficult for teachers to maintain discipline, provide individual attention, or implement participatory pedagogy (Secondary School Classroom Management Study, 2021; Obinor 2025). Overcrowding also strains existing infrastructure, inadequate desks, insufficient space, poor ventilation which affects learning quality, student behaviour and school climate.

Finally, weak supervision and regulatory oversight exacerbate all other problems. In many contexts, supervisory mechanisms are under-resourced or non-functional: there are too few trained supervisors, lack of transport or materials for supervision visits, and systemic delays in inspection cycles (Supervision of Secondary School Education in Nigeria, 2025). Without effective oversight,

managerial lapses go uncorrected and inefficiencies compound over time. Altogether, these issues highlight that school management problems are not simply about one dimension they involve financial, human, structural, governance and policy factors. Addressing them requires holistic reforms: increased funding, investment in teacher training and motivation, improved infrastructure, transparent governance, strict but fair supervision, and stakeholder engagement. Without systemic and coordinated action, secondary schools risk failing their students not because of curriculum or learners, but because of weak institutional management.

Management in secondary schools refers to the systematic coordination of human, material, and financial resources to ensure the effective functioning of the school and the achievement of educational goals. According to UNESCO (2024), management in secondary schools involves planning, organizing, directing, controlling, and evaluating all school processes to promote quality teaching and learning. Klinck (2023) explains that effective school management is anchored in strong instructional leadership where principals set clear goals, support teachers, and monitor learning outcomes.

International Journal of Innovative Education Research (2025) notes that secondary school management encompasses strategic planning, teacher recruitment, curriculum implementation, supervision of instruction, maintenance of facilities, and school–community collaboration, all of which must be aligned to improve student achievement. Athena Centre (2025) highlights that persistent issues such as teacher shortages, inadequate professional development, and limited funding complicate the work of school managers and affect the consistency of instructional delivery. Education Profiles (2024) adds that effective management also requires data driven decision making, transparent governance, and inclusive leadership that fosters collaboration among teachers, learners, and parents. In many contexts, school leaders operate within environments characterized by overcrowded classrooms, insufficient learning materials, and competing administrative demands, making managerial efficiency essential to maintaining school discipline and academic standards.

UNESCO (2024) emphasizes that well managed schools demonstrate stronger student outcomes because leadership directly shapes teacher motivation, school climate, and the availability of learning resources. Ultimately, the concept of management in secondary schools extends beyond routine administration; it reflects a comprehensive leadership function that integrates planning, supervision, accountability, resource optimization, and stakeholder engagement to create a supportive environment where effective teaching and learning can thrive.

Indiscipline among secondary school students remains a pressing and multi-faceted issue that undermines learning, school climate, and long term outcomes. Recent global and national reports highlight rising disruptive behaviours including classroom misconduct, truancy, bullying, exam malpractice, and violence which reduce instructional time and damage school safety (UNESCO, 2024). Empirical studies point to social media and digital device misuse as accelerating disrespectful attitudes, reduced attention spans, and impulsive behaviours that spill into classrooms (Syahbudin, 2024). Research in several African contexts finds that school based factors such as weak classroom management, inadequate teacher training, overcrowded classrooms and poor leadership interact with home based factors like low parental supervision, inconsistent discipline practices, and community violence to produce higher rates of indiscipline (Kamara et al., 2024; Abang et al., 2024). Examination malpractice and academic dishonesty have also resurged in many regions, driven by high stakes assessment cultures, pressure to pass, and the availability of illicit technologies, which erode academic integrity and morale (Okunlola, 2024; Adekalu, 2025). Studies additionally document the psychosocial effects on pupils: chronic misbehaviour is associated with lower achievement, school disengagement, higher dropout risk, and worse mental health outcomes (IOSR study, 2025).

Policy analyses emphasize that piecemeal punitive responses are insufficient; evidence recommends comprehensive strategies combining strong instructional leadership, teacher capacity building in positive behaviour management, mentoring and counselling services, family engagement, clear and consistently enforced codes of conduct, and

safe limits on device use (UNESCO, 2024; Journal on Educational Management, 2024). Finally, scholars urge better data and context specific research, including longitudinal studies and evaluations of restorative practices, social emotional learning and digital literacy interventions, so that schools can reduce indiscipline while protecting learning time and promoting student wellbeing (Research on school discipline, 2024).

