

## **Discipline Management Practices and Students' Discipline: A Case of Private Secondary Schools in Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District, Uganda**

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### **Abstract**

*The centrality of student discipline and its management in the success of educational processes cannot be over emphasised. Although various student discipline managements practices have been employed world over, including Uganda, related studies have mostly overlooked student leaders' perspectives in favour of those of administrators and teachers. This study, which involved student leaders in addition to teachers, examined the relationship between student discipline management practices and student discipline at private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District, Uganda. A focus group discussion guide and a closed-ended questionnaire, respectively, were utilised to gather data from a sample of 113 teachers and 46 student leaders, randomly chosen from 4 private secondary schools. Using census inquiry, discipline management teachers from the four schools were interviewed. A sequential explanatory study design using a mixed-methods paradigm was employed. Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis was performed to examine the hypotheses. Qualitative data were examined using content analysis. The findings revealed a statistically significant association between: guidance and counselling and student discipline ( $r = 0.539, p = 0.006$ ), parental involvement and student discipline ( $r = 0.499, p = 0.009$ ), and the administration of punishments and student discipline ( $r = 0.381, p = 0.003$ ). Similar findings emerged from the qualitative findings. They demonstrated that in the schools under study, student discipline management practices support student discipline. The study offers managers of private secondary schools advice to: implement a systematic strategy to involve parents in the management of the critical transition of adolescents from childhood to adulthood; encourage deterrent punishments with a positive behavioural impact; and to set up regular refresher programmes to retool teachers in contemporary ways of guidance and counselling.*

*Keywords:* administration of punishments, discipline, guidance and counselling, students' discipline, parental involvement

A fundamental necessity for effective teaching and learning in schools is student discipline. As a result, educational managers all around the world are deeply concerned about it (Onyango et al., 2018). According to Ali et al. (2014), discipline is control achieved by enforcing compliance with predetermined rules or behaviour, rapid and voluntary compliance with superiors' orders; and methodical, willing, and orderly conduct. Khatun et al. (2018) defined discipline as an action that deals with the repression and prevention of undesirable actions. Based on the foregoing, the current study defined discipline as the suppression of undesirable behaviour and the encouragement and maintenance of positive behaviours. According to Weli and Nnaa (2020), student discipline is a continuous process that helps an individual student or group of students to systematically develop their religious potential by internalising the values of the society / community / school into their personalities so that they can live ethically. The procedures used in schools to control students' behaviour are referred to as student discipline management practices. In accordance with Ofoyuru and Too-Okema (2011), student discipline management practices in this study were defined as techniques for controlling students in order to encourage and maintain acceptable conduct on the one hand and to stop bad conduct in regards to set rules and expected norms in a school on the other.

Through extensive prevention, focused intervention, and the promotion of self-discipline, student discipline management serves the needs of the entire school, each particular classroom, and each individual student (Patel, 2021). It fosters a positive perception of the school, gets students ready for the future, and establishes a calm environment where meaningful learning may occur and excellent morals, social skills, and attitudes can be instilled (Onderi & Odera, 2012). Since it is now essential in all spheres of life, especially teaching and learning, student discipline management is a key component of school administration (Mutu, 2015).

The challenge of managing student discipline is real. For instance, in the US, recognizing the increasing difficult challenge facing school administrators, courts granted them wide discretion in school disciplinary matters (Russo et al., 2015). In Australia, China and Israel, managing student discipline ranked the second most significant factor stressing teachers (Lewis et al., 2005). In Kenya, discipline problems in high schools today are more compelling like presence of drugs, gangs, and threats of assault, robbery, theft, vandalism, and rape. In 2012, Karanja and Bowen (2012) posited that learning institutions in Kenya were plagued with cases of student unrest and indiscipline. The situation is not any better in Uganda. According to Hassan (2021) many students in Uganda's education institutions continue to exhibit indiscipline in form of strikes, destruction of property, theft, use of foul language, disrespect to staff, and gangsterism, among others. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2022, students of Lubiri High School that is located in Mengo, a Kampala City suburb were apparently filmed having sex on bus. Interestingly, all schools have in place student discipline management practices and strategies. Against this backdrop, we examined the

relationship between student discipline management practices and students' discipline in private secondary schools in Uganda. We were inspired by concerns raised in reports and studies that despite the implementation of different student discipline management practices, students' discipline in some schools in Uganda and Wakiso District in particular leaves a lot to be desired.

