

THE CRIME OF ARSON IN ORGANISATIONS AND ITS STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION MANAGERS IN UGANDA

by

Kaziba A. Mpaata

Lecturer, Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU)

2008

Abstract

The prevalence of arson in different settings both in developed and developing countries is explored in this article. While this crime has different dimensions in terms of motive and consequences as it is discussed, there is an extremely urgent need for Education Managers in Uganda to have practical strategies that can mitigate this vice. It is therefore concluded by suggesting some of them so as to save life and property in schools.

As the Uganda Police intensify their investigation into the cause of the 14th April, 2008 fire that killed our beloved children at Budo Junior School, we have an obligation as university academics to contribute researched information on the why and how arson as a crime has developed over the years. For example, the information on the historical causes of arson in different countries is very crucial to stakeholders in the social and economical development of our country. This is indeed true for those in education management and policy. The Daily Monitor newspaper of 17th April, 2008 reported the possibility of arson in the Budo tragedy just as it has been reported in different institutions like Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU), Kibuli Secondary School, Lugazi Mixed Secondary School and the like.

There is an urgent need to stamp out this vice from our society. That is why President Museveni, on 1st April, 2008, directed the police to get to the bottom of what had caused the fire in Budo Junior School. Consequently, in the weekly observer of 15th May, 2008 Kigundu summarized what he described as the Budo Junior police report and thus “police have confirmed that last month’s inferno at Budo Junior School in which 20 pupils perished was started by someone yet to be identified.” This, however, should not be the only concern for parents, teachers, pupils or the Ministry of Education as a whole. What is urgently needed are practical strategies to avoid arson in schools and other organizations of whatever form.

The purpose of this article, therefore, is to try to bring to light some documented research on the incidence and prevalence of arson in organizations and contribute some information towards the much awaited and needed prevention strategy for education managers in Uganda.

Arson as Criminal Behaviour

According to uniform crime report (UCR) in Bartol (1999), arson is defined as “any willful or malicious burning or attempt to burn, with or without intent to defraud, a dwelling house, public building, motor vehicle or aircraft, personal property of another, etc.” Arson joined the list of UCR index crimes in 1978, signifying both its seriousness and its frequency. It has been reported that about one-fifth of all property loss in the United States is due to arson, exceeding \$2 billion annually. Tragically, arson also claims an estimated seven hundred to eight hundred lives a year, in United States alone. In Uganda loss has also been reported both in terms of life, property and business but of recent loss of life has caused a lot of public anxiety especially among parents and relatives who lost their beloved ones.

According to Tappan, (1947) crime is an intentional act in violation of the law. Crime is committed without defense or excuse, and penalized by the state as a felony or misdemeanor. Criminal behaviour, therefore, is intentional behaviour that violates a criminal code. It is intentional in that it did not occur accidentally or without justification or excuse. Arson is in this category.

Incidence and Prevalence

Arson figures are compiled in both the developed and developing countries. In Uganda fire has been reported in different institutions as well as other work places. In education institutions, for example, fire prevalence has been reported as summarized in the table below:

Table I The prevalence of fire in Education Institutions in Uganda and nature of loss

	Name of Institution	District Location	Year	Nature of Human Suffering	Nature of Investigation Report	Nature of Loss
1	Budo Junior School	Wakiso	2008	Very high	Government police report-public	Life and property
2	Kabalole Islamic Primary School	Fortportal	2006	Very high	Not public	Life and property
3	Army Boarding Primary School	Jinja	2006	Very high	Not public	Life and property
4	Naalya Secondary School	Wakiso	2004	Very high	Not public	Life and property
5	Islamic University in Uganda (Uthuman Hall)	Mbale	2006	High	Not public	Property
6	St. Maria Gorreti Secondary School	Fortportal	2007	High	Not public	Property
7	Bilaaal Islamic Kakiri	Wakiso	2004	High	Not public	Property
8	Kabalega Secondary School	Masindi	2004	High	Not public	Property
9	Seeta High School	Mukono	2004	High	Not public	Property
10	Kibuli Secondary School	Kampala	2004	High	Not public	Property
11	Kibuli Secondary School	Kampala	2004	High	Not public	Property
12	Kibuli Secondary School	Kampala	2003	High	Not public	Property
13	Kings College Budo	Wakiso	2004	High	Not public	Property
14	Buziga Islamic Institute	Kampala	2003	High	Not public	Property
15	Ntale School	Mbarara	2003	High	Not public	Property
16	Najja Primary School	Wakiso	2003	High	Not public	Property
17	Lubaga Girls School	Kampala	2002	High	Not public	Property
18	Nabisunsa Girls	Wakiso	2002	High	Not public	Property
19	Nkumba University	Wakiso	2002	High	Not public	Property
20	Kiwoko Secondary Sch.	Tororo	2002	High	Not public	Property
21	Busoga College Mwiri	Jinja	2002	High	Not public	Property
22	Nakasongola Army Secondary School	Nakasongola	2002	High	Not public	Property
23	Lugazi Mixed Sec. Sch.	Mukono	2002	High	Not public	Property
	Standard High Zana	Wakiso	2001	High	Not public	Property
25	Maria Gorreti Katende	Mpigi	2001	High	Not public	Property
26	Kasese High School	Kasese	2000	High	Not public	Property
27	Sir Apollo Kagwa Primary School	Kampala	2000	High	Not public	Property
28	Khadija Secondary. Sch.	Luwero	2000	High	Not public	Property
29	Makerere University	Kampala	2007	High	Not public	Property

