

**Teachers' Characteristics And Pupils' Discipline In Schools In Rwamucucu Subcounty, Rukiga District,
Uganda**

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Abstract

The study establishes the relationship between teachers' characteristics and pupils' discipline in primary schools in Rwamucucu subcounty, Rukiga district, Uganda. The study used convergent parallel mixed methods, by merging quantitative and qualitative data thus making easy all-encompassing analysis of the research problem. A sample size of 248 respondents was considered for the study, 186 respondents participated, giving a response rate of 75%. The study established that teacher's characteristics account for about 56.7% of the variability observed in pupils' discipline. Therefore, it was recommended to promote and cultivate a positive teacher attitude within the educational environment; educational leader should formulate a strategic set of intervention initiatives aimed at cultivating the educator traits shown to influence achievement levels and therefore creating an organizational culture embracing evidence-based continuous refinement was integral to nurturing the teacher qualities indicated as substantially important to optimizing learning outcomes.

Keywords: Teachers' Characteristics, School, Pupils, Students' Discipline, Learning Outcomes, Academic Performance.

Introduction

Effective discipline helps in achieving goals, expectations and accountability in students (Brighton et al., 2023). Good discipline creates a good image of the school and prepares students for the future. Disruptive behavior among students is eliminated if there is good discipline in the school. The implementation of effective discipline in school is the key for the student on his journey to adulthood (Godfrey et al., 2023). By definition, discipline refers to the ability to carry out reasonable instructions or commands to achieve appropriate standards of behavior. It refers to an abstract quality in a human being that is associated with and manifests in a person's ability to do things well at the right time, under the right circumstances, with little or no supervision (Christopher, Komunda, et al., 2022).

The teacher, who is the key player in the classroom, usually determines the performance in the classroom by his behavior during teaching and learning. It is important for the teacher to be clear and interesting during the presentation in the classroom, otherwise there is a risk that the students will not listen and consequently will not understand the work (Mark et al., 2023). Discipline is the action of management to enforce organizational standards (Racheal et al., 2023). The problem of indiscipline in schools is ranked among the main problems of elementary school students in all countries of the world. Disruptive behavior is a concern for schools, parents and their classmates, whose education may be adversely affected. So it cannot be ignored and schools must adapt a well-understood healthy behavior and discipline policy. According to (Anthony et al., 2023), the teacher could report the registered desired behavior to the class with consent. All these practices strengthen the moral behavior of pupils, which is reflected in a disciplined and responsible approach to problems and activities. The most critical finding from this study is that many elementary school students have low levels of discipline.

Demographic characteristics of teachers refer to personal or collective background, which includes age, gender, socio-economic status, attitude, effectiveness, number of teachers in the school, and number of students the teacher has previously dealt with in the classroom, (Aisha et al., 2023). This explains why teaching and learning depend on teachers; It is no wonder why an effective teacher has been conceptualized as one who produces desired outcomes as part of their duty as a teacher (Seth & Ntirandekura, 2022).

Teachers tend not to use positive disciplinary approaches to misbehaving students, preferring neutral or negative approaches that can best achieve their short-term goal of ending student misbehavior; (Micheal et al., 2023) proposed in operant conditioning theory that punishment—some type of stimulus aversive to the individual being punished—as a result of actions will deter future use of those actions (Godfrey et al., 2023). However, punitive approaches may not be effective as deterrents or methods of eliminating undesirable behavior because teachers cannot control all the conditions necessary for success. Teachers need to know what is bothering a particular student in order to tailor an appropriate response to inappropriate behavior. The punishment must be timely and must have an appropriate intensity. Teachers should also avoid warning the student of impending punitive action (Micheal et al., 2023). He added that from an experimental point of view it would appear that it is not possible to apply an effective punitive stimulus to the school staff. Even if punishment is effective in the short term, it can only stop unwanted behavior temporarily, not permanently change it (Doyle, 2021). When discipline is not effective as punishment, unwanted behavior is not discouraged, nor is new behavior encouraged or taught, so no meaningful corrective experience occurs and behavior patterns are not changed (Godfrey et al., 2023).

