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Original Article

Positive Discipline Approaches and Students' Behaviour in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Sheema Municipality, Uganda

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Keywords:

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Behaviour

This study examined the relationship between positive discipline approaches and students' behaviour in secondary schools in Sheema Municipality in southwestern Uganda. Positive discipline approaches were looked at in terms of guidance and counselling, positive reinforcement and role modelling in relation to students' behaviours. This cross-sectional study involved a sample of 343 students. Data were collected from the students using a self-administered questionnaire. Partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to carry out data analysis. The findings indicated that the measurement model was good and structural equation model results revealed that guidance counselling and positive reinforcement positively and significantly related to students' behaviour. However, role modelling is positively but insignificantly related to students' behaviour. The results imply that while guidance counselling and positive reinforcement are essential factors for promoting students' behaviour, role modelling is not. Therefore, it was recommended that school administrators and teachers should emphasise providing guidance counselling and positive reinforcement to students as they handle them while role modelling should not be prioritised.

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INTRODUCTION

Students good behaviour, visible through social competence in dealing with peers and others, compliance with instructions and following guidance, and autonomy or self-reliance, is vital for their academic success (Epps et al., 2003). However, secondary school students as adolescents face tremendous pressure and uncertainty sometimes leading to problematic behaviour in schools (Allwood et al., 2018; Wang & Kuo, 2019). Today, the world over a sense of social anxiety is mounting about behaviours of students in schools (Leigh & Clark, 2018). Student resistance against authorities is increasing in most countries (Dupuis-Déri et al., 2021). For example, in the United States difficult behaviour has a bearing on some students beyond school, and confinement rates for U.S. juveniles are the highest globally (Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020). In Australia, media reports about widespread public and political uneasiness on negative and declining behaviour amongst students in the country's public schools led authorities to put in place a plethora of policies, strategies and practices to have control and bring order in schools (Sullivan et al., 2016).

Even in African countries, the problem of poor indiscipline among secondary students is high. For instance in Nigeria, physical and psychological violence respectively were found to be extremely high in the country's first nationwide situational survey on violence in public schools at 85 and 50 per cent (Fawole et al., 2018). In Kenyan schools, the widespread misbehaviour is students' harassing others, especially girls. The majority of boys are harassed by junior students as the victims of bullies. The most prevalent forms of misbehaviour are physical and verbal violence among male and female students respectively (Itigi, 2017). A worse challenge in Kenyan secondary schools has been that nearly every week there are stories of destructive fires, and the perpetrators of these arson cases are students

(Cooper, 2014; Wang & Kuo, 2019). In Uganda, indiscipline behaviours of secondary students have also been a challenge. The schools have suffered arson with students as perpetrators of the fires gutting school buildings in revenge for disciplinary actions administered by administrators of schools (Gikungu & Karanja, 2014). In Uganda misbehaviours including assault, threatening, exclusion, psychological torture, malicious damage to property, extortion, sexual harassment and use of derogatory language are common practices (Muhangi, 2017). Although in the last nine years, there has been a semblance of peace in Sheema Municipality schools, previously it was a common phenomenon for schools from time to time to get temporarily closed because of violent strikes involving arson on school infrastructure and other indiscipline including drug abuse, alcoholism, intolerance and disrespect (Aboko, 2013; Aruho, 2013; Ayebare, 2018; Mugasha, 2013). While misbehaviour problems in the schools in the municipality have not been reported in the national media recently, it is because they have not been to the magnitude warranting the closure of schools.

Despite the misbehaviour of students being a challenge, the debate has been on how to handle students' indiscipline (Andrea & Leandry, 2021; Armstrong, 2018). Historically, most schools especially in Africa and Middle Eastern countries have dealt with students' bad behaviours with violent means specifically corporal punishment (Le Mottee & Kelly, 2017; Tiwari, 2019; UNICEF, 2017). However, scholars, psychologists and policymakers have come up to oppose corporal punishment arguing that it is ineffective in promoting discipline (Elgar et al., 2018; Gershoff, 2017; Straus & Donnelly, 2001). This is because it has been reported that worldwide many students have dropped out of school because of factors related to the use of corporal punishment in institutions where the school principals and teachers use corporal

punishment as the main strategy for controlling learners' behaviour. Corporal punishments easily escalate to physical abuse, permanent body injuries and death (Gershoff, 2017; Gudyanga et al., 2014; Karyeija et al., 2014). Many countries in Europe, South East Asia and Africa have abolished corporal punishment in schools (Fakunmoju, 2022; Heekes et al., 2022; Takahashi et al., 2020). In response to the outcry against corporal punishment, the government of Uganda in 1997 outlawed Corporal punishment following the passing of the Children Act (Segawa, 2018). However, there is a lack of empirical evidence on discipline approaches adopted after abolishing corporal punishments.