Besides, arson statistics in the United States are collected by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The NFPA definition, however, focuses on structure fires only and combines both established arsons and suspicious structure fires in compiling their statistics (Douglas, Burgees, Burgess, & Ressler, 1992). On the other hand, the FBI statistics, as reported in the UCR, exclude fires of suspicious or unknown origins. Still, the statistics reported by the NFPA are similar to the UCR data. According to the NFPA, arson is responsible for about 14 percent of all structure fires. The UCR reports that while about one-half of the arson fires are directed at structures (mostly residential), another 29 percent involve mobile property, such as motor vehicles or trailers (FBI, 1997).

It should be noted however that arson is difficult to prove or identify because the evidence is often destroyed in the fire (Bartol (1999). Even with evidence that the fire was set, the motive is often unknown (Bartol (1999). The annual clearance rate for arson averages about 15 percent (Douglas et al., 1992; FBI, 1997). Most of the known arsonists are young (Douglas et al, 1992). About 50 percent are under the age of eighteen. However, it is generally acknowledged that only a small proportion of fires set by juveniles are ever reported, probably fewer than 10 percent (Adler et al., 1994).

Surprisingly however, over 1,000 civilians and about 120 firefighters die each year in deliberately set fires; an additional 30,000 civilians and 4,000 firefighters are injured (Brady, 1983; Carter, 1980).

Motives and causes of arson

Research indicates that there appears to be a wide variety of motives for arson. In an effort to systematize the reasons, Boudreau and other experts in the field (Boudreau, Kwan, Faragher, & Denault, 1977) list six primary motives for arson and estimate their relative frequencies.

Revenge, Spite, or Jealousy Arsonists in this category include jilted lovers, feuding neighbours, disenchanted employees, and people who want to get back at someone they believe cheated or abused them. Alcohol and/or drugs are often associated with this motive.

Vandalism or Malicious Mischief Fires set to challenge authority or to relieve boredom are by far the most common of those set by juveniles.

Crime Concealment or Diversionary Tactics At least 7 to 9 percent of convicted arsonists are believed to be trying to obliterate evidence of burglaries, larcenies, and murders (Robbins & Robbins, 1964; Inciardi, 1970). The offender in this category expects that the fire will destroy any evidence that a crime was committed. Usually the fire is set near the object or incident the offender wishes to conceal. In some cases and especially in developed countries, the fire setter may try to cover his or her suicide for insurance purposes. Some especially in developing countries arsonists try to destroy records that may link them to embezzlement or other occupational crime. Arson has also been used to divert attention while the offender burglarizes another building or residence.

Profit, Insurance Fraud This is the category most likely to attract professional or semiprofessional arsonists, who generally escape detection. Consequently, there are few hard data and few statistics to support this motive. However, since the profits gained from arson of this type are so large and the probability of detection so small, actual incidence is believed to be much higher than reported statistically. The property may be residential property, businesses, or

modes of transportation (vehicles, boats, planes). According to Douglas et al. (1992), this type of arson usually has two offenders: the primary offender who is the dominant personality in the offense, and the secondary offender who is the “torch for hire”. The torch for hire is usually male, twenty-five to forty year of age, and unemployed. The torch is likely to have a prior arrest record for a variety of offenses, including burglary, assault, and public intoxication.

Intimidation, Extortion, Terrorism, Sabotage This category refers to fires set for the purpose of frightening or deterring. Examples are fires set by striking workers or employees to intimidate management or by extortionists to show that they mean business! Another example is the destruction of abortion clinics, presumably set by antiabortionists wishing to intimidate. By most accounts, arson with this motive is extremely rare. Douglas et al. (1992) refer to this group as extremist-motivated arsonists who are committed to further a social, political, or religious case.

Pyromania and Other Psychological Motives Pyromania is a psychiatric term for an “irresistible urge” or passion to set fires along with an intense fascination with flames. Before setting the fire, the individual is said to experience a build-up of tension; once the fire is underway, he or she experiences intense pleasure or release (DSM-IV, 1994). Although the fire-setting urge is believed to be uncontrollable, the individual often provides many clues about his or her intention before setting the fire. Pyromania is believed to be a motive in only a small percentage of all arsons. The research below provides more details and illustrates how some crimes lend themselves well the psychoanalytical interpretation.