### **Statement of the Problem**

As students from various socioeconomic backgrounds interact in the school environment, it becomes more important to establish and put into practice effective student discipline management practices. This is so that order, discipline, and a positive learning environment may be created and maintained, which in turn leads to effective implementation of such practices (Blandford, 1998). Due to the frequent student unrest, there have been more calls in recent years for secondary schools in Uganda to regulate student discipline better (Hassan, 2019). According to Muhangi (2017), student unrest has become a serious issue in schools, and indiscipline in its many forms dominates many secondary schools in Uganda. Sekiwu and Naluwemba (2014) claim that it has become increasingly difficult for Ugandan instructors to impose discipline, especially since the Ugandan government, after passing the Children's Act, banned corporal punishment in 1997.

The above indicators, among others, are a manifestation of the prevalence of student indiscipline in many Ugandan secondary schools, despite the introduction of alternative student discipline management practices and programmes such as guidance and counselling, parental involvement, intervention programs and strategies for changing student behavior, and the administration of legally admissible punishments. No wonder, the 2019 Kasangati Town Council Inspector of Schools' Report found that despite the use of a variety of discipline management techniques and strategies, incidents of drug use, sex relationships, and fighting among students during interschool sporting events were on the rise and more common in the region's private secondary schools. Negative consequences like teacher stress and attrition, strained relationships between teachers and their students, destruction of both personal and institutional property, school dropouts, and subpar academic performance of the students are likely to continue if nothing is done to change this situation. In light of this, the study set out to determine the relationship between the existing student discipline management practices and private secondary school students discipline in Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District, Uganda.

### **The Study's Objectives and Hypotheses**

The study aimed to look into the relationship between student discipline management practices and student behaviour in private secondary schools in the Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District. This was accomplished precisely by examining the relationship between the practices of (i) guidance and counselling, (ii) parental participation, and (iii) administration of punishments; and student discipline. Therefore, the study tested whether;

- H<sub>01</sub>: Guidance and counselling has no statistically significant relationship with students' discipline in private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District.
- H<sub>02</sub>: Parental involvement has no statistically significant relationship with students' discipline in private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District.
- H<sub>03</sub>: Administration of punishments has no statistically significant relationship with students' discipline in private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Guidance and Counseling as a Student Discipline Management Practice**

It is indisputable that counselling and advice are important as a strategy for managing behaviour (Magdalene et al., 2019). All school personnel should strongly adhere to the behavioural patterns required for maximum production in order to materialise and solidify the vision and mission of the institution (Okumbe, 1998). In educational institutions around the world, guidance and counseling (GC) has been accepted as an appropriate strategy for fostering positive discipline (Magdalene et al., 2019). However, research data show worrying outcomes about the success of GC in schools. For instance, school counsellors were discovered to be regular instructors without any professional training to provide guidance and counselling in Maluwa-banda's (1997) study that examined perceptions held by Malawi's Secondary school counsellors. Related studies that focused on the African context similarly showed that while there were few instances of successful institutionalisation of GC programmes, there were significant drawbacks, including a lack of resources, inadequate training, and a lack of motivation (Egbochuku, 2008; Gudyanga et al., 2015; Mlalaziet al., 2016). Thus, gaps in the effective application of GC as a strategy to uphold student discipline in schools are confirmed by the literature. Furthermore, studies on GC's role in student discipline management in Uganda have mostly overlooked students' opinions, despite the fact that they are primary users of GC services in schools.

