Mutual respect as a tool to curb indiscipline in secondary schools in bali nyonga, north west region of cameroon: implications for guidance counselling

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to examine mutual respect as a tool to curb indiscipline in secondary schools in Bali Nyonga, North West Region of Cameroon: implications for guidance counselling. The study employed the full-block experimental approach. The population of this study constituted four groups of respondents: 339 students, and 20 school staff. The sample was obtained through purposive sampling technique. The instruments for data collection were a questionnaire, and a semi-structured interview schedule. Data from the close ended questions was analysed using SPSS 23.0, with the aid of descriptive and inferential statistical tools while the interview was analysed thematically. The hypotheses of the study were tested using a non-parametric test (Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient) presented at 95% level of confidence interval with alpha set at 0.05 levels accepting 5% margin of error. Findings showed that in the school referred to adequately practice positive discipline, more of students 77.0% reported mutual respect confirmed by a high mean of 3.06 on 4 which is more than three times higher when compared to the school referred not to practice positive discipline with only 25.3% of students reported mutual respect,

further confirmed by a low mean of 2.37. Furthermore, when mutual respect was compared in relation to students' discipline, findings showed a significant difference in students' discipline between the school that adequately reinforce mutual respect and the school that does not (t=13.019, p-value < 0.001). The school that adequately reinforce mutual respect has a high mean value of 19.35 plus or minus 0.20583 which implies high discipline and low indiscipline than the school that does not adequately reinforced mutual respect with a lesser mean of 15.44 plus or minus 0.21899 indicating more students' indiscipline than students' discipline. And hypothetically, mutual respect significantly and positively correlates with students' discipline (R-value 0.400**, p-value < 0.001). The positivity of the coefficient value implies that students' indiscipline is more likely to be curb / reduce when mutual respect is well promoted in the school and this prediction is high as supported with a high explanatory power of 80.6% (Cox and Snell statistics). In the school that adequately practice mutual respect, some teachers said they instill mutual respect by counselling students, promoting friendship, exercising patience, promoting self-control, follow-up students, instill consciousness in actions, teach morality, and act as a role model for the students to emulate. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis that states mutual respect as a positive discipline approach significantly help to curb indiscipline in secondary schools was accepted. Therefore, it is recommended that the state through the Ministries of Education should include positive discipline in the curriculum of teacher training institutions. This will enhance their commitment in the teaching learning process. The Regional Delegations of secondary education should include positive disciple as a requirement for professional development programs, seminal and workshops to equipe teachers with the tools and knowledge of positive discipline in the classroom. The knowledge of Positive discipline will enhance teacher 's and guidance counselors the abilities to identify students with needs.

Keywords: Mutual Respect, Curb Indiscipline, Secondary Schools, Bali Nyonga, North West Region, Cameroon, Implications and Guidance Counselling.

Introduction: Mutual respect in educational settings is increasingly recognized as a vital component in fostering a positive learning environment, particularly in secondary schools. In Bali Nyonga, North West Region of Cameroon, the issue of indiscipline among students poses significant challenges to effective teaching and learning. According to Curwin and Mendler (1999), a respectful atmosphere enhances student engagement and promotes positive behavior, suggesting that the cultivation of mutual respect could be key to addressing indiscipline in this context. As schools grapple with increasing instances of disruptive behavior, understanding and implementing strategies that promote mutual respect becomes crucial for educators and guidance counselors alike.

In the current educational landscape of Bali Nyonga, instances of indiscipline such as truancy, disrespect towards teachers, and violence have been reported as common challenges. A study by Ngwa and Nkuo (2020) found that these behaviors negatively impact not only student performance but also the overall school climate. The lack of mutual respect among students and between students and teachers contributes to a cycle of conflict and disengagement, ultimately hindering academic achievement. This situation highlights the urgent need for interventions that prioritize the establishment of respectful relationships within schools.

Furthermore, the implications for guidance counseling in addressing these issues are significant. Guidance counselors play an essential role in shaping school culture and promoting mutual respect through targeted programs and workshops. According to Koller (2006), effective counseling can foster emotional intelligence and social skills among students, which are critical for developing respectful interactions. By integrating mutual respect into counseling practices, schools can create a more supportive environment that encourages positive behavior and reduces incidents of indiscipline.

Ultimately, the integration of mutual respect as a tool to curb indiscipline in secondary schools in Bali Nyonga has the potential to transform the educational experience for both students and educators. By fostering an atmosphere where students feel valued and respected, schools can mitigate the challenges associated with indiscipline. The collaboration between educators and guidance counselors in promoting mutual respect is essential for creating a conducive learning environment that not only enhances academic success but also contributes to the holistic development of students.

In essence, In the context of secondary schools in Bali Nyonga, North West Region of Cameroon, mutual respect is increasingly recognized as a critical tool for curbing indiscipline among students. Ideally, schools should be environments where students feel valued, respected, and supported, leading to positive behavior and academic success. However, the reality in many schools is starkly different. Reports indicate that indiscipline manifests in various forms, including disobedience, truancy, and violence, which disrupt the

learning environment and hinder educational outcomes. A study conducted in Cameroon highlighted that common types of indiscipline include collective misconduct and unacceptable habits, which are often rooted in a lack of mutual respect between students and teachers (Ngwokabuenui, 2015).