The first one is that of Douglas et al. (1992) who suggests an additional category that is close to the pyromania classification that is the : **excitement-motivated (E-M) arson**. Excitement-motivated arsonists set fires because they crave stimulation that is satisfied by fire setting and by watching all the excitement that accompanies the fighting of the fire. The offender often selects a location that offers a good vantage point from which to safely observe the firefighting and investigation. Sometimes he mingles with the crowd watching the fire, primarily to hear comments and see the excitement of the crowd. This E-M arsonist is usually a juvenile or young adult, usually unemployed and living with his (or her) parents. Generally, the E-M arsonist is socially inadequate and has poor interpersonal skills.

In a comprehensive study of 1,016 juveniles and adults arrested for arson and fire-related crimes, Icove and Estep (1987) report that vandalism is the most frequently identified motive, accounting for 49 percent of the arsons in the sample. The second most frequent motive was excitement (25 percent), followed by revenge (14 percent), crime concealment (2 percent), profit (1 percent), and other or unspecified motive (8 percent). Research (e.g., Robbins & Robbins, 1964) has consistently shown that most fires set by juveniles appear to be motivated by wishes to get back at authority or gain status, or prompted by a dare or need for excitement. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Icove-Estep investigation revealed that a vast majority (96 percent) of vandalism fires were set by juveniles, who often set the fire within one mile from their homes and were accompanied by one or more individuals. About half of these juvenile offenders remained at the scene. Excitement-motive fires (69 percent) also tended to be set by juveniles, who also tended to live within one mile of the crime scene, but who preferred to set the blaze alone.

One the other hand, revenge fires tended to be set by adults (81 percent), who tended to be single males and who used alcohol, drugs, or both prior to or during the offense. Earlier research (Robbins & Robbins, 1964; Inciardi, 1970) also concluded that revenge was almost exclusively an adult crime. According to Icov and Estep, approximately two-thirds of revenge fire setters have a prior arrest record. Crime concealment fires were also most likely set by adults (72 percent), who were predominately single, male, low income, and who also used alcohol and/or drugs prior to or during the offense. Virtually all the concealment fire setters had prior arrest records. Both the revenge and crime-concealment fire setters usually left the scene of the crime, usually to begin establishing an alibi. There is therefore need to investigate how some these research findings relate to the Uganda context. In other words, police reports should be made public.

Harmon, Rosner, and Wiederlight (1985) studied the psychological and demographic characteristics of twenty-seven women arsonists who were evaluated in the Forensic Psychiatric Clinics for the Criminal and Supreme Courts of New York between 1980 and 1983. Although the sample is small and restricted to a specific geographical area, the researcher found these female arsonists were somewhat older (mid-thirties), African American, and with a history of alcohol and drug abuse. Generally, the group was uneducated, unmarried, and relying on public assistance for support. Most often, their motivation was revenge, a consistent finding also reported by Icov and Estep for female arsonists. In their revenge, the women tended to act impulsively, responding to a perceived wrong committed against them or a perceived threat to their persons. In their haste, they use whatever flammable material was handy to set the fire. Generally, they set fires to places they lived in-apartments or common, public spaces of their buildings.

PYROMANIA

According to the DSM-IV, pyromania is “the presence of multiple episodes of deliberate and purposeful fire setting” (pg.614). Moreover, it is characterized by high levels of tension or emotional arousal before the act, and there is relief or reduction of this tension when setting fires, or when observing or participating in their aftermath. Pyromaniacs are believed to be regular spectators at fires in their neighbourhoods and communities. They are also believed to set off false alarms and to show unusual interest in firefighting paraphernalia.

Pyromania was coined in the early nineteenth century to refer to a form of “insanity” identified by the impulse to set fires without apparent motive (Schmideberg, 1953). It is reported by this researcher that in the mid-1800s, clinicians suggested that there was a relationship between fire setting and sexual disturbances, and psychoanalytic and psychiatric literature in particular continued to promote that link. For instance, Gold (1962, p.416) contends that the roots of arson are “deep within the personality and have some relationship to sexual disturbance and urinary malfunction” Abrahmsen (1960, p.120) wrote: “**Firesetting is a substitute** for a sexual thrill, and the devastating and destructive powers of fire reflect the intensity of the pyromaniac’s sexual desires, as well as his sadism.”

Orthodox psychoanalytic thinking draws a connection between pleasurable urination (urethral eroticism) and firesetting. Fenichel (1945, p.371) long ago concluded that: “Regularly deep-

seated relationship to urethral eroticism is to be found In the same way that there are coprophilic perversions based on urethral eroticism, perversions may also be developed based on the derivative or urethral eroticism, pleasure in fire.” This theory is based in part on the presumption that many firesetters are or have been enuretic that is bedwetters (Halleck, 1967). The theory does not suggest that enuretic people are likely to be firesetters, only that firesetters have more than their share of bed wetting behaviour. Whether this relationship actually exists in a country like Uganda is still very unclear from the available research.