Today, teachers globally have been urged to adopt positive discipline approaches (Shankland & Rosset, 2017; Sibanda & Mpofu, 2017). Positive discipline approaches refer to discipline management techniques aimed at turning children into responsible persons able to handle their problems with self-belief as they learn the rules of their schools (Özan, 2015). Positive discipline approaches help children excel, give them the understanding they need to learn, and enhance their character development (Durrant, 2009). Positive discipline approaches include guidance and counselling, role modelling and positive reinforcement among others (Kiprop, 2012). Guidance and counselling involve assisting individuals to comprehend and understand themselves such that they develop into socially acceptable individuals (Fadilah et al., 2020). Positive reinforcement is the offering of the desired rewards or sought-after stimuli to elicit expected behaviour (Ghafar, 2023). Role modelling is about an individual displaying success and behaviours admirable for others to follow in order to achieve such success (Morgenroth et al., 2015). The conceptualisation by Kiprop (2012) of positive discipline as guidance and counselling, role modelling and positive reinforcement was adopted in this study. Specifically this study examined the causal linkages between positive discipline approaches namely guidance and counselling, role modelling and positive reinforcement and students'

behaviour namely in secondary schools in Sheema Municipality.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The Social Learning Theory (SLT) propounded by Albert Bandura (1977) provides underpinnings that explain the relationship between positive discipline approaches and students' behaviour. Social Learning Theory proposes that individuals largely can learn new behaviours through observing others (Hinduja & Ingram, 2009). The underlying assumption of SLT is that behaviour is an outcome of both the person and the environment. Therefore, when an individual notices something in the environment, it is remembered and the individual reproduces the behaviour hence the environment delivers a consequence that changes the probability of the behaviour reoccurring (Sue et al., 2015). The premise of SLT is that individuals imitate what is in their environment because of a close link between individuals and their environment and their learning is manifested in their everyday behaviour (Tu et al., 2022). SLT conjectures that learning occurs through stages that are attention, retention, reciprocation and motivation. Attention processes involve individuals paying attention to the behaviour in the environment (Huber et al., 2009). Retention Processes involve individuals mimicking the displayed models' behaviour (Rasch & Born, 2013). Reciprocation encompasses improving their decisions through social interaction (Mahmoodi et al., 2018). Motivation is about students being more likely to devote their energy towards achieving a social outcome they believe can help them attain a desired outcome (Deaton, 2015). Therefore, are there role models to imitate, positive reinforcements which can be reciprocated are provided and students are counselled to believe in their own capacity to achieve certain outcomes, new behaviour will be learnt. Therefore, positive behaviour approaches in the environment relate to good student behaviour. This study based on SLT examined the influence of positive discipline approaches on students' behaviour.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Guidance and Counselling and Students' Behaviour

Guidance and counselling are given to students such that they can comprehend themselves, become self-dependent, make appropriate and useful choices and develop human relations and concern for others is guidance and counselling (Sood, 2016). Guidance and counselling encompass imperative comprehensive strategies aimed at reducing school dropout, assisting students in decision-making and managing transitions within education and making training choices or joining employment. Guidance and counselling minimise the risk of lack of information, having exaggerated expectations, and could assist students in making logical choices based on their goals, interests, and talents (Psifidou et al., 2021). Basically, guidance and counselling seek to help students develop a good self-image, a sense of identity, a set of values, and a set of beliefs that will direct their behaviour (Sood, 2016). Bardhoshi et al. (2018) using first-grade rural schools in the USA reported that well-designed classroom counselling lessons met students identified school needs.