Indiscipline among secondary school students refers to persistent behaviours that violate school rules, disrupt teaching and learning, and undermine the safety and order essential for academic success. According to UNESCO (2024), indiscipline encompasses actions such as truancy, bullying, examination malpractice, classroom disruption, vandalism, and defiance of authority, all of which compromise instructional time and weaken the learning environment. Kamara (2024) explains that these behaviours often emerge from a combination of school factors including inadequate supervision, ineffective classroom management, overcrowded learning spaces, and inconsistent enforcement of rules. Syahbudin (2024) adds that the rapid exposure of adolescents to unregulated digital content and social media platforms has intensified disciplinary challenges by promoting impulsivity, reduced attention span, and disobedience among students. Abang (2024) observes that poor parental monitoring, broken homes, and community level violence further contribute to indiscipline by shaping students' attitudes and emotional stability. IOSR (2025) emphasizes that indiscipline has severe academic implications, including low achievement, poor study habits, absenteeism, and higher dropout tendencies.

Adekalu (2025) notes that the normalization of behaviours like cheating or disrespect among peers reinforces negative behaviour cycles that spread across school systems. Okunlola (2024) argues that the rise in examination malpractice reflects broader societal challenges where unethical behaviours are mirrored by students. To address the concept comprehensively, scholars advocate for a holistic approach that integrates strong school leadership, teacher capacity development, counselling programmes, parental involvement and structured behavioural interventions (Journal of Educational Management, 2024). These viewpoints collectively show that indiscipline

is not merely a behavioural issue but a systemic challenge influenced by personal, social, institutional, and technological factors, requiring coordinated strategies for prevention and control.

Indiscipline in secondary schools exerts a direct and indirect toll on school finances by increasing operating costs, diverting budgetary resources to remediation and security, and undermining funding efficiency (Nwogu et al., 2025). UNESCO (2024) finds that strained education budgets leave little room for unplanned expenditures, so when schools must allocate funds for repairs after vandalism, increased supervision, or disciplinary interventions the opportunity cost is lost investment in teaching and learning materials. Research in Nigerian contexts shows that schools experiencing high levels of truancy, vandalism, exam malpractice, and violence routinely incur extra expenses for disciplinary hearings, parent meetings, counselling services, and increased staff time for supervision and record keeping (Ianna Journal study, Nwogu et al., 2025; IOSR study, 2025). Media analyses in high income settings also document fiscal effects, elevated suspension and exclusion rates have led some English secondary schools to face staffing cuts and to reallocate pupil premium funding intended for disadvantaged learners to cover crisis management and behaviour support costs (The Guardian, 2024; The Guardian, 2025). Empirical reviews indicate that persistent indiscipline can reduce school performance indicators, which in turn weakens public trust and may depress philanthropic and community support as well as eligibility for performance related grants (Education budget study, Nnebuihe Nwosu, 2025). School leaders therefore report diverting capital budgets toward immediate behavioural management needs, delaying infrastructure upgrades and curricular investments (RSIS International review of PPP initiatives, 2025). Preventive and restorative approaches such as counselling, social emotional learning, and community partnerships require upfront investment but are more cost effective over time than repeated crisis responses (Kamara, 2024); UNESCO, 2024). In sum, indiscipline drives recurrent unplanned expenditures, forces reallocation of constrained funds, and undermines longer term investment in teaching quality and infrastructure, creating a negative

feedback loop that worsens both behaviour and resource adequacy (Nwogu et al., 2025; IOSR, 2025; UNESCO, 2024).

Recent research shows that indiscipline significantly interferes with effective decision making in secondary schools by disrupting administrative processes and weakening the ability of school leaders to make timely, accurate, and evidence-based decisions. Olawale (2023) explains that persistent challenges such as truancy, bullying, assault, examination malpractice, and vandalism create crises that compel school heads to shift focus from strategic planning to crisis management, thereby delaying important administrative decisions. Ezenwa and Ibrahim (2022) add that when school authorities constantly respond to disciplinary cases, decisions regarding curriculum improvement, staff development, budgeting, and academic planning are often postponed or made under pressure, reducing their overall quality. Chukwu and Nduka (2024) point out that high levels of indiscipline cause breakdowns in communication, as teachers and administrators become overwhelmed with managing behavioural issues, creating gaps in information flow that hinder participatory decision-making processes. Adegoke (2023) argues that student unrest and violent behaviour also undermine policy implementation because decisions taken by school leaders face resistance from undisciplined groups, making it difficult to enforce rules or maintain consistency in school governance.