The relationship between sexual arousal and firesetting is plausible, since, through the process of classical conditioning, virtually any object or event can become associated with sexual arousal and gratification. The fact that some arsonists have fetishes or records of previous arrest for sexual offense (MacDonald, 1977) lends some support to this possibility. Individuals who are sexually aroused by fire may, in general, be highly conditionable introverts. We may also expect them to be sexually, socially, and vocationally inadequate (as noted by Levin, 1976). Firesetting could be a way of feeling significant and resolving conflicts.

While some firesetters may obtain sexual arousal and gratification from fire, there is very little evidence that many do. In an extensive analysis of sixty-eight convicted arsonists imprisoned in Florida, South Carolina, and North Carolina, sexual “abnormality” was no more in evidence than it was in a comparable group of controls (nonarsonist offenders) (Wolford, 1972). Nor is there much evidence for the diagnostic label “pyromaniac” as reported by Koson and Dvoskin (1982) were unable to find any arsonists in their sample that met the DSM-III criteria of pyromania. More specifically, even though 38 percent of the sample were repetitive arsonists, none qualified as exhibiting a recurrent failure to resist impulses to set fires compounded by an intense fascination with firesetting and seeing the fires burn.

In their investigation of 1,016 offenders of arson and fire-related crimes in the Prince George’s County area of Maryland, Icove and Estep (1987) reported only two offenders who may have qualified as pyromaniacs. In Canada, Bradford (1982) found only one individual out of thirty-four repetitive arsonists who could even remotely qualify as a pyromaniac, and Hill and colleagues (Hill, Langevin, Paitich, Handy, Russon, & Wilkinson, 1982), in another Canadian sample of thirty-eight arsonists, found none. Yesavage and associates (Yesavage, Benezech, Ceccaldi, Bourgeois, & Addad, 1983) also found no indications that fifty French arsonists were attracted to fire for sexual reasons. Similar findings have been reported for child firesetters (Kuhnley, Hendren, & Quinlan, 1982; Stewart & Culver, 1982).

REPETITIVE AND PERSISTENT ARSONISTS

Research on repetitive or serial arsonists is beginning to identify some common features. A repetitive or serial arsonist is one who sets three or more separate fires. The time between the firesetting episodes may be days, weeks, or even years. Douglas and colleagues (1992) suggest that a distinction also be made between spree arsonists and mass arsonists. A **spree arsonist** sets fires at three or more separate locations with no emotional “cooling-off” period between them. The **mass arsonist**, on the other hand, sets three or more fires at the same location within a limited period of time. For example, a mass arsonist may set fires to several floors of the same apartment building, simultaneously or within minutes of each other. The most frightening of these repetitive arsonists is the one who randomly selects structures for revenge, excitement, or

political (or religious) ideology. An entire community may sleep in fear until the offender either stops or is detected.

The most consistent research finding on the psychology of adult repetitive arsonists is that they, as a group, experience and perceive little control over their environment or personal lives. They are usually from a socially disadvantaged segment of the population (Jackson, Glass, & Hope, 1987). Their plight is usually compounded by an assortment of physical, mental, and psychological handicaps (Koson & Dvoskin, 1982). Compared to other criminal groups, their intellectual level (IQ scores) and educational attainment are low (Wolford, 1972; Lewis & Yarnell, 1951). They also lack social or interpersonal skills for dealing with their social environment, and consequently often lack self-esteem (Hurley & Monahan, 1969; Vreeland & Levin, 1980).

Nearly all children who set fires beyond the normal fascination stage tend to have poor relationship with their parents and were also victims of physical and emotional abuse (Jackson, Glass, & Hope, 1987). Depression is commonly reported in other studies, and sometime the offenders display serious suicide inclinations (Jackson, Glass, & Hope, 1987).

Therefore, the overall picture of the adult serial arsonist is one of inadequacy, frequent failure, social passivity, and social isolation. Adult arsonists who began setting fires as children tend to be unassertive, have limited interpersonal skills, be underemployed or unemployed, and be prone toward depression and feelings of helplessness (Murphy & Clare, 1996). Theoretically, repetitive fire setting may be motivated by an attempt to gain some control over his or her life and some social recognition. For example, the firesetting seems to be precipitated by events that exacerbate the arsonist's feelings of low self-esteem, sadness, and depression (Bumpass, Fagelman, & Bix, 1983). In addition, following a firesetting, many arsonists stay at the scene of the fire, often sound the alarm, and even help fight the fire. In some cases they take heroic action to save lives. The recognition they receive for these actions probably enhances their self-esteem and instills a sense of control in their lives!

Jackson, Glass, and Hope (1987) also noted that most of firesetting by repetitive arsonists progress from small fires to large fires, and the arsonists also become increasingly involved in fighting the fire. Furthermore, repetitive arsonists set fires alone and in secret, with virtually no one aware of their actions until caught. If caught, their history of firesetting presents an additional opportunity for them to gain attention and recognition from others.