The consequences of this indiscipline are profound. Students who do not feel respected are less likely to engage positively in their education, leading to increased dropout rates and poor academic performance. Furthermore, the absence of a respectful school culture can contribute to a cycle of violence and conflict, affecting not only the students involved but also the broader school community. The government of Cameroon has recognized these issues and has implemented various policies aimed at improving school discipline, including the introduction of moral education and behavior accountability policies (Ebontane, 2006). However, these measures have not fully addressed the underlying issues of mutual respect and psychosocial support, as many teachers lack the training necessary to foster a supportive environment.

Despite governmental efforts, the problem of indiscipline persists in secondary schools in Bali Nyonga. Statistics indicate that a significant percentage of students continue to exhibit disruptive behaviors, which can be attributed to the ongoing lack of mutual respect in the classroom. This situation underscores the urgent need for effective guidance counseling programs that emphasize the importance of mutual respect as a foundational element in curbing indiscipline. By equipping teachers with the skills to foster respectful relationships and providing students with the support they need, schools can create a more conducive learning environment that ultimately leads to improved behavior and academic success.

This study has as lone objective to find out how mutual respect helps to curb indiscipline in Secondary Schools in Bali Nyonga, North West Region of Cameroon: Implications for Guidance Counselling.

Based on the above objective, one general hypothesis was tested which verified how mutual respect as a positive discipline approach significantly help to curb indiscipline in Secondary Schools in Bali Nyonga, North West Region of Cameroon: Implications for Guidance Counselling.

Literature Review

To begin with, Stanford Encyclopedia (2014) defines respect as a responsive relation which is expressed in various ways including attention, deference, acknowledgment, valuing, and behaviour. The English word respect is derived from the respicere, which means "to look back at" or "to look again". The

Stanford Encyclopedia further notes that respect is a particular mode of apprehending the object, and explains that the person who respects something pays attention to it and perceives it differently from someone who does not. It is therefore instructive that the synonyms for respect are words such regard, which means to "to watch out for" and consideration, which means "to examine carefully" or "paying close attention to". Respect requires paying close attention and involves other behaviours such as deference and acknowledgement, as well as a philosophical orientation of valuing another's point of view. Relying on the ethical theory of Immanuel Kant, Wood (1999) suggests that when one respects another, one is not prone to be oblivious or indifferent to that person, or to ignore or quickly dismiss that person, neglecting or disregarding that person, and argues that it is morally wrong to express disrespect or contempt for persons by not valuing them as ends in themselves.

Respect as part of the process of leadership, is not confined to the world of business and to adults. It is equally important when leading schools and relating to students. Kohn (1996) contends that children are more likely to be respectful when important adults in their lives respect them; a view later echoed by Boynton and Boynton (2005) who note that people are more apt to go out of their way to please a boss who they believe values them as individuals and treats them with dignity and respect. According the Boynton and Boynton, students have the same feelings as adults do. They thus conclude that in order to foster positive teacher-student relations and improve student discipline teachers should seek to show respect to students. Thus, if respect has positive effects on teacher-student behavior then the absence of respect may be deemed to be a contributor to negative student-teacher relationships and negative attitudes of students towards school and school authorities, although the negative attitudes of students towards school and school authorities result from a variety of factors.

A classroom environment upholds the values that a teacher fosters within their room (Miller & Pedro, 2006). Miller and Pedro (2006) specifically explore the qualities of a respectful classroom environment, which they believe is a space in which students feel comfortable, safe, and valued. Jones & Leah (2022) found that there were multiple factors that contributed to fostering a respectful environment, including: classroom management, teacher-student relationships, and peer relationships. There have been multiple studies analyzing different aspects of a positive and respectful classroom environment and ways to foster such an environment.

Many studies conducted on the subject record student

feedback through surveys and/ or interviews. One such study by Keyes (2019) looked at student perceptions of belonging in the school and classroom. This study consisted of a compilation of 31 interviews of high school students attending a Chicago Public School and detailed a list of factors that students contributed to their sense of belonging. A study by Pendergast, Allen, McGregor, and Ronksley-Pavia (2018) compiles interviews of school administrators, teachers, and middle level school students in order to see how a sense of belonging at school affected youth as well as how to create that sense of belonging. Öncü and Bichelmeyer (2021) surveyed high school and college students taking an associate certification course as well as the teachers who taught those courses. They asked questions about multiple factors that influence a students' sense of belonging, such as engagement, instructional practices, and teacher characteristics. Alston & Bowles, (2012) looked at how instructional practices might affect students' sense of belonging, and found that there was a relationship between instructional practices, a sense of belonging, and academic achievement. Skerrett (2012) observe a teacher's reading class in order to understand how classroom practices contributed to students' sense of belonging and academic achievement.

Another trend in creating a respectful classroom environment is a focus on mutual respect (Skerrett, 2012). Mutual respect is created when teachers follow the same standards they set for their students. This respect signals to students that teachers not only have high expectations for their students, but that they see those expectations as attainable and worth holding themselves accountable to. Mutual respect often comes with an emphasis on relationships.

Fostering positive teacher-student relationships, as well as positive peer relationships, is a large part of classroom culture. Positive and strong relationships create a sense of safety in the classroom that allows for more meaningful learning. Many studies point to the positive benefits of creating strong relationships within the classroom (Miller & Pedro, 2006). Positive relationships lead to better student engagement, better student achievement, and a better sense of belonging (Öncü & Bichelmeyer, 2021). Though many classrooms focus on student-teacher relationships, peer relationships are a large factor in student comfort, and a teacher does have a big role in fostering positive peer relationships through academic and community building activities.