Berger (2013) in a study that assessed the importance of small group counselling interventions for underachieving students in the USA established that there was a significant improvement in their behaviours after receiving counselling. This was in the spheres of motivation, time management, and organisational abilities following guidance and counselling. In relation to the above, using at-risk ninth-grade learners in the USA, Kayler and Sherman (2009) found that small-group counselling intervention strengthened studying behaviours. In addition, school counsellor visibility and improved school counsellor relationships with students and guardians resulted in positive behaviours amongst students. In a review of outcomes of school counselling in the USA, Carey and Dimmitt (2012) revealed that there was a relationship between counselling and positive student educational outcomes. However, the study also

revealed that some of the school counselling activities had less impact on students and significant school-wide variables such as attendance and discipline. Kanus (2017) in a study that investigated the outcomes of guidance and counselling services on students' emotional stability in Kenyan secondary schools found out that they helped students to handle their emotional problems.

Consistent with the study above, Salgong et al. (2016) in a study in the Koibatek district in Kenya involving secondary school students, principals, counsellors and teachers revealed that guidance and counselling improved the discipline of students and led to reduced indiscipline in schools. Also in a study in Kenya involving teachers and school counsellors, Onyango et al. (2018) indicated that guidance and counselling improved students' conduct. Parzych et al. (2019) revealed that in Indiana, Connecticut and New York in the USA, guidance and counselling lowered student absenteeism and suspensions. However, while the literature above suggests that guidance and counselling are largely related to students' behaviour, contextual gaps emerged. For instance, the studies were skewed to the Western World specifically the USA with only the studies (Kanus, 2017; Onyango et al., 2018; Salgong et al., 2016) capturing guidance and counselling in the African context, particularly in Kenya and not Uganda. Still, while all studies revealed the existence of casual linkages between guidance and counselling aspects and students' behaviour, Carey and Dimmitt (2012) indicated that some school counselling activities did not have a significant impact which raised an empirical gap on the efficacy of guidance and counselling. Therefore, seeking to address the empirical gap and to report from the Ugandan context, this study tested the hypothesis to the effect that:

H₀₁: Guidance and counselling positively relates to students' behaviour in secondary schools.

Positive Reinforcement and Students' Behaviour

Positive reinforcement is the response given by teachers as a result of positive behaviours of

students to make them increase their frequency of performing those behaviours (Mantasiah et al., 2021). The concept is premised on the ground that reinforcement or operant conditioning addresses the challenge of committing disruptive behaviour or encourages repeating and increasing desirable behaviour in an individual. With positive reinforcement, there is a likelihood of desirable learning outcomes hence it is possible to change a learner's behaviour (Rafi et al., 2020). Positive reinforcement involves giving a present, an award or compliments to students (Mantasiah et al., 2021). Gooch (2017) assessed the impact of reinforcement on student behaviour second-grade classroom comprising Native American, Hispanic and African American students in the USA. The results revealed that reinforcement in terms of cooperative discipline was more successful than assertive discipline in deterring problem behaviour in students. In a scoping review, Rafi et al. (2020) indicated that positive reinforcement approaches including praise and providing feedback had the likelihood of leading to desired behaviour in students.

In their study involving junior high school students in Iran, Rahimi and Karkami (2015) found out that with classes in which teachers handled disruptive behaviours using punitive measures, students developed learning problems because disciplinary measures lowered students' motivation. Investigating teachers' use of positive reinforcement, Partin (2009) used elementary schools in the USA. Analysis revealed that the methods increased and enhanced students' appropriate behaviours. Reinke et al. (2008) in a study involving elementary schools in the Pacific Northwest region of the US found that more use of praise and behaviour-specific praise decreased classroom disruptive behaviour. Relatedly, in a study analysing the classroom-level positive behaviour intervention supports (PBIS) implemented in high schools in the USA, Scott (2018) reported that the programme led to a reduction in students' disruptive classroom behaviours.