What are the etiological factors in repetitive firesetting? Fascination and experimentation with fire appear to be a common feature of normal child development. Kafrey (1980) discovered that interest and fascination with fire appear to be nearly universal in children between five and seven years old. Furthermore, it is reported that this fascination with fire begins early, with about one in five children setting fires before the age of three. Firesetting behaviour appears to decline after age seven, probably due to frequent admonishments of its dangers from parents and other adults. Those children who continue to set fires tend to be more mischievous, energetic, adventurous, and impulsive than their peers. Persistent firesetters are more likely to demonstrate symptoms of ADHD during childhood (Forehand et al., 1991), and many were regarded as “**conduct problems**” by their teachers. Not surprisingly, most persistent firesetters are male (about 80 percent). Kafrey (1980) refers to these behavioral patterns as the “rascality pattern.” The

rascality pattern has also been noted by Kuhnley, Hendren, and Quinlan (1982), Stewart and Culver (1982), and Kolko, Kazdin, and Meyer (1985).

The frequent observation that youthful firesetters are conduct problems, impulsive, more hyperactive, and even more aggressive than their peers appears to be in sharp contrast to the behaviour of repetitive adult firesetters, described above. It has been documented that aggressive, acting-out, and hyperactive children are often unpopular with peers (Hartup, 1983; Maccoby, 1986), and demonstrate poor interpersonal and social skills for dealing with others. Patterson (1982) writes that impulsive, hyperactive children with a low frustration tolerance and inadequate social skills tend to be social isolates. Moreover, other research (e.g., Caspi, Elder, & Bem, 1987) indicates that ill-tempered children have considerable personal, marital, social and financial failure throughout their lifetime, a pattern very similar to repetitive arsonists. In addition both the frequent childhood firesetters and repetitive adults arsonist exhibit a continual battle against the social environment as demonstrated by frequent contacts with criminal justice agencies. In their conclusion on child and adult firesetting, Vreeland and Levin (1980, p.44) wrote:

The picture turns to be one of an individual with several maladaptive behaviour patterns, of which firesetting is one. We have identified social ineffectiveness as a common factor in the general tendency of firesetters to have drinking problems, marital, occupational and sexual problems, and to exhibit a variety of other criminal and antisocial behaviours.

Thus, Uganda managers should note that firesetting may be just one component in the constellation of maladaptive behaviours displayed by these individuals. Firesetting may be among these behaviours because of previous experiences with fire. Ritvo, Shanok, & Lewis (1983) found that a surprisingly large number of firesetters had been burned and maltreated with fire as children. They describe how one frequent firesetter during his early childhood had his feet severely burned by his father as a punishment for lighting fires. Another boy had been beaten on his buttocks with a hot spatula by his father. Still another had his hands held over a lighted stove burner by mother until burned for lighting fires. Ritvo, Shanok, and Lewis (1983, p.266) speculate that these punishments may have “conveyed the message that the use of fire was an acceptable mode of retaliation.

This literature has therefore indicated that repetitive or serial arsonists set fires primarily for psychological and social gain. This focus is not to imply that a majority of arson fires are set by these individuals. Obviously, arson is committed for a variety of reasons by a variety of offenders, although much of it is probably committed for monetary gain. Having analyzed this researched information, there is need to contribute towards the strategic decisions to mitigate arson in education institutions. This attempt is made in the next section.’

Reported Measures in Uganda

In the Daily Monitor of 16th April, 2008, Ssenkibirwa provided what he described as expert opinion on how to avert reoccurrence of such fatal fire mishaps at public buildings. Ssenkibirwa’s expert opinion have been supplemented by this investigation and summarized in the table below:

Table 2: Preventive Measures for Fire

No.	Measure	Because in doing so
1.	Electrical wiring on all public buildings should be conveyed through steel conduits. Dormitories in particular should not have power sockets.	You avoid cooking and ironing etc. in dormitories
2.	Every public building should have automatic circuit breakers to half fire spread in case of short circuits or overloads.	You correct mistakes of overload and avoid fire spread just in time.
3.	Adequate number of portable fire extinguishers ought to be provided in every building and the gadgets should be fixed on walls where they are easily accessible. Potential users need to be given drills on basic operation techniques.	You instantly engage fire as fire fighters in the country are informed promptly.
4.	There should be warning bells/sirens to raise alerts in case of a fire outbreak. Such installations could be inform of break-glass-and-press design or centrally located and pressed when there is danger.	You enable pupils/students assemble in a fire free zone at once and counsel them to leave their property and save life or prepare for further escape.
5.	The alarm should be loud enough to be heard across the entire premises.	You even wake up those in deep sleep at once.
6.	There must be simple fire safety and prevention notices displayed conspicuously and drafted in clear understandable text or other illustrations.	You provide meaningful information or knowledge for future action.
7.	In case of fire outbreak, there must be a designated assembly point where all persons who have evacuated the buildings must assemble for head count and instructions on further escape or firefight. And a fire action plan, containing the evacuation procedure and steps to be taken must be clearly spelt out and prominently displayed.	You cross check records and you are able to help those trapped immediately.
8.	Manager of public buildings must secure all round fencing to avert intrusion by trespassers to stem arson.	You effectively avoid foreign faces to come inside the school premises without permission.
9.	At least two fire/water hydrants with adequately pressurized water supply complete with accessories such as stand and branch pipes for use during a fire fighting operation are essential.	You respond and prevent the spread of fire.
10.	Fire officers and line ministries must carry out periodic fire safety and prevention inspection at least once each year to ensure compliance with the set standards.	You monitor standards for prevention and control.
11.	Lighting where pupil/students reside or dormitories must be enough and standardized	You avoid pupil/student temptations of using other methods to get light.
12.	UMEME or electricity suppliers must be sensitive to student hostels/dormitories or schools in general	You enhance the security of the pupils/students and also contribute towards their academic performance in general..