Some more specific factors that help create a respectful classroom environment are celebrating identity, creating safe spaces, and ingenuity. Celebrating students' identities demonstrates that they are valued by the classroom and that they bring something valuable to the classroom community. Sharing and reflecting student identities in the classroom creates a strong sense of belonging (Alston, & Bowles, 2012). It also contributes to the creation of a safe space for all students because students see themselves as valued and represented in the classroom. In many studies, students and teachers have commented on what they call a "safe space" (Miller & Pedro, 2006).

Safe spaces are places where students can be their authentic selves, ask difficult questions, make mistakes, and grow together. Having a classroom that students feel safe in is very important to a strong classroom environment. If students do not feel safe to be themselves and make mistakes, not only is learning difficult, but creating a culture of ingenuity is difficult. Amerstorfer (2021), states that students who believed their teachers to be genuine people, felt more comfortable in the classroom. This sense of comfort led to a stronger and more respectful classroom environment. If a student can trust a teacher to be genuine and real with them, students will be more comfortable being genuine and real with their teachers and peers. In nearly all instances mentioned, teachers act as the role model that sets the classroom standard of respect. In the end, teachers hold the most power and ability to foster a respectful classroom environment.

The concept of trust between teachers and pupils is not only a complex area, but one which is often contested due to the problem of defining trust in this context (Czerniawski & Garlick 2011). It is also pertinent to note here that trust may operate on two different levels: 'synthetic' trust may exist where student voice initiatives are tokenistic and driven by ulterior motives such as compliance or policy, as opposed to 'authentic' trust which is genuine and is derived from establishing professional and democratic partnerships between pupils and teachers (Czerniawski 2012).

The capacity to build and sustain relationships between students and teachers, however, boils down to ensuring that the opinions of students are valued and that they are trusted (García-Moya, Moreno, & Brooks, 2019). This in turn equates itself with what can be described as 'interpersonal trust' between teachers and pupils and is fundamental to unleashing the full potential of student voice where pupils are empowered in decision-making processes (Lizzio, Dempster & Neumann 2011). Along with increased responsibility and leadership roles, students constantly reiterate the importance of trust and the need for mutual respect (Mullis 2011).

Hart (1992) provides a useful model of student voice

which presents the spectrum of pupil activity. Hart's 'ladder of participation' (see Figure 1) includes the lower levels of Manipulation, Decoration and Tokenism. These three lower rungs on Hart's ladder distinguish themselves from what Fielding (2001) describes as the true embodiment of 'emancipatory' practice whereby students are involved in radical democratic initiatives and therefore actively directing and being responsible for change. Pupil consultation and engagement where pupils and teachers take joint ownership of teaching and learning such as the 'Teach a teacher' project is essentially challenging because it questions the established teacher pupil balance of power (Rudduck 2005). At an institutional level this involves, at least culturally, a deeply engrained process of reform and a shift both in the identity of the stakeholders (Morgan 2011) and in the way the institution operates on a day-today basis with a view to pupils becoming involved in bringing about educational change and renewal (Fielding 2001). This entails a process which is mutually supportive and as well as fostering pupils' emotional and social development (Deuchar 2009), it also allows students to build empathy with their teachers (D'Andrea 2013; Gamliel and Hazan 2014).

Paula Denton (2009) values language as "one of the most powerful teaching tools." Teachers who develop a repertoire of language and choose words carefully are better able to support students academically and socially as they develop skills of collaboration and self-control. Specific language strategies are applicable to different categories of classroom interaction. For example, questioning techniques challenge students to venture out of their academic comfort zones. Corrective language is needed to redirect students' negative behavior. Direct language with a "kind and straightforward tone" conveys trust, respect, and a feeling of safety in the classroom. Direct instructions, such as open your folder, are more effective and less divisive than comparisons with the exemplary behavior of a peer.

Younger children respond better to commands that appeal to their concrete thinking domain. For example, a student who is distracted from a class discussion may be more effectively told to look at the speaker and listen rather than be respectful of the speaker. Sarcasm is to be avoided. This mode of speech may be effective in gaining an immediate redirection of behavior and can provide an amusing interlude for the class; however, the price to pay is a long term loss of respect and trust from the target student.

The most respectful instructions focus on student behaviour rather than the person. A comment about the lack of progress in a story-writing assignment is

preferable to a comment about lack of caring. Negative comments about a student's disposition are likely to result in defensive responses and negative reinforcement. The effective teacher is aware of language that will further engagement and promote progress for all students. Charlotte Danielson (2011) maintains that "teachers create an environment of respect and rapport in their classrooms by the ways they interact with students and by the interaction they encourage and cultivate among students." Good classroom rapport is dependent upon the teacher's insistence that students are respectful and caring toward one another. Appropriate choice of vocal tone and body language communicate a caring and interested disposition from the teacher toward students. Social inclusion by both the teacher and peers is necessary in order to create the feeling of a safe classroom environment in which all students are encouraged to learn. The effective teacher models socially inclusive behavior and ensures the creation of a supportive culture within the classroom. Classrooms that exhibit respect and rapport from the teacher and students display attributes such as respectful talk, politeness, turn taking, and fairness.

According to Sager (2003), the feeling of belonging has two elements: comfort and acceptance. Unsurprisingly, students who feel accepted at school are comfortable with daily interactions and are more likely to engage with work and succeed academically. Students who feel rejected by peers or feel out of place in school are less likely to show commitment to their studies. Sager asserts that students in some schools perceive a social hierarchy in which popular students succeed and others are left to fail. Teachers who consciously seek to include all individuals are likely to create a more welcoming classroom environment. The employment of a variety of teaching strategies and a diversity of activities is likely to strike chords of interest and promote engagement for all students. An acknowledgment of students' cultural preferences, language strengths and weaknesses, and personal interests sets the tone for an inclusive and caring classroom environment.