Also in a study analysing PBIS, Thomas (2021) revealed that the programme was related to better

student behaviour with a decline in control practices such as office referrals and school suspensions. Further, in a study assessing the influence of teacher reinforcement using students of a vocational institution in Makassar, Indonesia, Niswaty (2017) established teachers' positive reinforcement had a significant influence on the motivation of students. On their part, Somayeh et al. (2013) using high school students in Ahwaz in Khuzestan reported that positive reinforcement related significantly to students' self-control and commitment. However, while all the studies indicated that positive reinforcement related to students' behaviour, none of the studies captured the local context of Uganda where negative reinforcement especially corporal remains high despite its abolition (Gershoff, 2017; Lokot et al., 2020; Nyakito & Allida, 2018). To examine the effectiveness of the use of positive reinforcement in schools in Uganda, this study analysed the hypothesis to the effect that:

H₀₂: Positive reinforcement positively relates to students' behaviour in secondary schools.

Role Modelling and Students' Behaviour

Role modelling is a process by which individuals learn from those they look up to through an active process of engagement, appraisal and selection of those suggestions which are relevant to them, and the construction of knowledge from the experience (Lamb et al., 2022). Kearney and Levine (2020) indicate that role models can be a powerful force for social learning affect the way individuals view themselves and the world around them, and ultimately affect their decisions about how to conduct their lives. One of the best ways to learn about humanistic and ethical aspects of life is through role modelling. Students actively observe and mimic the characteristics of their perceived models through the cognitive process of role modelling (Bijari et al., 2016). In a study in secondary schools in Pakistan involving female students, Bashir et al. (2014) reported that most students in the schools took their teachers as role models, and this impacted their behaviours. Consistently, Hasnah (2017) is a critical review established that teachers' qualities like being

committed to the work, encouraging students and appreciating diversity, bringing a wide range of skills and talents to teaching, fostering critical thinking and emphasising teamwork among students.

In a review, Morgenroth et al. (2015) revealed that a role model who functions as an inspiration may make a goal desirable. However, it was also reported that role modelling may negatively influence role aspirants' expectations of success when attainability is low. In a study involving first-grade children in three school districts in Southeast and Central Texas, Hughes and Chen (2011) reported that teachers' role modelling had a positive and significant influence on students' development of a sense of school belonging and being cooperative in the classroom activities. In the same vein, Murray and Main (2005) in a study on role modelling involving nursing students in the UK reported that role modelling was the most appropriate approach because it enabled students to work alongside practitioners. Accordingly, role modelling gave students opportunities to learn about communication skills, problem-solving and how to move patients safely in a positive learning environment. The above finding was confirmed by Narinasamy and Logeswaran (2015) in a study on the influence of teachers' role modelling of teachers in a state school in Malaysia. The findings showed that teacher's characteristics were important in establishing good relationships between teachers and students in the classrooms. They revealed that the patience and listening of a teacher to students helped in changing the behaviours of students.

Nauta et al. (2001) in a study involving students at a large Midwestern university in the USA established that role modelling related to the development of socially desirable behaviours among students. Shein and Chiou (2011) in a study examining the role modelling role of teachers on students' learning styles in higher learning institutions in Taiwan revealed learning styles of students were associated with their role models. However, while the studies above pointed to the relationship between role modelling and student behaviour, the studies were skewed

outside Uganda and did not capture the Ugandan context. With reported cases of unprofessional conduct (Muhwezi, 2017; Zikanga et al., 2021) and alcoholism (Rukundo & Magambo, 2013; Bashaija et al., 2021) reported among teachers in Uganda, it was deemed necessary to study whether teachers set role models that influenced students behaviour. This study thus tested the hypothesis to the effect that:

H₀₃: Role modelling positively relates to students' behaviour in secondary schools.

METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methodology that guided this study. Specifically, the methods included the research design and sample, measures of the constructs and data analysis. The design adopted was the cross-sectional research design using a sample of secondary students. Data were analysed in partial least square structural equation modelling.

Research Design and Sample

The study was a cross-sectional survey collecting data on what was taking place in the schools in relation to positive discipline approaches and student behaviour at a particular time. This allowed the analysis of study variables at once and looked at the prevalence of the research problem in the study population as it existed at the time. Using the cross-sectional research design, it was possible to obtain useful data in a relatively short time scope. Since the cross-sectional studies permit the collection of data using questionnaire surveys, the quantitative approach was adopted. This enabled the collection of data for making statistical inferences producing generalizable findings. The sample for the study was 357 students from a population of 5227 students determined using the table for determining sample size from a given population by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). However, accurate data were collected from 343(96.1%) students. This response rate was considered good because, according to Pielsticker and Hiebl (2020), a response rate of above 50% is sufficient in humanity studies.