#### **Parental Involvement as a Student Discipline Management Practice**

Parent participation includes interactions between parents and their children as well as between parents and teachers, and to a lesser extent, between parents themselves (McNeal, 2014). Schuck, who was referenced by Thoha and Wulandari (2016) and Githu (2014) claim that parents can get involved in their children's education and discipline by: helping their children with their projects and assignments; going to schools to meet teachers; getting involved in school activities and events; helping their children choose field studies; monitoring their children's academic development by keeping an eye on their attendance; regularly meeting with the school administration to discuss discipline issues; volunteering to be students' counsellors; and reporting incidents of student indiscipline that occur outside of school to the appropriate administrative

authority. According to Shahzad et al. (2016), parental involvement is closely associated with emotional and academic involvement in the affairs of a child by parents and other family members at home. In their 2014 report, Ali et al. urged school officials to involve parents in the management of student discipline. This is because when parents are too busy to watch over their kids, the kids become morally slack, despise the authority of the school, and even disregard school rules and regulations (Ali et al., 2014).

### **Punishment Administration as a Student Discipline-management Practice**

Because a school serves to provide useful services to students, instructors, parents, and the community, punishment is seen as a constructive force that helps to preserve and bring desired law and order to the school (Onderi & Odera, 2012). According to Omari (2011), sanctions are founded on four principles: punitive, retaliatory, reformatory, and deterrent to others. When the punisher uses punishment by causing harm to wrongdoers, punishment turns into a punitive act. When punishment is used as a form of vengeance, it turns into retribution. Additionally, as it is anticipated to have corrective consequences, punishment might be viewed in terms of reformation. That is, it might make harmful behaviours less common. In addition, punishing wrongdoers can serve as a deterrent to others, preventing them from engaging in similar bad activity.

According to Mviso (2004, cited in Arigbo & Adeogun, 2018), Uganda's secondary schools use a variety of sanctions such as reprimands, mocking sarcasm, belittling, name-calling, loss of privileges, social exclusion, demoting, placing placards around the offender's neck, standing or kneeling in front of the class, exercise drills like raising arms while carrying weight, suspension and expulsion from school, corporal punishment, restitution, and detention or keeping students after school. Okesina and Famolu (2022) observed that applying such sanctions has the effect of stifling the repetition of the behaviour for which the punishments were applied. Punishments must be used carefully since, if applied incorrectly, they can lead to disorder in classrooms and property damage, which may negatively impact students' overall academic performance (Arigbo & Adeogun, 2018).

### **Methodology**

In order to measure the relationship between student discipline management practices and student discipline, generalise the findings while also gaining a thorough understanding of individual experiences with regard to student discipline management practices and student discipline in private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District, this study used a sequential explanatory research design that was rooted in a mixed-methods paradigm. As a result, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to perform the study. While the qualitative phase collected qualitative data that was utilised to corroborate the quantitative results, the quantitative phase explained the relationship between student discipline management practices and students' discipline.

From a population of 160 teachers in the 4 private secondary schools, 113 teachers were randomly selected to participate in the study using the Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) Table of Sample Size Determination. In the meantime, 46 student leaders (SLs) were selected at random from the four (4) private secondary schools. SLs were involved in the study because they enforce student punishments. Finally, one Discipline Management Teacher (DMT) was purposefully chosen from each of the four schools due to their greater participation in disciplinary management-related issues. This resulted in a sample size of 163 people being drawn from the student leaders, teachers, and DMTs in the four schools.

All teachers from the four secondary schools chosen were handed questionnaires, independent of their job situation (full- or part-time teachers). Every response to the survey was evaluated using a five-point Likert scale, where 5 stood for Strongly Agree, 4 for Agree, 3 for Not Sure, 2 for Disagree, and 1 for Strongly Disagree. Ten to twelve student leaders participated in focus group discussions and DMTs were interviewed in order to gather qualitative data that reflected their thoughts on the subject.

When the instruments' psychometric qualities were assessed, it was discovered that they were valid (CVI .90) and reliable, with Cronbach Alpha coefficients for both students' discipline and discipline management practices of .87 and .70, respectively. To calculate descriptive and inferential statistics, data were imported into the computer statistical package (SPSS 20 version), and the techniques of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation applied.

