

ABSTRACT

An Examination of the Issue of Indiscipline and the Levels of Success of Sanctions Administered at a High School in North Trinidad

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This study sought to examine the issue of indiscipline and the levels of success of sanctions administered at a secondary school in North Trinidad. Data were collected through document analysis, as well as through interviews held with one student whose deviant behaviour was curtailed and one repeat offender, both of whom were administered the same sanction. The school has a graded system of sanctions suitable to its particular needs and circumstances, which requires the commitment of all school personnel. The deans indicated that they feel overwhelmed because of the lack of support from other staff members. The study found a high frequency of lax teacher behaviours, including absenteeism and unpunctuality. Students whose parents are more supportive of their children and the school's discipline policies tend to be deterred from participating in indiscipline or repeating an undisciplined behaviour after a sanction is administered. The overall finding was that the use of sanctions, without an accompanying teaching programme and recognition of expected behaviour, merely displaces the problem to the home and community.

Keywords: Case studies; Discipline policy; Indiscipline; School discipline; Secondary school students; Student attitudes; Student behavior; Trinidad and Tobago