Measures of Constructs

The dependent variable in this study was student behaviour and the independent variable was positive discipline approaches. Positive behaviours were measured in terms of social competence with peers and adults, compliance with rules and adult direction, and autonomy or self-reliance. Before data reduction, social competence was measured using 11 items, compliance nine items and autonomy six items (Epps et al., 2003). Positive discipline approaches were measured in terms of guidance and counselling, role modelling and positive reinforcement among others (Kiprop, 2012). Guidance and counselling were measured using nine items (Salgong et al., 2016), role modelling 12 items (Nauta & Kokaly, 2001), and positive reinforcement 14 items (Rahimi & Karkami, 2015). The items were measured using a five-point Likert scale with one (1) as the minimum for the worst-case scenario (very untrue) to a maximum of five (5) as the best-case scenario (very true).

Data Analysis Method

The study employed partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) particularly SmartPLS 3 software because of its capacity to generate intuitive functions for generating higher-order constructs and interaction terms and estimation of complex models with many latent variables. SmartPLS shows predictive relationships between variables with strong theoretical support revealing causal relationships. Using SmartPLS it was possible to display the relationships (paths) between the constructs and measurement models of the constructs indicating the relationships between the constructs and the indicator variables (Hair Jr et al., 2021). PLS-

SEM technique applying SmartPLS was appropriate for this study to test the causal-effect relationships proposed in this study model because the sample exceeded 100 ($n = 343$) (Yang et al., 2021). Therefore, using SmartPLS the relationship between positive behaviour approaches and student behaviour was shown.

FINDINGS

This section presents results on positive discipline approaches and students' behaviour in government-aided secondary schools. The results include background characteristics of the study participants, the measurement and structural models.

Demographic Characteristics of Students

The results in *Table 1* show that the modal percentage (57.7%) of the study participants was males with females being 42.3%. This meant that a larger percentage of students who participated in the study were males. With respect to the age distribution of the students participating in the study, the larger percentage (59.8%) were aged 14-18 years, 21.3% were below 14 years and the remaining 19.0% were above 18 years. Therefore, the modal age was between 14-18 years. The results on class distribution of students participating in the study show that the larger percentage (22.7%) were senior two students followed by 22.2% that were in senior six, 19.2% were in senior one, 18.1% were in senior five, 10.5% were in senior four, and 7.3% were in senior S.3. Generally, the results on class distribution show that the students were from different classes. Therefore, the perceptions examined in the study with respect to positive discipline approaches and students' behaviour reflected the views of students of various classes in the schools.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics, Total N = 343

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender Distribution	Male	198	57.7	57.7
	Female	145	42.3	100.0
Age Distribution	Below 14 years	73	21.3	21.3
	14 - 18 years	205	59.8	81.0
	Above 18 years	65	19.0	100.0
Class Distribution	S.1	66	19.2	19.2

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
S.2	78	22.7	42.0
S.3	25	7.3	49.3
S.4	36	10.5	59.8
S.5	62	18.1	77.8
S.6	76	22.2	100.0

Measurement Models

The measurement models involved testing validity in terms of convergent validity and discriminant validity, reliability, average variance extracted, and collinearity diagnostic assessment. The models helped to establish the accuracy and consistency of the instrument and ascertained the independence of the variables.

Measurement Model 1

The first measurement model (*Table 2*) tested the validity of the data which involved assessing

convergent validity using average variance extracted (AVE) and discriminant validity using the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations. While AVE measures whether the constructs measure a variable, the HTMT ratio of correlations helps in assessing whether a reflectively measured construct is independent of others measuring the same variable and hence can predict the dependent variable independently. The results follow in *Table 2*.

Table 2: Heterotrait Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio of Correlations for Discriminant Validity Assessment

Positive discipline approaches	AVE	Guidance & Counselling	Positive Reinforcement	Role Modelling
Guidance & Counselling	0.623			
Positive Reinforcement	0.529	0.663		
Role Modelling	0.614	0.300	0.192	
Students' Behaviour	EVE	Autonomy	Compliance	Social Competence
Autonomy	0.902			
Compliance	0.502	0.224		
Social Competence	0.517	0.136	0.196	

The tests results in *Table 2* show that the EVA values were greater than the acceptable threshold of 0.5 confirming convergent validity (Alarcón et al., 2015). For Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations, they fulfilled the condition of discriminant validity because they did not exceed the maximum of 0.90 (Ringle et al., 2023). Therefore, the measures converged on the variables and were discriminately valid (*Table 2*). The validity results reached the threshold requirements. Therefore, the results qualified to be used in subsequent analyses.