Content analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. We analysed the content in each data item and this allowed us to identify significant data out of a data corpus that was triangulated with quantitative findings. The interviews lasted between 20 to 30 minutes. For the sake of anonymity, Discipline management teachers (DMTs) that were interviewed were assigned codes as DMT1, DMT2, DMT3, and DMT4 representing schools A, B, C, and D respectively. Similarly, student leaders (SLs) that participated in the focus group discussions were coded as SL1 up to SL12 in the respective focus discussion groups 1, 2, 3, and 4 in schools A, B, C, and D respectively. Qualitative data were triangulated with the quantitative data collected. The interview tapes were transcribed, read, and reread using the MS Word programme so that we could become comfortable with the data that was utilised to evaluate and further explain the quantitative findings.

### **Results and Discussion**

The results of the study are presented, interpreted, and discussed following the objectives, after the presentation of the demographic information. Demographic information was obtained from teachers, discipline management teachers (DMTs), and student-leaders (SLs) who were engaged in this study to best link such information on matters of students' discipline management practices and students' discipline. This is presented Table 1.

Table 1  
*Demographic Characteristics of Respondents*

Characteristics	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender (Teachers, DMTs, and student leaders n=163)	Male	88	54.4
	Female	75	45.6
Academic qualification (Teachers and DMTs n=117)	Diploma	24	20.5
	Bachelor's Degree	80	68.4
Duration of service (teachers and DMTs n=117)	Master's Degree	13	11.1
	1 -5 years	30	25.6
	6 – 10 years	45	38.5
	11 – 15 years	25	21.4
Age (Teachers, DMTs, and student leaders n=163)	16 years and above	17	14.5
	15 -20 years	74	45.4
	21 – 25 years	21	12.9
	26 – 29 years	30	18.4
	30 -39 years	34	20.9
	40 years and above	4	2.4

Source: Primary Data (2023)

As per Table 1, 88 (54.4%) and 75 (45.6%) respondents were male and female respectively, with the majority being males. Cislaket et al. (2018) argue for proper participation of both genders to prevent prejudice, and this is true since institutionalized gender, gender roles, gender identity, and gender relations all affect the quality of students' discipline.

In addition, 4 (2.4%) respondents were over 40 years of age. DMTs fell under this category. A total of 74 respondents (45.4%) were between the ages of 15 and 20, 34 (20.9%) were between 30 to 39 years, and 51 (31.3%) were between 21 and 29 years of age. The age distribution of the respondents is relevant to how strictly student discipline management procedures would be applied in schools by providing counseling to students and dealing with their discipline-related issues.

It was determined that those with five years or less of service were 30 (25.6%), those with six to ten years were 45 (38.5%), those with eleven to fifteen years were 25 (21.4%), and those with sixteen years or more were 17 (14.5%). This indicates that the majority of the respondents had the longest service histories that qualified them to participate in the study. This is similar to the claim made by Ellis and Morrison (1998) that respondents' length of service in a specific job ensures their degree of comprehension of the circumstances there. There is every reason to believe that the results may be easily believed because all levels of service duration were considered in the study.

In terms of educational background, the respondents (DMTs and teachers) had 24 (20.5%) diplomas, 80 (68.3%) bachelor's degrees, and 13 (11.1%) master's degrees. This indicates that whereas the majority of the respondents held bachelor's degrees, all educational levels were represented in the study. According to the researchers, the data was representative of the respondents' diverse educational backgrounds.

### Students' Discipline in Private Secondary Schools in Kasangati Town Council

The respondents (teachers) were asked to indicate their level of agreement/disagreement with 6 statements that measured student discipline. The descriptive results are summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2