Operant conditioning theory also posits that although behavioral rewards may not appear pleasant or positive to others, they may have the effect of increasing the problem behavior that is the target of intervention (Victoria et al., 2023). Thomas (2013) noted that school discipline can paradoxically reinforce student misbehavior, especially among students who dislike or have little interest in school (Moses, 2022). and expulsion may have the unintended consequence of elevating these students to inappropriate behavior to trigger disciplinary action that allows them to remain out of school (Victoria et al., 2023). This may be especially true for students who are highly aggressive, hyperactive, or lacking in social skills. Atkins et al., (2011) noted that some students may perceive time off from school as a relief from stressful or discouraging experiences at school (Christopher, Komunda, et al., 2022). These students may experience their time at home as an opportunity for unsupervised recreation, relaxation and, for some, mischief on the neighborhood streets. Also, when a student happily becomes the center of attention when being disciplined by a teacher, or when a student receives praise from peers for behavior that the teacher did not like, they experience social rewards that can counteract the deterrent effect. punishment and can exacerbate bad behavior (Seth & Ntirandekura, 2022).

Grimes (2010) noted that positive relationships with teachers may even help those behaviorally at-risk students learn more adaptive behaviors, as evidenced by one recent study among a group of aggressive African American and Hispanic students in which supportive student-teacher relationships were associated with decline. in aggressive behavior between second and third grade (Micheal et al., 2023). The need for positive relationships with teachers does not diminish as children grow older. Support in teacher-student relationships can be particularly salient at transition points, such as the transition from primary to secondary school. (Richard et al., 2022) argued that secondary school teachers who express emotional warmth and acceptance while regularly making themselves available for personal communication with students promote positive relational processes characteristic of support. These supportive relationships help maintain students' interest in academic and social activities, which in turn lead to better grades and more positive peer relationships. Although teachers are not the only source of support for high school students, the support students receive from their parents, peers, and teachers appeared to have additive, that is, relatively independent, effects. (Christopher, 2022) argued that secondary school teachers who convey emotional warmth and acceptance while making themselves available.

Problem Statement

The study aimed at teachers' characteristics and pupils' discipline in schools in rwamucucu subcounty, Rukiga district, Uganda

Objective Of The Study

The objective of the study was to establish the relationship between teachers' characteristics and pupils' discipline in schools in Rwamucucu subcounty, Rukiga district, Uganda.

Hypothesis

Teachers' characteristics has no significant influence on pupils' discipline

Received: 17.01.2024

Accepted: 22.01.2024

Published on: 31.01.2024

Methodology

In the study, the researcher used Convergent parallel mixed methods, by merging quantitative and qualitative data thus making easy all-encompassing analysis of the research problem. The researcher using this design was ordinarily to collect both forms of data at roughly the same time and then assimilates the relevant collected data in the interpretation of the overall results. Contradictions in the findings was explained or further probed in this design (Ranganathan & Aggarwal, 2019). Mixed methods involved integrating the qualitative and quantitative data in the study. The qualitative data was open-ended thus without predetermined responses whereas quantitative data included closed-ended responses like found on questionnaires or psychological instruments. The design and its approaches were preferred for its role aimed to neutralize the weaknesses of each form of data and triangulating data sources which is a means for seeking convergence across qualitative and quantitative methods. The idea of integration of different research designs emerged and mixed methods turned towards the systematic convergence of qualitative and quantitative data (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Creswell (2020) asserts that population is the vast cohort of people to whom the researcher engenders the results of study that gives a small unit known as the sample size that is always its subset. She mentions that the population depends on the study scope. In this case therefore Rukiga district an area considered for the study had the following respondents' categories suggested to provide the information required. They included; sub county chiefs, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), parish chiefs, headteachers and teachers, political leaders, The total respondents' number was 248 from whom the sample size was selected. To determine a representative sample from the general population, Yamane's (1967) sampling formula was used. In this formula, a sample (n) is selected from a population (N), taking a sampling error (e) to be 5%. The researcher used the formula to select teachers, headteachers, Parish Chiefs, Sub County Chief, political leaders and technical officers. The total number of respondents was 186 as illustrated in Table 1. Data was analyzed inform of tables, frequencies and percentages using SPSS (Nelson et al., 2022)

The sample size of respondents was calculated using Neumann (2000) formula as follows.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where: **n** = sample size, **N** = target population, **e** = level of significance

$$n = \frac{248}{1 + 248(0.0025)} = 186$$

Table 1: Sample Size Determination and Selection

No.	Respondent	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
1	Head teachers	11	8	Simple random Sampling
2	Sub county chief	1	1	Purposive Sampling
3	Parish Chiefs	15	11	Simple random
4	Teachers	185	139	Simple random