Measurement Model 2

The second measurement model involved testing reliability using Cronbach's alpha (CA [α]) and Composite Reliability (CR) because both measure internal consistency which indicates the association between indicators measuring the same construct. The model also included collinearity results to ascertain whether the variables were independent. The reliability and collinearity results follow in *Table 3*.

Table 3: Reliability, composite reliability, average variance extracted and collinearity

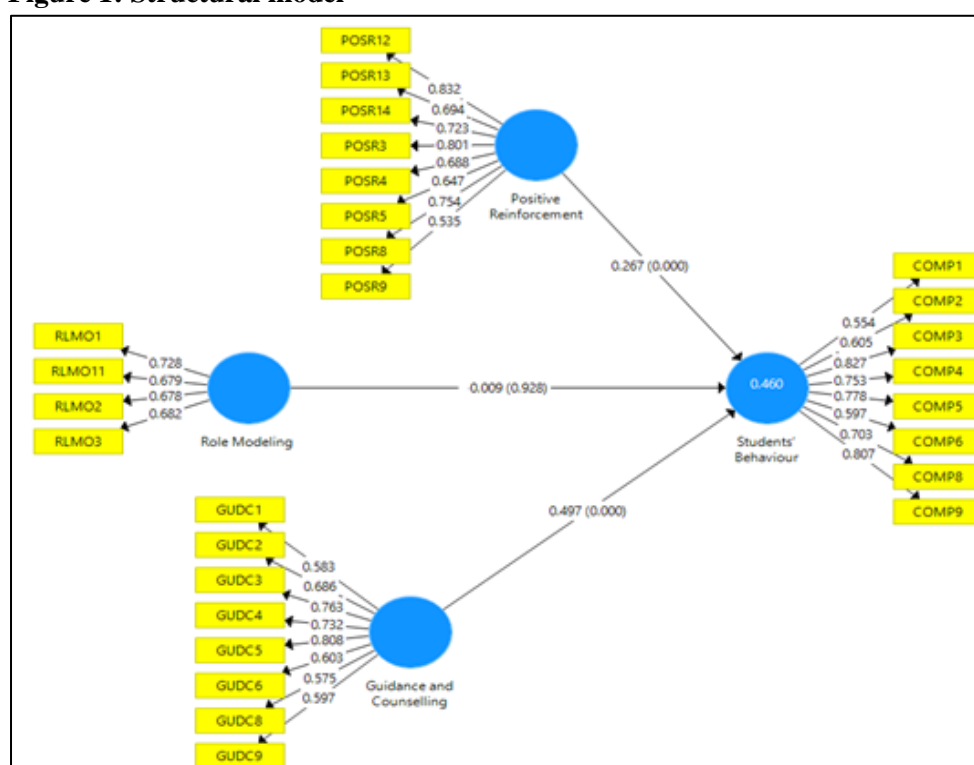
Positive discipline approaches	CA (α)	CR	VIF
Guidance & Counselling	0.795	0.868	1.751
Positive Reinforcement	0.869	0.898	1.922
Role Modelling	0.769	0.756	2.020
Students' Behaviour		CR	VIF
Autonomy	0.792	0.965	2.310
Compliance	0.895	0.888	2.155
Social Competence	0.865	0.881	1.965

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient and composite reliability values (*Table 3*) for individual constructs were above 0.70 which indicates a satisfactory level of reliability in exploratory research. Nonetheless, since Cronbach's alpha has a limitation of assuming that all indicator traits are the same in the population lowering reliability values, Composite Reliability was preferred because it is liberal as it takes into account the different outer traits of the indicator variables. The Collinearity test results which are indicators of high correlation between constructs in a formative measurement model showed that it did not exist because the variance inflation factor (VIF) which is the standard metric for measuring collinearity produced values that were less than 5 (Hair Jr et al., 2021). The lack of collinearity indicated

independence between the constructs measuring the variables.