Teachers, especially in secondary education, generally think of raised performance on academic assignments as the main purpose of feedback to students. Feedback on student behavior is also an important responsibility of teachers in order to both create a positive and safe classroom environment and to promote individual student growth. Teachers are uniquely situated to provide feedback on academic progress and also to guide students in addressing behaviors such as low levels of participation, tardiness, calling out, lack of preparation, and other negative dispositions.

Academic and behavioral feedback is linked. For

example, a student is more likely to increase academic engagement having accepted feedback about poor preparation. Effective feedback within a warm and trusted classroom relationship may support students in gaining confidence and strengthening self-image inside and outside of school. Feedback is effective only if the teacher and student have developed positive rapport and trust. Secondly, the manner of delivery needs to be respectful, reassuring, and aimed at the behavior rather than at the student. Some teachers, in addition to reactive and immediate feedback, elect to schedule meetings with each individual student in order to ensure a safe environment for discussing dispositional behaviors (Burke, 2013).

Michele Borba (2006) asserts that students learn character building behaviors by "watching others do them well." For some students, the teacher may be their only model of respectful behavior. Borba draws attention to the frequent exposure of students to disrespectful dialogue such as "negativity, ridicule, and sarcasm" when watching popular television shows. Additionally, teachers cannot assume that all students are raised with respectful language in the home. Students may need guidance in order to recognize "appropriate language and destructive language. For example, respectful language could be referred to as a compliment or booster and disrespectful language could be referred to as disrespectful or a put-down. Borba reminds teachers that "it's easier to change behavior by focusing on the positive aspects instead of the negative." Classroom rules, ideally created with students, should include the need for respectful behavior and language. Lists of respectful statements displayed on posters may be of some help.

From a theoretical view point, the Discipline with Dignity model by Richard L. Curwin and Allen N. Mendler (1999) emphasizes the importance of mutual respect in the classroom as a foundational element for effective discipline. This model advocates for a balanced approach to discipline that combines clear expectations with a supportive environment, which is particularly relevant in the context of secondary schools in Bali Nyonga, Cameroon. In this setting, fostering mutual respect can serve as a powerful tool to curb indiscipline, as it encourages students to take ownership of their behavior and understand the consequences of their actions. By integrating the principles of the Discipline with Dignity model, educators can create a classroom atmosphere where students feel valued and respected, which is essential for promoting positive behavior and reducing instances of indiscipline.

Moreover, the model's focus on building strong teacher-student relationships aligns well with the cultural context of Bali Nyonga, where community and interpersonal relationships are highly valued. Curwin and Mendler argue that when teachers demonstrate care and understanding, students are more likely to respond positively and engage in the learning process. This is particularly important in regions where students may face various socio-economic challenges that affect their behavior and academic performance. By implementing strategies that emphasize empathy, active listening, and collaborative rule-setting, teachers can foster a sense of belonging among students, which is crucial for mitigating disruptive behaviors and enhancing overall classroom dynamics.

Finally, the implications for guidance counseling in this context are significant. Counselors can play a vital role in supporting the implementation of the Discipline with Dignity model by providing training for teachers on effective communication and conflict resolution strategies. Additionally, counselors can facilitate workshops that promote mutual respect and understanding among students, helping to create a more cohesive school environment. By aligning counseling practices with the principles of the Discipline with Dignity model, schools in Bali Nyonga can cultivate a culture of respect and responsibility, ultimately leading to improved student behavior and academic success.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed the full-block experimental approach specifically the Convergent Parallel Mixed method research design. The purpose of convergent parallel mixed method was to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem by converging or merging quantitative and qualitative data. The population consist of students, teachers and guidance counsellors of all secondary schools in Bali Nyonga Sub division of the North West Region. In this study, the target population is made up the confessional secondary schools. The students, teachers, discipline masters and guidance counsellors. These are the schools that are operational and are authorized secondary schools in the Bali Nyonga Subdivision. In the two confessional secondary schools in Bali sub division that made up of the accessible population of the study, there are 335 students, with 37 teachers, 3 discipline masters and 3 guidance counsellors making a total of 378 which also constituted the accessible population. Out of the 535 students, there are 230 male and 305 female. In addition, there are 37 teachers and out of the 37 teachers, there are 10 male and 27 female teachers. The sample size of the study consisted of 339 students, and 20 school staff. The sample was obtained through purposive sampling technique. The instruments for data collection were a questionnaire, and a semi-structured

interview schedule. Data from the close ended questions was analysed using SPSS 23.0, with the aid of descriptive and inferential statistical tools while the interview was analysed thematically. The hypotheses of the study were tested using a non-parametric test (Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient) presented at 95% level of confidence interval with alpha set at 0.05 levels accepting 5% margin of error.

DISCUSSION

Demographic Information of Respondents

Among the 339 students sampled for the study, 67.3% (228) were from Comprehensive Presbyterian College Bali and 32.7% (111) from Ancilia Catholic Comprehensive College Bali. More students were sampled from Comprehensive Presbyterian College Bali because it has students almost two times higher than in Ancilia Catholic Comprehensive College Bali. By class, 34.5% (117) of students were in form one, 22.1% (75) in form two, 14.5% (49) in form three, 7.7% (26) in

form four, 12.1% (41) in form five, 7.7% (26) in lower sixth, and 1.5% (5) in upper sixth. Finally, 56.0% (190) were male and 44.0% (149) were female.