#### *Descriptive Statistics on Student Discipline*

Item on student discipline	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Students adequately observe school rules and regulations	Strongly Disagree	25	22.1
	Disagree	7	6.2
	Not Sure	21	18.6
	Agree	26	23.0
	Strongly Agree	34	30.1
		113	100
It is rare to catch students in indiscipline cases in this school	Strongly Disagree	20	17.7
	Disagree	19	16.8
	Not Sure	19	16.8
	Agree	27	23.9
	Strongly Agree	28	24.8
		113	100.0
Students in this school give a lot of respect to teachers and other staff members	Strongly Disagree	19	16.8
	Disagree	7	6.2
	Not Sure	12	10.6
	Agree	30	26.5
	Strongly Agree	45	39.8
		113	100.0
Students in this school give a lot of respect to their fellow students and student leaders	Strongly Disagree	12	10.6
	Disagree	16	14.2
	Not Sure	21	18.6
	Agree	31	27.4
	Strongly Agree	33	29.2
		113	100.0
The students in this school are decent and morally upright	Strongly Disagree	20	17.7
	Disagree	17	15
	Not Sure	12	10.6
	Agree	14	12.4
	Strongly Agree	50	44.2
		113	100.0
Students in this school are polite and always conduct themselves with a lot of courtesy	Strongly Disagree	24	21.2
	Disagree	10	8.8
	Not Sure	15	13.3
	Agree	14	12.4
	Strongly Agree	50	44.2
		113	100.0

Source: Primary data



The results in Table 2 above show a favourable rating of students' discipline by teachers in the 4 selected private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District. Accordingly, the majority of the respondents agreed that in their schools: (i) students adequately observe school rules and regulations (60, 53.1%); (ii) it is rare to catch students in indiscipline cases (55, 48.7%); (iii) students give a lot of respect to teachers and other staff members (75, 66.4%); (iv) students give a lot of respect to their fellow students and student leaders (64, 56.6%); (v) students are decent and morally upright (64, 56.6%); and (vi) that students are polite and always conduct themselves with a lot of courtesy (64, 56.6%).

However, 32 (28.3%), 39 (34.5%), 26 (23.0%), 28 (24.8%), 37 (32.7%), and 34 (30.0%) respondents respectively disagreed that in their schools: it is rare to catch students in indiscipline cases; the students give a lot of respect to teachers, other staff members, their fellow students and student leaders; the students are decent and morally upright; and that students are polite and always conduct themselves with a lot of courtesy. Results also showed that 21 (18.6%), 19 (16.8%), 12 (10.6%), 21 (18.6%), 12 (10.6%), and 15 (13.3%) respondents were respectively not sure whether (i) students adequately observe school rules and regulations (ii) it is rare to catch students in indiscipline cases in their schools (iii) the students give a lot of respect to teachers and other staff members (iv) the students give a lot of respect to their fellow students and student leaders (v) the students are decent and morally upright (vi) students are polite and always conduct themselves with a lot of courtesy.

The qualitative research results also showed that the four schools made an attempt to raise disciplined citizens out of their students. Results from interviews and FGDs revealed that: rules and regulations are posted on noticeboards at school, in the buildings, and in the classrooms; students have general respect for teachers, fellow students, student leaders, and other staff members; many students show politeness and courtesy; and that there is a growing tendency among students to act morally upright and decently. In this vein, a DMT revealed that:

*As a private secondary school, it is our responsibility to instill discipline in our students. To support this, we have school rules and regulations that are posted throughout the building and are provided in booklet form to newly admitted students. Students are expected to read these rules and adhere to them at all times (DMT1, School A).*

Relatedly, DMT4 from school D observed that despite the existence of disobedient students in most schools, numerous measures had been taken to reduce disobedience, including guidance and counselling, creating rules with the students, parental involvement, explaining the rules to the students, and making sure that teachers follow their own instructions. This participant also revealed that students' morals have constantly improved as a result of the practice of bringing

religious preachers during Friday prayers for Muslim students and Sunday mass and service for Christian students.

The results of the FGDs also showed that student leaders had a favourable opinion on the discipline of the students. For instance, all of the student leaders agreed that their institutions had made significant efforts to uphold student discipline. They also said that without the rules and regulations for the pupils, there would be no order in schools. They did, however, point out that there are variances in how these rules and regulations are applied to students. Additionally, they said that the existence of student leaders in classrooms is an effort to enforce student discipline. Because of this, a student leader in School A asserted:

*Our existence as student leaders demonstrates the administration's desire for student discipline because our leadership is made up of many leadership positions with varying responsibilities for managing other students' behaviours and academic discipline. A disciplinary committee is also present. Thus, I believe that our school has made a lot of efforts to ensure that students maintain discipline (FGD1, at School A, SL10).*

### **Guidance and Counseling as a Student Discipline Management Practice in Private Secondary Schools in Kasangati Town Council**