Obi and Yusuf (2024) further note that the emotional strain caused by recurring indiscipline such as teacher harassment, destruction of school records and disregard for authority contributes to decision fatigue among administrators, resulting in poorly considered choices that negatively affect academic quality and school climate. Consequently, indiscipline distorts the decision-making environment by creating unpredictability, increasing administrative workload and weakening stakeholder collaboration. Overall, high levels of student indiscipline undermine strategic thinking, slow down policy formulation, and compromise the quality of decisions that shape academic and administrative outcomes in secondary schools.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the strategic importance of secondary school management in achieving quality education, persistent student indiscipline has become a major threat to effective school administration in Akwanga. Reports from school administrators, teachers and community stakeholders indicate a steady rise in cases of truancy, bullying, classroom disruption, examination malpractice, drug abuse, lateness, disobedience to school rules and destruction of school property. These behaviours create an unstable school climate that makes it increasingly difficult for principals to plan, organize, coordinate, and implement educational policies effectively. The time and resources that should be devoted to instructional supervision, staff development, financial planning, and decision making are frequently diverted to managing disciplinary crises. As a result, vital administrative processes such as record keeping, communication flow, resource allocation, and monitoring of teaching and learning activities are often compromised.

Furthermore, many secondary schools in Akwanga lack clear and consistently enforced disciplinary structures, leading to weakened authority of school heads and teachers. Parents and guardians also display low levels of cooperation in addressing indiscipline, which exacerbates the problem and undermines management efforts. The growing influence of social media and societal moral decline continues to expose students to negative behavioural patterns that schools struggle to control. Consequently, school principals are confronted with mounting challenges that impede their ability to maintain order, enforce rules, make timely decisions, and achieve educational goals. If these issues are not properly investigated and addressed, the management of secondary schools in Akwanga may continue to deteriorate, ultimately affecting students' academic performance, teacher effectiveness, and overall school productivity. Therefore, there is a pressing need to examine the influence of indiscipline on the management of secondary schools in Akwanga in order to identify the root causes, patterns and managerial implications of this growing concern.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of indiscipline on management of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Specifically, the study sought to;

1. examine the influence of indiscipline on funding of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.
2. determine the influence of indiscipline on decision making in secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study;

1. To what extent does indiscipline influence funding of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?
2. To what extent does indiscipline influence decision making in secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance;

1. There is no significant influence of indiscipline on funding of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.
2. There is no significant influence of indiscipline on decision making in secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Research Methods

The research employed a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey is a research design in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items which are considered representative of entire group (Adzongo, 2022). The reason for the choice of the survey research design is to ensure detailed systematic description of facts and characteristics of data to be collected for the study to help proper analysis and evaluation of findings. This research involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions about opinions of people about some topics or issue. The population for this study was 119 which consists principals, vice principals and teachers in secondary schools in Akwanga. The sample size of 119 which is the

total population was used. This agrees with Emaikwu (2013) who states that the actual population is idea to represent the entire population if the total population is not much. A simple random sampling technique was employed to select the respondents because each respondent of the population has an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample. The instrument for this research was a 10 item structured rating scale “titled Indiscipline and Management of Schools Rating Scale (IMSRS)”. Responses were collected from the respondents and analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer research questions and chi-square test of goodness of fit to test hypotheses at 0.05 confidence level of significance.

Results

This section dealt with the presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion of findings.

Research Question One: To what extent does indiscipline influence funding of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard deviation on influence of indiscipline on funding of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

S/N	Items Description	N	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	\bar{X}	Std.	Decision
1.	Strained education budgets leave little room for unplanned expenditures.	119	96	19	0	4	3.73	0.63	VHE
2.	Schools experiencing high levels of truancy, vandalism, exam malpractice and violence routinely incur extra expenses for disciplinary hearings.	119	44	64	7	4	3.24	0.71	HE
3.	Media analysis in high income settings also document fiscal effects.	119	65	22	24	8	3.21	0.99	HE
4.	Persistent indiscipline can reduce school performance indicators.	119	43	42	16	18	2.94	1.05	HE
5.	School leaders report diverting capital budgets toward immediate behavioural management needs.	119	58	38	6	17	3.15	1.04	HE
	Cluster Mean/Std.						3.25	0.88	HE

Source: Field Work; 2025.