Among the 15 teachers interviewed for the study, 60.0% (9) were female and 40.0% (6) were male. Moreover, 33.3% (5) of the teachers have taught for less than 5 years, 26.7% (4) for 5-10 years and 20.0% (3) for 11-15 years and above 15 years.

The findings of the study will be presented and supported by literature and the works of other researchers. Quantitative data will be presented first followed by qualitative data.

Appraisal of mutual respect as a positive discipline tool helps to curb indiscipline in the Experimental and Control Schools

The table below depicts students' opinion on mutual respect as a positive discipline tool helps to curb indiscipline in the experimental school.

Table 14: *Appraisal of Mutual Respect in the Experimental School*

Items	Stretched				Collapsed		Mean	Std. Dev
	SA	A	D	SD	SA/A	D/SD		
Teachers in our school ignore students.	51 (45.9%)	27 (24.3%)	15 (13.5%)	18 (16.2%)	78 (70.3%)	33 (29.7%)	3.00	1.120
Students in our school value their teachers.	51 (45.9%)	51 (45.9%)	6 (5.4%)	3 (2.7%)	102 (91.9%)	9 (8.1%)	3.35	.709
Students in our school treat their peers same.	33 (29.7%)	45 (40.5%)	27 (24.3%)	6 (5.4%)	78 (70.3%)	33 (29.7%)	2.95	.872
Teachers in our school quickly dismiss disciplinary issues.	39 (35.1%)	30 (27.0%)	33 (29.7%)	9 (8.1%)	69 (62.2%)	42 (37.8%)	2.89	.985
The school environment promotes a sense of safety among students and teachers.	33 (39.7%)	36 (32.4%)	30 (27.0%)	12 (10.8%)	69 (62.2%)	42 (37.8%)	2.81	.986
The teachers follow the same standards they set for their student discipline issues.	39 (35.1%)	54 (48.6%)	9 (8.1%)	9 (8.1%)	93 (83.8%)	18 (16.2%)	3.11	.867
Students in our school feel secured in the learning environment.	39 (35.1%)	57 (51.4%)	12 (10.8%)	3 (2.7%)	96 (86.5%)	15 (13.5%)	3.19	.733
Students in our school are polite towards themselves and teachers.	39 (35.1%)	60 (54.1%)	6 (5.4%)	6 (5.4%)	99 (89.2%)	12 (10.8%)	3.19	.769
Multiple Response and Mean	**324 (36.5%)**	**360 (40.5%)**	**138 (15.5%)**	**66 (7.4%)**	**684 (77.0%)**	**204 (23.0%)**	**3.06**	**.880**

Key: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree.

Std. Dev; Standard Deviation

The reported 77.0% of students acknowledging mutual respect aligns with the principles of Positive Discipline, which emphasizes kindness and firmness in

interactions. This approach encourages students to feel valued and respected, which is essential for their emotional and social development. According to

research, fostering mutual respect in educational settings can lead to improved student engagement and a more positive school climate (Cents-Boonstra, 2021). The mean score of 3.06, which is above the midpoint of 3.0, indicates that students generally perceive their environment as one that promotes mutual respect. This finding is consistent with Adlerian principles, which underpin Positive Discipline. Adlerian psychology posits that individuals are motivated by a desire to belong and feel significant, suggesting that when students feel respected, they are more likely to engage positively with their peers and teachers (McCluskey, 2022). While the majority reflects a positive outcome, the 23.0% of students who do not report mutual respect indicates an area for improvement. It is crucial for educators to investigate the reasons behind this discrepancy. Engaging with these students to understand their experiences can provide insights into potential gaps in the implementation of positive discipline practices. This aligns with the notion that effective discipline strategies should be inclusive and address the needs of all students, ensuring that everyone feels respected and valued.

Specifically, 91.9% (102) of students indicated that students in their school value teachers. Moreover, 89.2% (99) of students also reported politeness from students towards teachers. These statistics suggest a strong appreciation for educators among students, which can have various implications for educational outcomes and the overall learning environment. Research indicates that when students value their teachers, it can lead to improved academic performance. According to studies on social and emotional learning (SEL), supportive relationships between students and teachers enhance student engagement and academic success. Students who feel valued are more likely to participate actively in their learning, leading to better grades and test scores (Schonert-Reichl, 2017).

The reported politeness from students towards teachers is a vital aspect of school climate. A respectful environment contributes to a sense of safety and belonging among students, which is essential for effective learning. SEL programs have been shown to reduce bullying and aggression, promoting a culture of respect and support (O'Brennan, 2014). Politeness and respect from students can also positively impact teacher well-being. Educators who experience respectful interactions with students report higher job satisfaction and lower levels of burnout. This, in turn, can lead to more effective teaching practices and a more positive classroom atmosphere (Wang, 2024).

Similarly, the fact that 86.5% (96) of students feel secure in their learning environment is a positive indicator of the school climate. A secure learning environment is crucial for fostering student engagement and academic success. Research indicates that a positive school climate, characterized by safety and support, significantly enhances students' social, emotional, and academic development (Mitchell & Bradshaw, 2013). When students feel secure, they are more likely to participate actively in their learning and develop positive relationships with peers and teachers. The finding that 83.8% (93) of students believe teachers follow the same standards they set for students suggests a level of fairness and consistency in classroom management. This consistency is essential for establishing trust and respect between students and teachers. According to research, when teachers maintain clear expectations and consistently enforce them, it leads to improved student behavior and academic outcomes (Sugai & Horner, 2006). This alignment between teacher expectations and student behavior can create a more conducive learning environment.