The implication of table 2 to both the Ministry of Education and Institutional Managers is that we urgently need to operationalise the above preventive measures to develop a policy for arson prevention in education institutions.

Strategic Implications for Arson Prevention in Education Institutions in Uganda

Team Building by Head Teachers

This should be used as a major technique to develop effective work groups throughout the school. These work groups for example focus on reporting any indications of foreign equipment within the vicinity of the school. The head teacher should build teams in the areas of communication, role clarification, and interpersonal relations. There should be interpersonal support and trust among the school functional groups. The simple slogan should be **Together Each of us will Achieve More = TEAM**. Emphasize mutual interest and be honest in expressing needs, preferences and constraints.

Construction or Availability of Water Tanks

These tanks are needed in all areas especially near the dormitories. If possible, some water tanks should be reserved for fire fighting emergencies only. Keys for emergencies such as these should be kept at known points.

Doors and Escape Routes

Most of the dormitories or students hostels have less than two doors. This is unacceptable! There should be a maximum of three with very specific fire emergency doors indicated “exit door”. This should also depend on the number of pupils or students a hostel or dormitory is accommodating.

The Availability of a Bell

There should be a specific bell for the alert. This bell should be rang only at specific times and all pupils or students need be trained to respond to this bell and assemble in a specific area. Its sound should obviously be unique. Sensitivity training of this kind will keep the students aware of any problems in the school by responding to the bell.

Social Density Policy

The Ministry of Education should specify the social density. This is the number of people in an area divided by the number of square feet in the area. Students need freedom from external observation or privacy but this privacy should not be confused with freedom to escape at their own will or allowing intruders in the school. In short, a manageable number should be allowed to accommodate a particular dormitory or hostel room.

Fire Extinguishers

This need be secured, and students or pupils should be given clear demonstration/lessons of how to use them. The number should also depend on the size of the building in question or school in general.

The School Fence and Security Guards

An excellent school is one with mentally, physically and emotionally alert guards and a sound fence system. The fence is useless without faces to keep it and these faces must be **vigilant, involved, value** student or community life and property, **interested** and **devoted** in their work. The simple formula for this is VIVID.

Qualified Wardens and Matrons

The challenge to head teachers in Uganda at present is to get qualified wardens or matrons and this is not definitely in terms of academic qualifications alone. This is far from it. A qualified warden or matron is that person who is willing and able to be a mother/father of many beyond material gains. They work with increased openness, greater concern for others, increased tolerance and understanding for individuals problems, greater listening with no ethnical, tribal or religious prejudice. In short, they are reflectors. They like to stand back and ponder experiences, and observe them from many different perspectives. They collect information both at first hand and from others. Their days are filled with activity. They tend to thrive on the challenge. They can easily be also generous people constantly involving themselves with others, but, in doing so, they seek to centre all activities in the dormitory/hostel around themselves for easy monitoring. Detailed specific job abilities are indicated in table 3.

Frequent Inspection before preps and after, etc.

There is need for the matron/warden to allocate an equal amount of time to inspection. This will require them to get to know whether there are stubborn characters who have candles, hot plates and match boxes that are supposed to be prohibited long before. This requires that the matron/warden is essentially practical, a down to earth person who does not take anything for granted. The philosophy here is “there is presently nobody to trust in terms of daily inspection of the hostel than myself”.

Proper Wiring

It is expected that the wiring is proper and cannot easily be manipulated by anybody. The electrical wires need be invisible in all ways so that students or pupils are not tempted to tap them.

Government Policy to Facilitate the Ministry of Education

In the government policy to facilitate the Ministry of Education, there is need to compel UMEME or electricity bodies to make sure that all schools, hospitals, etc. have electricity at almost all times. It was, for example, useless for this body to rush to Budo and fix lines after this memorable tragedy as was reported. UMEME should serve schools and other sensitive places using the “**just in time**” management concept and not “**fix it just in case**” they start complaining.

Conflict Management

Conflicts within and among students/pupils or among staff should be handled swiftly by the immediate supervisors. There is need for pro active leadership. Leaders both at the Ministry and school level should take a lead in dealing with emerging issues and should never wait for only legislation in order to act. For example head teachers need not think that the schools they head belong to them until they are tired of leading them. The Ministry should have a Discipline and Grievance Committee within its quality inspection department.