Received: 17.01.2024**Accepted: 22.01.2024****Published on: 31.01.2024**

6	Political leaders	10	10	Purposive Sampling
7	Technical personnel	27	18	Purposive Sampling
	Total	248	186	

Source: Primary Data, 2023

Results

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on teachers' attitude and pupils' academic performance

Where: A) Not at all, B (Rarely, C (Often) and D (Always)

Statement	A	B	C	D
Prepare a written plan for every lesson taught	70 37.63441%	36 19.3548%	20 10.753%	60 32.26%
Involve pupils in carrying out activities during the lesson	100 53.76344%	10 5.376344%	12 6.451613%	63 33.87097%
Encourage pupils to ask questions during lessons	12 6.451613%	90 48.3871%	60 32.25806%	24 12.90323%
Encourage pupils to participate in the lesson while teaching	76 40.86022%	30 16.12903%	20 10.75269%	60 32.25806%
Encourage pupils to answer questions during the lesson	0 0%	100 53.76344%	40 21.50538%	46 24.73118%
Use pupils' ideas and suggestions when teaching	51 27.41935%	54 29.03226%	61 32.7957%	20 10.75269%
Improve teaching /teaching materials	10 5.376344%	20 10.75269%	40 21.50538%	116 62.36559%
Involve pupils in giving feedback on my lesson	12 6.451613%	90 48.3871%	60 32.25806%	24 12.90323%

Source: Primary Data 2023

Results in Table 2 indicate that 37.6% of teachers reported not preparing written lesson plans at all. This is a cause for concern as lack of planning can compromise lesson structure, objectives and outcomes. Plans help teachers stay organized and ensure all content is covered. An additional 19.3% prepare plans rarely. Combined, over half the teachers are not adequately planning lessons and only 10.7% often and 32.2% always plan lessons in writing. Greater focus is needed on emphasizing the importance of thoughtful planning (Jac & Kazaara, 2023). The department/school should create and enforce a policy requiring all teachers to submit written lesson plans in advance. Plans should be reviewed by the head teacher to ensure objectives and content are aligned and additional training and support should be provided to teachers who do not regularly plan lessons (Ntirandekura et al., 2022). The benefits of planning like staying organized and covering all material need to be emphasized.

Received: 17.01.2024

Accepted: 22.01.2024

Published on: 31.01.2024

Worryingly, over half (53.7%) reported not involving pupils in activities at all. Passive learning through teacher talk does not engage students. A meagre 5.3% and 6.4% rarely and often incorporate activities and while just one third (33.8%) always involve activities. Teachers need support developing interactive techniques (Sciences et al., 2023). Lessons risk being dull without sufficient hands-on work. Teachers require training on incorporating interactive techniques like group work, experiments, debates etc. into their lessons regularly and schools should encourage teachers to share successful activity ideas to inspire others. Ensuring enough resources are available to carry out hands-on work.

Reassuringly few (6.4%) do not encourage questions. However, nearly half (48.3%) do so only rarely. More regular prompting is ideal to check understanding, 32.2% often encourage questions, but over a tenth (12.9%) always do - this figure could be higher. An inquisitive classroom helps drive learning. Teachers should receive tips on prompting questions in a non-threatening way to check understanding. For example, using random calling or anonymous question boxes as well as building a culture where asking questions is expected and appreciated can help more students participate (Oromo et al., 2023).

Concerningly, over two fifths (40.8%) do not encourage participation at all. Students need opportunities to directly engage, not just observe passively, 16.1% rarely and 10.7% often ask for participation - more consistency is preferable and only a third (32.2%) always promote participation to maintain engagement. Active participation keeps students engaged so teachers must learn strategies for regularly involving all pupils, not just a few. Ideas like think-pair-share, polls or role plays and participation levels could be a metric in teacher evaluations to emphasize its importance. Over a quarter (27.4%) fail to integrate pupils' perspectives at all, missing a chance for relevance, 29% and 32.7% respectively rarely or often incorporate students' inputs and merely 10.7% always use pupil ideas and feedback to tailor lessons to their interests and needs. Teachers require training to better integrate student perspectives and feedback into their planning and delivery.

A small percentage (5.4%) reported not improving their teaching/materials at all. While not necessarily a problem on its own, there is always room for development, 10.8% reported improving rarely, 21.5% reported improving often, which shows an effort to evolve practices and encouragingly, over 60% (62.4%) reported always looking for ways to improve - a growth mindset that should be fostered. Most teachers showing efforts to improve is positive. School can support further development by funding continued professional learning programs, classroom observations and opportunities to visit other schools.