The indication that 70.3% (78) of students feel that teachers ignore them while students treat peers the same raises concerns about student engagement and teacher-student relationships. Ignoring students can lead to feelings of alienation and disengagement, which can negatively impact their academic performance and mental health (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, & Leaf, 2012). Furthermore, the perception that peers treat each other similarly may reflect a classroom culture where negative behaviors are normalized. Research shows that classroom dynamics, including peer interactions, significantly influence individual student behavior and overall classroom climate (Stormshak et al., 1999). Finally, the finding that 62.2% (69) of students perceive a quick dismissal of disciplinary issues is troubling. This perception can undermine the authority of teachers and the overall effectiveness of classroom management strategies. Studies have shown that when disciplinary issues are not addressed adequately, it can lead to an increase in disruptive behaviors and a decline in the overall learning environment (Tobin & Vincent, 2011). Effective classroom management requires not only setting clear expectations but also addressing behavioral issues promptly and fairly to maintain a positive learning atmosphere.

The table below depicts students' opinion on mutual respect as a positive discipline tool helps to curb indiscipline in the control School.

Table 15: Appraisal of Mutual Respect in the Control School

Items	Stretched				Collapsed		Mean	Std. Dev
	SA	A	D	SD	SA/A	D/SD		
Teachers in our school ignore students.	15 (6.6%)	31 (13.6%)	164 (71.9%)	18 (7.9%)	46 (20.2%)	182 (79.8%)	2.19	.667
Students in our school value their teachers.	32 (14.0%)	12 (5.3%)	174 (76.3%)	10 (4.4%)	44 (19.3%)	184 (80.7%)	2.29	.759
Students in our school treat their peers same.	60 (26.3%)	15 (6.6%)	138 (60.5%)	15 (6.6%)	75 (32.9%)	153 (67.1%)	2.53	.955
Teachers in our school quickly dismiss disciplinary issues.	53 (23.2%)	16 (7.0%)	150 (65.8%)	9 (3.9%)	69 (30.3%)	159 (69.7%)	2.50	.893
The school environment promotes a sense of safety among students and teachers.	44 (19.3%)	11 (4.8%)	168 (73.7%)	5 (2.2%)	55 (24.1%)	173 (75.9%)	2.41	.822
The teachers follow the same standards they set for their student discipline issues.	56 (24.6%)	20 (8.8%)	147 (64.5%)	5 (2.2%)	76 (33.3%)	152 (66.7%)	2.56	.886
Students in our school feel secured in the learning environment.	38 (16.7%)	25 (11.0%)	154 (67.5%)	11 (4.8%)	63 (27.6%)	165 (72.4%)	2.39	.820
Students in our school are polite towards themselves and teachers.	16 (7.0%)	17 (7.5%)	173 (75.9%)	22 (9.6%)	33 (14.5%)	195 (85.5%)	2.12	.663
Multiple Response and Mean	**314 (17.2%)**	**147 (8.1%)**	**1268 (69.5%)**	**95 (5.2%)**	**461 (25.3%)**	**1363 (74.7%)**	**2.37**	**.808**

Key: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree.

Std. Dev; Standard Deviation

In overall, in the school that was referred not to practice positive discipline, 25.3% of students reported mutual respect while majority 74.7% do not. The overall mean of 2.37 below 2.5 on a mean scale 1-4 implies that mutual respect is low. The low percentage of students reporting mutual respect suggests a challenging environment for building positive relationships among peers and between students and teachers. Research indicates that mutual respect is foundational for effective communication and collaboration in educational settings (Nelsen, 2015). Without it, students may struggle to engage meaningfully with one another and with their educators. A lack of mutual respect can lead to a negative impact on the learning environment. When students do not feel respected, they may be less motivated to participate in class and more likely to exhibit disruptive behaviors (Granero-Gallegos, Gómez-López, Baena-Extremera, & Martínez-Molina, 2019). This can create a cycle where low engagement leads to further disrespect and conflict. The absence of positive discipline practices in the school may contribute to the low levels of mutual respect. Positive discipline emphasizes the importance of fostering respectful relationships and teaching students about accountability and empathy. Schools that do not implement these strategies may miss opportunities to cultivate a culture of respect and cooperation. The findings suggest a pressing need for interventions aimed at improving mutual respect within the school.

Implementing positive discipline strategies, such as class meetings and collaborative problem-solving, can help create an environment where students feel valued and respected (Epstein et al., 2008). These approaches encourage students to take ownership of their behavior and foster a sense of community.

Specifically, while 33.3% (76) of students indicated that teachers follow the same standard set for students, 66.7% (152) disagreed. Moreover, while 32.9% (75) of students reported same treatment by peers to others, 67.1% (153) disagreed. Furthermore, 30.3% (69) of students reported quick dismissal of disciplinary cases while 69.7% (159) do not. Research indicates that when teachers apply rules inconsistently, it can lead to confusion and resentment among students, undermining their trust in the educational system (Thornberg, 2007). Consistent enforcement of standards is crucial for fostering a respectful and equitable learning environment. Peer relationships are critical for student development, and perceptions of unfair treatment can lead to social isolation and conflict (Nwauzoije, 2023). When students feel that they are not treated fairly by their peers, it can negatively impact their emotional well-being and academic performance. Quick and fair responses to disciplinary issues are essential for maintaining a positive school climate. Research has shown that when disciplinary problems are ignored or dismissed, it can lead to an increase in disruptive behavior and a decline in overall student morale (Caldarella, 2021). Effective classroom management requires timely intervention to reinforce expectations and maintain respect among students.