According to descriptive findings on guidance and counselling in the selected private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council, of the teachers surveyed,

- i) 62 (54.8%) agreed that their schools had counselling and guidance departments, whereas 41 (36.2%) disagreed and 10 (8.8%) were unsure.
- ii) 92 (81.4%) thought the counselling and guidance team members were approachable and nice, while 19 (16.8%) disagreed and 2 teachers were unsure.
- iii) 30 teachers (26.6%) disagreed, 10 (8.8%) were unsure, and 73 (64.6%) agreed that schools provide training to staff of the guidance and counselling department to enable them successfully discipline students.
- iv) 82 teachers (72.6%) agreed that schools invite guest lecturers to mentor and coach pupils towards positive behaviours. However, 21 of them (18.6%) disagreed, and a further 10 (8.8%) were unsure.
- v) 32 teachers (28.3%) disagreed, 28 (24.8%) were unsure, and 53 of them (46.4%) agreed that the Guidance and Counselling Departments' counsellors have well-known counselling offices that allow for privacy.

The aforementioned results not only show that the majority of respondents agreed that guidance and counselling play an important role in fostering student discipline, but they are also corroborated by qualitative findings. One DMT stated the following while confirming the department's existence:

*Our institution places a strong emphasis on student guidance and counselling. This is due to the Government's ban on corporal punishment. Our department of guidance and counselling aids in instilling discipline in our students. Therefore, we give our students more counselling than punishment (DMT3 from School C).*

The above interview result was supported by the FGD findings. For instance, one student leader stated the following in a focus group discussion:

*We urge the student leadership body to invite well-respected former students to address our learners on matters of discipline as well as other subject areas that may include academic performance, completing UNEB forms, and choosing courses at university, among others (FGD2 with School B's SL8).*

But according to some of the participants we spoke with, top management in their schools is yet to provide enough support to the guidance and counselling department in terms of hiring counsellors, scheduling counselling sessions correctly, or rewarding those who counsel students (DMT2 from School B, FGD4 with SL7 of School D). It would seem that, in general, private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council have made efforts to use their guidance and counselling departments to improve students' behaviour, even though this matter needs further examination.

### **Parental Involvement as a Student Discipline Management Practice in Private Secondary Schools in Kasangati Town Council**

The second objective investigated how discipline in private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council is related to parental participation as a method of managing it. According to the descriptive findings, parental involvement in student behaviour management can improve discipline. The majority of respondents – 46 (40.7%) and 35 (31.0%) – strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that schools always engage parents in managing student behaviour. Additionally, it was noticed that 16 (14.2%) and 7 (6.2%) respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively, while 9 (8%) lacked certainty regarding parental involvement. This shows that parents shared responsibility for the discipline of their children. It was mentioned in the interview with DMT1 from School A that parents are a part of the discipline management committees under the Parents Committee Meeting, which provides a forum for all stakeholders to participate in management and administrative issues at their respective schools. One of the areas that this committee considers, aside from academic issues, is student discipline. This participant said the following:

*This school has a parents' committee that meets regularly to discuss issues including teacher and student discipline. Members of the committee meet on a regular basis to discuss student disciplinary issues with a teacher representative. Parents and other family members visit the school to observe their children's behaviour. This committee then makes a report on the children's behaviour, which is then discussed at the general school meeting (DMT1 from School A).*

The results are in line with McNeal's (2014) assertion that managing student behaviour requires contact between a variety of stakeholders, including parents with parents, parents with teachers, as well as local authorities with

students. According to this study, the involvement of such individuals would rise and present a positive image of the attempt to maintain student discipline in classrooms. However, it was highlighted by one of the participants (DMT4 from School D) that parents were less committed to collaborating with teachers on issues relating to student discipline. It was also mentioned that some parents view teachers as enemies of their children when it comes to reprimanding them, and that at times, some parents confront teachers who they believe have disciplined their children. Accordingly, a DMT stated:

*There is a lack of commitment on the side of parents and teachers to work towards the same discipline management objectives, which is why some schools struggle to regulate students' behavior. The decision to implement strict measures against indisciplined students at schools was largely influenced by this lack of commitment (DMT3 at School C).*