Structural Equation Model

To establish the existence of casual linkages between the independent and dependent variables, structural equation modelling was carried out on the three (3) hypotheses, namely; guidance and counselling positively relate to students' behaviour in secondary schools (H1), positive reinforcement positively relates to students' behaviour in secondary schools (H2), and role modelling positively relates to students' behaviour in secondary schools (H3). The results on the same are indicated in the structural model (*Figure 1*) and path estimates (*Table 4*).

Figure 1: Structural model

The structural equation model (*Figure 1*) presents factor loadings, betas (β s) and p-values and involves establishing relationships between constructs by examining their path coefficients, and determination (R^2). The factor loadings show that for guidance and counselling, all nine indicators were retained, for role modelling four out of 12 indicators were retained, and for positive

reinforcement only eight out of 14 indicators were retained. For students' behaviour, of the three constructs namely social competence, compliance and autonomy only compliance was retained. However, out of its nine indicators, only eight were retained. The betas (β s), p-values and R^2 values are further indicated in *Table 4*.

Table 4: Structural equation model estimates

	Beta	Mean	STD	t	p
Guidance and Counselling →Students' Behaviour	0.497	0.493	0.070	7.064	0.000
Positive Reinforcement →Students' Behaviour	0.267	0.279	0.066	4.071	0.000
Role Modelling →Students' Behaviour	0.009	0.017	0.103	0.091	0.928
$R^2 = 0.460$					

The results revealed that guidance and counselling ($\beta = 0.497$, $t = 7.064$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) and positive reinforcement ($\beta = 0.267$, $t = 4.071$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) positively and significantly predicted students behaviour. However, role modelling ($\beta = 0.009$, $t = 0.091$, $p = 0.928 > 0.05$) positively but insignificantly predicted students behaviour. R^2 suggested the three factors namely guidance and counselling, positive reinforcement and role modelling contributed 46.0% to students' behaviour. This means that coefficients of determination suggested that 54.0% of the variation in students' behaviour was accounted for by other factors not considered under this model.

DISCUSSION

The results showed that guidance and counselling positively and significantly predicted students' behaviour. This means that if a school implements an effective guidance and counselling system, students' behaviours will be improved. This finding is consistent with the finding by Bardhoshi et al. (2018) who reported that well-designed classroom counselling lessons met students identified school needs. Relatedly, Berger (2013) revealed that there was a significant improvement in underachieving students. Also, Kayler and Sherman (2009) found out that small-group counselling intervention strengthened studying behaviours. In the same vein, Carey and Dimmitt (2012) revealed that there was a relationship between counselling and positive

student educational outcomes. Also, Kanus (2017) found out that guidance and counselling services helped students to handle their emotional problems. Consistently, Salgong et al. (2016) also revealed that guidance and counselling improved the discipline of students and led to reduced indiscipline in schools. Similarly, Onyango et al. (2018) indicated that guidance and counselling related to the management of student behaviour. Likewise, Parzych et al. (2019) revealed that guidance and counselling lowered student absenteeism and suspensions. With the findings of the study consistent with the findings of previous scholars, it can be surmised that guidance and counselling in a school system predict students' behaviours.

The findings further revealed that positive reinforcement positively and significantly predicted students' behaviour. This finding agreed with Gooch (2017) who revealed that reinforcement in terms of cooperative discipline was more successful than assertive discipline in deterring problem behaviour in students. Relatedly, Rafi et al. (2020) reported that positive reinforcement strategies including praise, feedback and other classroom management studies had an implication for increasing the likelihood of the desired behaviour. In the same vein, Rahimi and Karkami (2015) found out that in classes where teachers managed disruptive behaviours by using punitive strategies, students

had problems in learning as punitive strategies lowered students' motivation. Therefore, positive reinforcement is related to enhanced student behaviours. Also, Partin (2009) revealed that teacher praise and the provision of high rates of opportunities for students to respond correctly to academic questions, tasks, or demands increased their appropriate behaviours. Similarly, Reinke et al. (2008) found that increased use of praise and use of behaviour-specific praise contributed to decreases in classroom disruptive behaviour. Further, Scott (2018) reported that the programme led to a reduction in students' disruptive classroom behaviours. Thomas (2021) also revealed that the programme resulted in improved student behaviour by decreasing the use of punitive behaviours such as office referrals and school suspensions. In the same vein, Niswaty (2017) established teachers' positive reinforcement had a significant influence on the motivation of students. Similarly, Somayeh et al. (2013) reported that positive discipline methods (reinforcement) had a positive and significant relationship with students' self-control and commitment. With the finding of the study agreeing with the findings of previous scholars, it can surmised that if teachers use positive reinforcement, they are likely to enhance good behaviours in students.