The fact that only 27.6% (63) of students feel secure in their learning environment, while 72.4% (165) do not, suggests a troubling atmosphere that may hinder academic and social development. A secure learning environment is essential for students to thrive; when students feel unsafe, it can lead to anxiety, disengagement, and lower academic performance (Mitchell & Bradshaw, 2013). Schools must prioritize creating a safe and supportive environment to foster student well-being. The finding that 85.5% (195) of students perceive a lack of politeness from peers towards teachers indicates a significant breakdown in respect within the school culture. Research shows that respectful interactions between students and teachers are crucial for effective teaching and learning (Vanner, 2022). When students do not exhibit politeness, it can undermine the authority of teachers and disrupt the learning process.

The data showing that 80.7% (184) of students report a lack of value for teachers further underscores the challenges in the school environment. When students do not recognize the importance of their teachers, it can lead to disengagement and a lack of motivation to learn (Bradshaw et al., 2012). This devaluation can also affect teachers' morale and their ability to foster a positive classroom atmosphere. The finding that 75.9% (173) of students feel that there is a lack of promotion of a sense of safety among students and teachers is particularly concerning. Effective schools actively promote safety through clear policies, supportive relationships, and proactive measures to address bullying and conflict (Gaffney, 2021). When safety is not prioritized, it can lead to an environment where students feel vulnerable and unsupported.

Figure 4: *Comparing Mutual Respect by School*
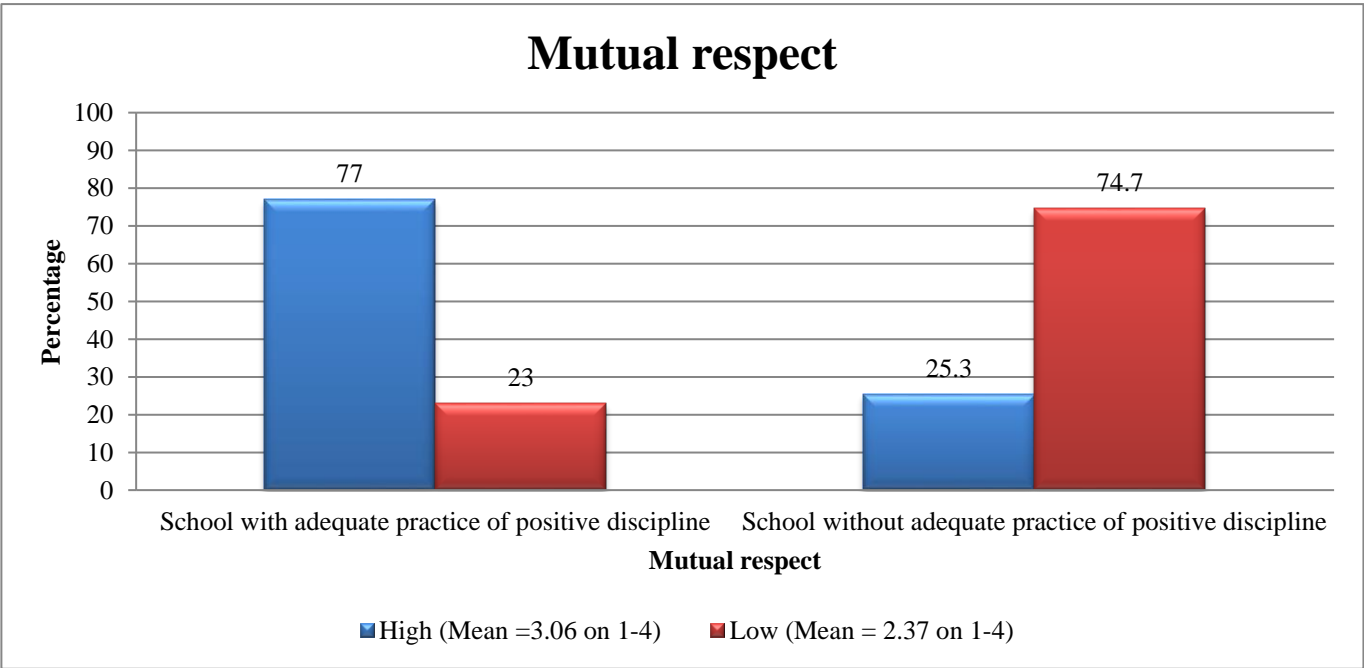
As shown on the figure, in the school that was referred to adequately practice positive discipline, more of students 77.0% reported mutual respect confirmed by a high mean of 3.06 on 4 which is more than three times higher when compared to the school referred not to practice positive discipline with only 25.3% of students reported mutual respect further confirmed by a low mean of 2.37. The high percentage of students reporting mutual respect in the positive discipline school suggests that such practices foster an environment where students feel valued and respected. Positive discipline emphasizes mutual respect, cooperation, and problem-solving, which are essential for creating a supportive learning environment (Nelsen, 2015). The findings align with research indicating that when students feel respected, they are more likely to engage positively in their learning. Mutual respect enhances student-teacher relationships, which can lead to increased motivation and academic success (Bradshaw et al., 2012).