### **Administration of Punishments as a Student Discipline Management Practice in Private Secondary Schools in Kasangati Town Council**

This study also investigated the relationship between students' behaviour in private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council and the use of punishments as a method of managing discipline. According to the descriptive findings, 54 (47.8%) and 30 (26.5%) of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that punishments were used to encourage students' behaviour. However, a total of 13 (11.5%) and 5 (4.4%) teachers strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively while 11 (9.7%) were undecided. Additionally, it came up in focus group discussions with student leaders that schools would issue warning letters to parents of misbehaving students. One of the student leaders asserted the following in this regard:

*Teachers or student leaders may first provide a verbal warning to an unruly student before taking additional action, such as issuing a written warning to the student's parents or guardians, if the unruliness continues. If the student's behaviour does not improve, more severe repercussions, such as suspension and ultimately expulsion from the school, will be applied in accordance with school rules and regulations (FGD4 with SL9 in School D).*

The comment from SL9 supports the descriptive findings, which revealed that 78 (69%) respondents concurred that penalties were meted out following a verbal or written warning. 19 (16.8%) respondents disagreed, while 16 (14.2%) were unsure. This demonstrates that there was a formal process in place until a punishment was granted and carried out. According to FGD findings, student leaders SL8 in FGD2, School B; and SL4 in FGD4, School D said that student leaders are also mandated to penalise fellow students who fail to behave in line with school rules and regulations. It was noticed, however, that the severity of incidences of indiscipline and the sanctions administered by student leaders vary proportionately.

Onderi and Odera (2012), who established that punishments have been utilised in the management of students' discipline over the years, complement the aforementioned findings. It should be mentioned, nonetheless, that in some nations, the application of punishments is done judiciously to prevent the use of corporal punishment. The results are also consistent with Kambuga et al. (2018), who saw teachers' use of punishments as a calculated reprimand to stop pupils' misbehaviour. Teachers can employ a number of punishments as alternatives to the use of physical force which causes a child to feel pain. Such punishments should help to improve communication among students and the rest of the school community. In the same vein, because offenders are not humiliated and degraded, they will be assisted in developing into respectable members of society.

### Testing the Null Hypotheses

Based on the literature review and the study's objectives, three null hypotheses were derived and tested using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. Pallant's (2001) interpretation – which states that a correlation between .50 and 1.0 is strong, .30 and .49 is moderate, and .10 and .29 is weak – was the basis for both the correlation coefficients' magnitude and interpretation.

### Pearson Correlation Results on the Relationship Between Guidance and Counseling and Students' Discipline

H<sub>0</sub>1: Guidance and counselling has no statistically significant relationship with students' discipline in private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District.

Table 3 presents the results of the test of the hypothesis.

Table 3

#### *Pearson Correlation for Guidance and Counselling and Students' Discipline*

		Guidance and Counseling	Students' Discipline
Guidance and Counseling	Pearson Correlation	1	.539*
	Sign(2-tailed)		.006
	N	113	113
Students' Discipline	Pearson Correlation	.539*	1
	Sign(2-tailed)	.006	
	N	113	113

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The null hypothesis that “there is no statistically significant relationship between guidance and counselling and students' discipline in private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council” was examined, found to be false, and rejected. The findings revealed a positive, statistically significant and strong relationship between student discipline and guidance and counselling. This was demonstrated using the statistic [ $r = 0.539$ ,  $p = 0.006$ ] at the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, it can be claimed that offering guidance and counselling greatly encourages pupils' discipline.

The above-mentioned statistical findings are consistent with Onyango et al.'s (2018) research on the effectiveness of guidance and counselling in the management of students' behaviour in Kenyan public secondary schools, which discovered a positive relationship between guidance and counseling and students' behaviour management. Similarly, Salgong et al. (2016) corroborated that guidance and counseling are essential elements of controlling people's behaviour in all societies, including the most primitive ones. They further observed that even the most primitive cultures evolved as a result of the necessity to control people's behaviour for the benefit of the group.