Nonetheless, the findings indicated that role modelling insignificantly predicted students' behaviour. This finding is inconsistent with the findings of previous scholars. This is because their findings confirmed the role of role modelling in predicting students' behaviour. For example, Bashir et al. (2014) reported that most students in the schools took their teachers as role models, and this impacted their behaviours. Similarly, Hasnah (2017) established that teachers' qualities like being committed to the work, encouraging students and appreciating diversity, bringing a wide range of skills and talents to teaching, fostering critical thinking and emphasising teamwork among students. Also, Morgenroth et al. (2015) revealed that a role model who functions as an inspiration may make a goal desirable. In the same vein, Hughes and Chen

(2011) reported that teachers' role modelling had a positive and significant influence on students' development of a sense of school belonging and being cooperative in classroom activities. Likewise, Murray and Main (2005) reported that role modelling was the most appropriate approach because it enabled students to work alongside practitioners. Relatedly, Narinasamy and Logeswaran (2015) indicated that teachers' characteristics such as patience and listening helped in changing the behaviours of students. Also, Nauta et al. (2001) revealed that role modelling is related to the development of socially desirable behaviours among students. Further, inconsistent with the findings of the study, Shein and Chiou (2011) indicated that the learning styles of students were associated with their role models. However, with the finding of the study contrary to the findings of all the other scholars, it can be deduced that in the context of schools in Uganda, role modelling has a limited impact on influencing students' behaviour.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examined the relationship between positive discipline approaches and students' behaviour in secondary schools. From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that two aspects of positive discipline approaches namely guidance and counselling, and positive reinforcement are essential factors for promoting students' behaviour. As indicated in the structural model, when students receive counselling offered to the whole class, in small-group with other students, as an individual student, and guidance and counselling are aimed at changing students focus, there will be improved behaviours among students. Also, if schools establish student-focused guidance and counselling interventions, guidance and counselling are provided in an enjoyable manner, are not directive but help the students appreciate the need to change and students are engaged in dialogue, students' behaviours will be enhanced. In addition, if students receive positive reinforcement from teachers letting them talk about their side of things, are made to understand why their

behaviours are a problem for others and teachers help them to understand how their behaviours affect them, there is likely to be improvement in students behaviours.

Further, if teachers reward students for behaving properly, praise classes for good behaviour, and make their classes decide what should happen to students who misbehave, students' behaviours are likely to be enhanced. However, role modelling in terms of there being teachers whom students can count on to be there for them when they need support in making academic and career choices, and help students weigh the pros and cons of academic and career choices students' behaviour will be insignificantly enhanced. Also, there being teachers to help students consider their academic and career options, and mentor their academic and career pursuits insignificantly enhanced students behaviours. Therefore, it is recommended that school administrators and teachers should emphasise providing guidance counselling and positive reinforcement to students as they handle them while role modelling should not be prioritised. This is because while guidance counselling and positive reinforcement enhance students' behaviour significantly, role modelling influences them insignificantly.

Limitations

This study makes significant contributions as far as indicating how positive discipline approaches especially guidance counselling and positive reinforcement relate to students' behaviours. However, the results for the third hypothesis which were inconsistent with what was hypothesised in relation to the relationship between role modelling and students' behaviour suggest the need for further exploring the significance of role modelling in more Ugandan secondary schools especially since this study was done in one rural municipality. Still, this study was a cross-sectional survey suggesting that some school situations in relation to the study variables may not have been fully captured. This calls for future studies to adopt longitudinal studies for an extended analysis of the situations in the schools. Further, the study was positivist in nature limiting

in-depth analysis. This suggests that future studies on the same should adopt an interpretive approach for in-depth analysis.

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