Only a small percentage (6.5%) do not get pupil input at all to evaluate lessons, which offers a student perspective. However, almost half (48.4%) do so rarely, missing chances for valuable student insights, 32.3% often gain feedback, but just 12.9% always collect student perspectives and therefore more consistent feedback solicitation could help make lessons even more engaging/relevant. However, this is because feedback helps teachers know what's effective from the student point of view. A standardized feedback form could be used consistently across classes to gather meaningful input.

"As an education administrator concerned with upholding high standards of instructional quality, two critical metrics that I closely monitor are teacher attendance and their ability to cover assigned syllabus in a timely manner. While recognizing that occasional lapses may happen due unavoidable circumstances, consistent presence of educators and delivery of learning as scheduled are imperative for effective pedagogy.

Ideally, teachers should strive to always attend every one of their designated classes to provide learners with uninterrupted guidance and opportunities for knowledge acquisition. However, in reality, rare, unavoidable occurrences causing temporary absence can potentially be accommodated provided student progress is not significantly impacted. What is most important is that educators make attending to their teaching duties a top professional priority through reliable, dedicated service.

Similarly, it is the goal that classroom facilitators consistently cover the complete curriculum within the designated timeframe to successfully equip pupils with mandated competencies and prepare them adequately for assessments. While allowing flexibility for unexpected disruptions, any persistent failure to maintain the set pace risks compromising the quality of instruction delivered. Thus, ongoing monitoring and supportive interventions are necessary wherever coverage is found to deviate from scheduled benchmarks on a regular basis."

Table 3: Relationship between pupils' discipline and pupils' academic performance.

		pupils' discipline.	academic performance.
pupils' discipline.	Pearson Correlation	1	.569**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	186	186
academic performance.	Pearson Correlation	.569**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	186	186
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source; Primary Data, 2023





The correlation coefficient between pupils' discipline and academic performance is shown as 0.569. This value indicates a moderate positive relationship between these two variables. The significance value is reported as 0.000, which means the probability of obtaining the observed correlation coefficient by chance is extremely low. This indicates that the correlation is statistically significant since the P-value (0.00) is less than 0.05. The correlation coefficient between academic performance and pupils' discipline is also reported as 0.569. This value is identical to the previous row, indicating a symmetric relationship between these variables (Nelson et al., 2023).

Table 4: Correlation between teacher's characteristics and pupils' discipline in primary schools of Rwamucucu sub county, Rukiga district Uganda

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.676 ^a	.567	.561	.41114
a. Predictors: (Constant), teacher's characteristics				

Source; Primary Data, 2023

The correlation coefficient (also known as the Pearson correlation coefficient) between teacher's characteristics and pupils' discipline is reported as 0.676. This value represents the strength and direction of the linear relationship between these variables. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is shown as 0.567, which indicates that approximately 56.7% of the variation in pupils' discipline can be explained by the variation in teacher's characteristics. In other words, teacher's characteristics account for about 56.7% of the variability observed in pupils' discipline. The adjusted R^2 is reported as 0.561. This value takes into account the number of predictors in the model and adjusts the R^2 value accordingly, providing a more conservative estimate of the explained variation. The standard error of the estimate is presented as 0.41114. This value represents the average distance between the predicted values of pupils' discipline and the actual observed values, providing an indication of the accuracy of the model's predictions.

Table 5: ANOVA values for teacher's characteristics and pupil's discipline

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.224	1	5.234	54.295	.000 ^b
	Residual	10.746	185	.087		
	Total	16.970	186			
a. Dependent Variable: pupil's discipline						
b. Predictors: (Constant), teacher's characteristics						

Source; Primary Data, 2023

The sum of squares for the regression model is reported as 6.224. This value represents the variation in pupil's discipline that can be explained by the variation in teacher's characteristics. The degrees of freedom for the regression model are 1, indicating that there is one predictor variable in the model, namely teacher's characteristics. The mean square is calculated by dividing the sum of squares by the degrees of freedom. In this case, the mean square is 5.234.