### **Pearson Correlation Results on the Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Students' Discipline**

H<sub>0</sub>2: Parental involvement has no statistically significant relationship with students' discipline in private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District.

This hypothesis was tested as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

#### *Pearson Correlation for Parental Involvement and Students' Discipline*

		Parental Involvement	Students' Discipline
Parental Involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	.499*
	Sign(2-tailed)		.009
	N	113	113
Students' Discipline	Pearson Correlation	.499*	1
	Sign(2-tailed)	.009	
	N	113	113

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

According to statistical evidence, there was a correlation between parental involvement and student discipline that was statistically significant, moderate and in the positive direction ( $r = 0.499$ ,  $p = 0.009$ ). As a result, the alternative hypothesis, "There is a statistically significant relationship between parental involvement and students' discipline in private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council," is supported and the null hypothesis is rejected. This suggests that as more parents get involved in helping to regulate their children's behaviour, student behaviour gets better. Thus, the constructive relationship is ascribed to parents' participation in issues of managing discipline through meetings and learner counselling. Positive results for the two variables are also partially attributed to the efforts of the school management teams of involving parents and other community members. The aforementioned findings concur with a study by Durisic and Bunijevacc (2017) that identified parental participation as a crucial component of a child's performance in schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The above researchers discovered that when parents' efforts to help schools are encouraged and parental involvement is expanded, this directly contributes to a successful educational system.

### Pearson Correlations Results on the Relationship Between Administration of Punishments and Students' Discipline

H<sub>03</sub>: Administration of punishments has no statistically significant relationship with students' discipline in private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District.

This hypothesis was tested in Table 5.

Table 5

*Pearson Correlation for Administration of Punishment and Students' Discipline*

		Administration of Punishment	Students' Discipline
Administration of Punishment	Pearson Correlation	1	.381*
	Sign(2-tailed)		.003
	N	113	113
Students' Discipline	Pearson Correlation	.381*	1
	Sign(2-tailed)	.003	
	N	113	113

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In private secondary schools in the Kasangati Town Council, the results revealed a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship between the use of punishments as a student discipline management practice and students' behaviour [ $r = 0.381$ ,  $p = 0.003$  at the level of significance of 0.005]. Thus, the alternative hypothesis that "There is a statistically significant relationship between administration of punishments and student discipline in Kasangati Town Council" was accepted in place of the original null hypothesis that "There is no statistically significant relationship between administration of punishments and students' discipline in private secondary schools in Kasangati Town Council."

Therefore, the use of different types of punishments such as, verbal and written warnings, suspensions, and engaging parents to determine or approve another form of punishment (other than corporal punishments) for their children based on the situation at hand, are essential for students' discipline. Although the results indicate a statistically significant correlation between the use of punishments and the behaviour of students, the  $r$ -value of 0.381 is not substantial. This implies that additional factors, such as the pupils' upbringing and peer pressure, may be influencing their level of discipline as well.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

We draw the conclusion that student discipline management practices such as guidance and counselling, parental participation, and the imposition of legally accepted punishments have a statistically significant positive relationship with students' discipline. This suggests that providing more guidance and counselling, involving parents, and enforcing punishments may enhance good behaviour and actions in terms of adherence to school policies and procedures,

respect for school leadership, and moral uprightness. In order to achieve this, schools may need to implement enablers like: making sure that the guidance and counselling department is adequately supported and that its staff members are periodically retrained; actively implementing a systematic approach to engaging parents, especially during the crucial adolescent stage; removing zero-tolerance policies for indiscipline because they fail to recognise adolescents' mistakes in judgement; and making sure that the outcomes of punishments are positive.

Premised on the above, we advise managers of private secondary schools to set up regular refresher programmes so that teachers can receive training on how to properly guide and counsel students as well as how to impose punishments that are deterrent and can have a positive behavioural impact. The Convention on the Human Rights of the Child, which Uganda ratified and pledged to protecting, states that punishments that result in beneficial behavioural results are those that do not breach those rights. Teachers and school administrators will need to be reminded of this. Schools should also implement a systematic approach to engage parents with a focus on how teachers and parents can work together to manage the critical transition of adolescents from childhood to adulthood.

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