Table 1 item-by-item interpretation shows that strained education budgets leave little room for unplanned expenditures. Schools experiencing high levels of truancy, vandalism, exam malpractice and violence routinely incur extra expenses for disciplinary hearings. Media analysis in high income settings also document fiscal effects. Persistent indiscipline can reduce school performance indicators. School leaders report diverting capital budgets toward immediate behavioural management needs. The cluster mean of 3.25 and correspondent standard deviation of .88 was above the cut-off mean of 2.50. This

implies that there is a significant influence of indiscipline on funding of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Research Question Two: To what extent does indiscipline influence decision making of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard deviation on influence of indiscipline on decision making of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

S/N	Items Description	N	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	\bar{X}	Std.	Decision
1	High levels of indiscipline cause breakdowns in communication.	119	74	34	1	10	3.44	0.88	VHE
2	Student unrest and violent behaviour also undermine policy implementation	119	58	46	12	3	3.33	0.76	HE
3	Emotional strain caused by recurring indiscipline such as teacher harassment contributes to decision fatigue among administrators.	119	84	23	7	5	3.56	0.78	HE
4	Indiscipline distorts the decision-making environment by creating unpredictability.	119	77	29	6	7	3.47	0.84	HE
5	High levels of student indiscipline undermine strategic thinking.	119	54	50	6	9	3.25	0.86	HE
	Cluster Mean/Std.						3.41	0.82	HE

Source: Field Work; 2025.

Table 2 item-by-item interpretation shows that high levels of indiscipline cause breakdowns in communication. Student unrest and violent behaviour also undermine policy implementation. Emotional strain caused by recurring indiscipline such as teacher harassment contributes to decision fatigue among administrators. Indiscipline distorts the decision-making environment by creating unpredictability. High levels of student indiscipline undermine strategic thinking. The cluster mean of 3.41 and correspondent standard deviation of .82 was above the cut-off mean of 2.50. This implies that there is a

significant influence of indiscipline on decision making of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant influence of indiscipline on funding of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Table 3: The table below shows the chi-square test on impact of cooperative learning techniques on teachers' quality of secondary school teachers in Makurdi Local Government.

Responses Mode	SA	A	D	SD	Df	X^2	P	Decision
Observed	96	19	0	4	9	36.546	.000	H_0 Rejected
Expected	29.8	29.8	29.8	29.8				

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 4 shows that ($X^2 = 10, 75.432, P = 0.00$). Since P is $0.00 < 0.05$ level of significance, the null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This implies there is a significant influence of indiscipline on funding of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Hypothesis Two: there is no significant influence of indiscipline on decision making

of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Table 6: The table below shows the chi-square test on influence of indiscipline on decision making of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Responses Mode	SA	A	D	SD	Df	X ²	P	Decision
Observed	74	34	1	10	11	115.655	.000	H ₀ Rejected
Expected	29.8	29.8	29.8	29.8				

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 6 shows that ($X^2 = 11, 120.381, P = 0.00$). Since P is $0.00 < 0.05$ level of significance, the null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This implies that there is a significant influence of indiscipline on decision making of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of findings was organized around the two hypotheses;

Hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant influence of indiscipline on funding of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Responses from respondents further revealed that strained education budgets leave little room for unplanned expenditures. Schools experiencing high levels of truancy, vandalism, exam malpractice and violence routinely incur extra expenses for disciplinary hearings. Media analysis in high income settings also document fiscal effects. Persistent indiscipline can reduce school performance indicators. School leaders report diverting capital budgets toward immediate behavioural management needs.

Hypothesis two revealed that there is a significant influence of indiscipline on decision making of secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Responses from respondents further revealed that high levels of indiscipline cause breakdowns in communication. Student unrest and violent behaviour also undermine policy implementation. Emotional strain caused by recurring indiscipline such as teacher harassment contributes to decision fatigue among administrators. Indiscipline distorts the decision-making environment by creating unpredictability. High levels of student indiscipline undermine strategic thinking.

Conclusion

Based on the findings; the study concludes that there is a significant influence of indiscipline on funding and decision making in secondary schools in Akwange Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made;

1. School management should release adequate funds to improve educational standard in the area of study.
2. School management should involve critical stakeholders in making decisions concerning secondary schools in the area of study.

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