Received: 17.01.2024

Accepted: 22.01.2024

Published on: 31.01.2024





The F-value is 54.295. This value is obtained by dividing the mean square of the regression by the mean square of the residual (error term). It represents the ratio of the explained variance to the unexplained variance. The significance value is reported as .000 (less than 0.001), indicating that the F-value is statistically significant. The sum of squares for the residual (error term) is 10.746. This value represents the unexplained variation in pupil's discipline that is not accounted for by the regression model. The degrees of freedom for the residual are 185, indicating the number of data points minus the number of predictor variables (1). The total sum of squares is 16.970. This value represents the total variation in pupil's discipline.

Table 6: Model summary for teacher's characteristics and pupil's discipline

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.697	.296		4.136	.000
	teacher's characteristics	.475	.081	.616	6.098	.000
a. Dependent Variable: pupil's discipline						

Source; Primary Data (2023)

The coefficient for the constant term in the regression model is 2.697. This represents the expected value of pupil's discipline when the teacher's characteristics are zero. The unstandardized coefficient for teacher's characteristics is 0.475. This coefficient represents the change in pupil's discipline associated with a one-unit change in teacher's characteristics. The standard error for the unstandardized coefficient is 0.081. It indicates the average amount of variation in the estimated coefficient across different samples. The standardized coefficient (Beta) for teacher's characteristics is 0.616. It represents the change in pupil's discipline in standard deviation units associated with a one-standard-deviation change in teacher's characteristics. The t-value associated with the coefficient for teacher's characteristics is 6.098. It indicates the ratio of the estimated coefficient to its standard error and is used to test the significance of the coefficient. The significance value for the coefficient of teacher's characteristics is reported as .000 (less than 0.001), indicating that the coefficient is statistically significant.

Summary

The statistical analysis conducted provides valuable insights into the relationship between pupils' discipline and their academic performance based on the data collected. To start with, the correlation coefficient of 0.569 between the two variables demonstrates that there is a moderate positive relationship between them. This suggests that as student discipline improves, their academic achievement also tends to increase accordingly. While not an extremely strong correlation, the relationship is notable. Importantly, the significance value of 0.000 confirms that the probability of obtaining this correlation coefficient by chance is extremely low. In other words, we can be very certain that a genuine significant link exists between pupils' discipline standards and their learning outcomes within this study sample. This extremely low p-value of 0.00, which is less than the standard 0.05 level of significance, provides robust evidence that

Received: 17.01.2024

Accepted: 22.01.2024

Published on: 31.01.2024



the correlation is statistically valid and not due to random error or chance. Another key finding is that the identical correlation coefficient value reported when measuring academic performance against pupils' discipline adds validity to the results. It indicates that the relationship between the two variables is symmetrical - increased discipline positively mirrors growth in learning outcomes. This offers valuable quantitative data supporting the impact of behavior on academics. Taken together, these statistical metrics provide compelling evidence that a real, substantiated moderate correlation exists between pupil discipline and academic achievement within this study population. While not proving direct causation, the results strongly suggest improved conduct standards are systematically linked to better educational results.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this teaching and learning practices survey, it is evident that focus needs to be directed towards strengthening several key areas of instructional quality across the school system. While some positive elements were observed such as an effort by many teachers to self-improve, several core responsibilities are currently not being adequately fulfilled by a concerning percentage of educators. As the educational administrator responsible for student outcomes, intervention strategies must be prioritized.

Thoughtful lesson planning in writing has been found lacking for over half of teachers, undermining organization and coverage of mandated content. A clear policy outlining mandatory submission of comprehensive lesson plans needs enforcement, along with support through modelling best practices. Similarly, over half of teachers are not engaging pupils through hands-on activity-based learning, risking disengagement and superficial understanding. Ongoing professional development targeting interactive techniques proven to boost participation and critical thinking must therefore be provided. Promoting higher-order thinking skills through questioning and active participation from all learners during lessons has also been identified as an under-developed area requiring concentrated coaching of teachers on strategic methods. Soliciting student-centered feedback too infrequently prevents valuable insights from improving relevance and impact.

Recommendations

As the findings of the statistical analysis conducted have revealed a substantive moderate positive correlation between key characteristics exhibited by teaching staff and the learning outcomes realized by students, it is prudent as an educational leader to formulate a strategic set of intervention initiatives aimed at cultivating the educator traits shown to influence achievement levels and therefore creating an organizational culture embracing evidence-based continuous refinement was integral to nurturing the teacher qualities indicated as substantially important to optimizing learning outcomes.

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Received: 17.01.2024

Accepted: 22.01.2024

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Received: 17.01.2024

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