Lead by Example

Education managers should adhere to an old saying that action speak louder than words. One way a leader can influence subordinate commitment is by setting an example of exemplary

behaviour in day to day interaction with others. Leading by example is some times called role modeling. A head teacher who asks teachers or the matron to observe a particular standard should also observe the same standard. For example “teachers should always be available.” This value espoused by the head teacher should be demonstrated in the head teacher daily behaviour and this must be done consistently, not just when it is convenient. This is the main reason why head teachers are supposed to reside within the school. Remember that goodness is the only investment that never fails

Inspect the Schools and Nurture them

It is said that the only thing that lazy people do fast is to get tired. School inspectors should not get tired. The Ministry of Education should therefore inspect the schools and the policy should be to assist them to put up these facilities. They are expensive but schools cannot afford to neglect them. In this way, the government should assist schools to acquire them.

Verify and Maintain Records

There is need for an up to date record keeping by the warden or matrons. The head teachers should make sure that pupils/students who are sick and therefore stay in hostels are recorded. Those who are given permission to go home are also known. Those in prep are recorded, etc. This definitely cannot be done by any acquired relative, appointed as a matron or warden, but by someone with specific competencies.

Therefore the seriousness with which the Ministry of Education can come up with a good policy for the management of fires will largely depend on the level of proficiency and endouring capability of the appointed matron or warden leave alone the head teacher. Thus, in order to select such a person we need to consider some aspects of the required abilities among others. In other words, in addition to the level of education attained there is need to focus on the suggested job abilities in table 3.

Table 3 Job abilities required of a Warden or Matron

1. Ability to reside within the facility and always with the pupil/student.	19. Has absolute dedication to do the right things.
2. Ready to perform job beyond normal duty.	20. Maintains effective relationship with others.
3. Soft spoken and courtly.	21. Interacts patiently and tactfully with others.
4. Personal/accountability.	22. Solicits actively and takes sound advice from others.
5. Integrity and openness.	23. Provide pupil/student with value added services.
6. Ability to prepare student records and take roll call anytime.	24. Seek pupil/student feedback enthusiastically.
7. Manage discipline of learners within the facility.	25. Provides timely and appropriate assistance to pupils/students.
8. Maintain and keep records of student numbers up to date.	26. Understands clearly the desired results.
9. Safe guards school or university reputation by taking positive action.	27. Closely monitor student/pupil activities.
10. Participates in civic activities.	28. Exhibits high degree of understanding of standards, rules and school procedures.
11. Achieves high quality work continuously and consistently.	29. Achieves meticulous work output consistently.
12. Distributes ideas and information promptly to relevant authorities.	30. Exhibits high degree of understanding.
13. Discuss important information with relevant authorities.	31. Demonstrates time consciousness by strictly observing school schedules.
14. Provides timely goal-oriented feedback to head teachers, etc.	32. Is clearly aware of school schedules and inspires confidence in pupils.
	33. Commands strong respect and support from parents and others.
	34. Can easily recall student/pupil names even when under stress.

15. Has a strong ego drive for student security.	35. Has parental courage, initiative and perseverance in action.
16. Possesses strong qualities of listening, commitment and sensitivity even at night.	36. Ability to observe, gather, select and evaluate facts.
17. Is a team participant.	
18. Utilizes hostel resources efficiently and effectively.	

In conclusion this article contributes to the understanding of the prevalence and existence of the crime of arson. It is documented here that arson is not a new crime and therefore it is the stakeholders in Uganda who are indeed late in coming up with pragmatic measures to stamp out this vice from our society so as to reduce the volume of tears in our country. In appointing a matron or warden there should be job qualities put into consideration. The Ministry should also make sure that each school has a fire policy and student/pupil are trained on how to respond and fight fires by professionals fire experts in this area. In other words universities are at present challenged to develop a full course so as to come out with professionally trained wardens/matron and even nurses working in the school setting.

References

- Abrahamsen, D. (1960). *The psychology of crime*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Adler, R., Nunn, R., Northam, E., Lebnan, V., & Ross, R. (1994). Secondary pre-vention of childhood firesetting. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 33, 1194-1202.
- Bartol R. Curt (1999). *Criminal Behaviour. A psychological Approach*. Prentice Hall.
- Boudreau, J., Kwan, Q., Faragher, W., & Denault, G. (1977). *Arson and arson investigation*. Washington, DC: USGPO.
- Brady, J. (1983). Arson, urban economy, and organized crime: The case of Boston. *Social Problems*, 31, 1-27.
- Bumpass, E.R., Fagelman, F.D., & Birx, R.J. (1983). Intervention with children who set fires. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 37, 328-345.
- Carter, R. (1980). Arson and arson investigation in the United States. *Fire Journal*, 74, 40-47.
- Caspi, A., Elder, G.H., & Bem, D.J. (1987). Moving against the world: Life course patterns of explosive children. *Developmental Psychology*, 23, 308-313.
- Douglas, J.E., Burgess, A.W., Burgess, A.G., & Ressler, R.K. (1992). *Crime classification manual*. New York: Lexington Books.
- Douglas, J.E., & Munn, C. (1992a). The detection of staging and personation at the crime scene. In J.E. Douglas, A.W. Burgess, A.G. Burgess, & R.K. Ressler (Eds.), *Crime classification manual*. New York: Lexington Books.
- DSM-IV. (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (4th edition). Washington, DC American Psychiatric Association.
- Forehand, R., Wierson, M., Frame, C.L., Kemptom, T., & Armistead, L. (1991). Juvenile firesetting: A unique syndrome or an advanced level of antisocial behavior? *Behavioral Research and Therapy*, 29, 125-128.

- Gold, L. H. (1962). Psychiatric profile of the firesetter. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 7, 404-417.
- Halleck, S.L. (1967). *Psychiatry and the dilemmas of crime*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Harmon, R.B., Rosner, R., & Wiederlight, M. (1985). Women and arson: A demographic study. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 10, 467-477.
- Hartup, W.W. (1983). Peer relations. In P.H. Mussen (Ed.), *Manual of child psychology*. New York: Wiley.
- Hill, R.W., Langevin, R., Paitich, D., Handy, L., Russon, A., & Wilkinson, L. (1982). Is arson an aggressive act or a property offense? *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 27, 648-654.
- Hurley, W., & Monahan, T.M. (1969). Arson: The criminal and the crime. *British Journal of Criminology*, 9, 4-21.
- Icove, D.J., & Estep, M.H. (1987), April). Motive-based offender profiles of arson and fire-related crime. *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, pp.17-23.
- Inciardi, J.A. (1970), The adult firesetter, a typology: *Criminology*, 3, 145-155.
- Jackson, H.F., Glass, C., & Hope, S. (1987). A functional analysis of recidivistic arson. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 26, 175-185.
- Kafrey, D. (1980). Playing with matches: Children and fire. In D. Canter (Ed.), *Fires and human behaviour*. Chichester, Eng: Wiley.
- Kigundu (2008) in the Weekly Observer, Weekly Newspaper 15th May, 2008.
- Kolko, D.J., Kazdin, A.E., & Meyer, E.C. (1985). Aggressive and psychopathology in childhood firesetters: Parent and child reports. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 53, 377-385.
- Koson, D.F., & Dvoskin, J. (1982). Arson: A diagnostic study. *Bulletin of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*, 10, 39-49.
- Kuhnley, E.J., Hendren, R. L., & Quinland, D.M. (1982). *Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry*, 21, 560-563.
- Levin, B. (1976). Psychological characteristics of firesetters. *Fire Journal*, 70, 36-41.
- Lewis, N.D., & Yarnell, H. (1951). Pathological firesetting (pyromania). *Nervous and Mental Disease Monographs*, No. 82.
- Maccoby, E.E. (1986). Social groupings in childhood. In D. Olweus, J. Block, & M. Radke-Yarrow (Eds.), *Development of antisocial and prosocial behaviour: Research, theories, and issues*. New York: Academic Press.
- MacDonald, J.M. (1977). *Bombers and firesetters*. Springfield, IL: C.C. Thomas.
- Murphy, G.H., & Clare, C.H. (1996). Analysis of motivation in people with mild learning disabilities (mental handicap) who set fires. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 2, 153-164.
- Patterson, G.R. (1982). *Coercive family processes*. Eugene, OR: Castalia Press.
- Patterson, G.R. (1986). Performance models for antisocial boys. *American Psychologist*, 41, 432-444.

President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni in the Daily Monitor, 1st April, 2008.

Ritvo, E., Shanok, S.S., & Lewis, D.O. (1983). Firesetting and nonfiresetting delinquents. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development*, 13, 259-267.

Robbins, E., & Robbins, L. (1964). Arson with special reference to pyromania. *New York State Journal of Medicine*, 2, 795-798.

Schmideberg, M. (1953). Pathological firesetters. *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science*, 44, 30-39.

Ssenkibirwa (2008) in the Daily Monitor Newspaper 16th April, 2008.

Stewart, M. A., & Culver, K.W. (1982). Children who set fires: The clinical picture and a follow-up. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 140, 357-363.

Tappan, P.W. (1947). Who is the criminal? *American Sociological Review*, 12, 100-110.

Tappan, P.W. (1949). *Juvenile delinquency*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

The DailyMonitor Newspaper 17th April, 2008.

Vreeland, R.G., & Levin, B.M. (1980), Psychological aspects of firesetting. In D. Canter (Ed.), *Fires and human behaviour*. Chichester, Eng. Wiley.

Wolford, M.R. (1972). Some attitudinal, psychological and sociological characteristics of incarcerated arsonists. *Fire and Arson Investigator*, 16, 8-13.

Yesavage, J.A., Benezech m., Ceccaldi, P., Bourgeois, M., & Addad, M. (1983). Arson in mentally ill and criminal populations. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 44, 128-130.