Table 16: Comparing Mutual Respect in Relation to Students' Discipline by School

Variables	School	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	T-test value

Mutual respect	Adequate reinforcement of positive discipline	111	24.49	3.199	.30364	t=16.294
	Inadequate reinforcement of positive discipline	228	18.98	2.235	.14802	p<0.001
Students' discipline	Adequate reinforcement of positive discipline	111	19.35	2.169	.20583	t=13.019
	Inadequate reinforcement of positive discipline	228	15.44	3.307	.21899	p<0.001

Mean Difference for mutual respect =5.50; Mean Difference in students' discipline=3.93; df =337

Furthermore, comparing mutual respect in relation to students' discipline by school, findings showed that there is a significant difference in students' discipline between the school that adequately reinforce mutual respect and the school that does not (t=13.019, p-value < 0.001). In other words, the high mean value for school that adequately reinforce mutual respect 19.35 plus or minus 0.20583 implies high students' discipline and low indiscipline while the school that does not adequately reinforced mutual respect with a lesser mean of 15.44 plus or minus 0.21899 indicates more students' indiscipline than students' discipline. Carl Rogers proposed that for individuals to reach their full potential, certain core conditions must be met: unconditional positive regard, empathy, and genuineness (Rogers, 1961). In a school setting, when students feel respected and valued (unconditional positive regard), they are more likely to develop self-discipline and take responsibility for their actions. The high mean value of discipline in the school that reinforces mutual respect aligns with this principle,

suggesting that students thrive in environments where they feel acknowledged and cared for.

Rogers' theory posits that a positive environment fosters higher self-esteem, leading to more constructive behavior. In the context of the findings, students in the school with high mutual respect may exhibit better discipline because they feel secure and valued, which enhances their self-regulation skills (Rogers, 1980). Conversely, the lower mean of discipline in the school lacking mutual respect likely reflects lower self-esteem and increased indiscipline, as students may feel disconnected and unsupported. The findings underscore the importance of creating a positive school climate rooted in mutual respect. According to Rogers, when individuals feel safe and respected, they are more likely to engage positively with their environment and peers. The stark contrast in discipline levels between the two schools highlights the necessity for educational institutions to prioritize the reinforcement of mutual respect to foster an environment conducive to learning and personal development (Rogers, 1961).

Table 18: Teachers' Opinion on Behavioural Problems Prevailing in the School

Themes	Quotations
Drug abuse	"Students are drug addicted children, don't respect teachers the students are just the way they are. The present dispensation is so bad. The mutual respect that used to be between teachers and students take and give is no longer there". "Taking drugs." "Drugs consumption." "Some students do abuse drugs."
Late coming and disrespect	"Late coming, disrespect in class, at times when you the teacher is busy lecturing they are being distracted." "Talking back at teachers, late coming". "Disrespect." "Some students have no respect for the teachers." "Disrespect toward teachers."
Bulling and fighting	"Some students are brutal, disrespect coming from the children towards the teachers." "Bulling and fighting." "Bulling." "Fighting."
Stealing	"Some turn to stealing." "Stealing." "Theft."
Poor dressing	"Poor dressing because there is no school uniform around here." "Wrong school attire." "Poor dressing."
Laziness	"Laziness."
Bad teachers moral	"I think the centre point is morality. Morality both on the teachers and students because when there is good moral from the teachers and students, there will be a middle ground where there is respect because there is no body who is morally up right and is disrespected. So morality is the focus.
No interest in studies	"The behavioural aspect that I have seen in the students is that some don't have the zeal to learn. There is no zeal to learn and this is the case with many students coming from the crisis zone because

Not adherence to advice	*they have spent a lot of years in the house and you need to force them or push them to learn." "Some of the students do not listen at all."*

In relation to mutual respect, the teachers were first asked of the behavioural problems prevailing in the school. The most mentioned was drug abuse as depicted in the statements "Students are drug addicted children, don't respect teachers the students are just the way they are. The present dispensation is so bad. The mutual respect that used to be between teachers and students take and give is no longer there". The teachers' observations suggest that drug abuse among students is not only a behavioral problem but also a factor contributing to the erosion of mutual respect. When students engage in substance use, it can lead to disrespectful behavior towards authority figures, including teachers. This aligns with research indicating that substance use is often associated with lower levels of academic engagement and respect for school rules, which can deteriorate the teacher-student relationship (Cox et al., 2015). A positive school climate, characterized by mutual respect and supportive relationships, is crucial for preventing substance use among students. Studies have shown that schools fostering a respectful environment can mitigate the likelihood of drug abuse initiation (Cornell & Huang, 2016). The teachers' comments reflect a recognition that the current school climate may not support such positive interactions, which can exacerbate issues related to drug use.

Another frequently mentioned behaviour problem mentioned is late coming to school and disrespect for teachers as narrated in the statements "Late coming, disrespect in class, at times when you the teacher is busy lecturing they are being distracted.", "Talking back at teachers, late coming". Moreover, bulling and fighting were also frequently mentioned as narrated "Some students are brutal, disrespect coming from the children towards the teachers.", "Bulling and fighting." Late arrivals disrupt the flow of the classroom and can lead to a lack of engagement among students. When students arrive late, they miss important instructional time, which can hinder their academic performance and disrupt the learning process for others (Adegunju, Ola-Alani, & Agubossi, 2019). The mention of bullying and fighting as frequent behavioral problems underscores the need for effective interventions. Bullying not only affects the victims but also creates a hostile environment for all students, leading to increased anxiety and decreased academic performance (Gini & Pozzoli, 2009). The statements about brutal behavior and disrespect towards teachers

highlight the serious implications of such actions. Aggressive behaviors can lead to a cycle of violence and further disrespect, making it difficult for teachers to maintain authority and create a safe learning environment (Cohen & Espelage, 2020).

Another behaviour problem mentioned is stealing. Poor dressing, laziness, bad teacher moral, and lack of interest in school were other behavioural problems mentioned as narrated by some teachers "Poor dressing because there is no school uniform around here." "I think the centre point is morality. Morality both on the teachers and students because when there is good moral from the teachers and students, there will be a middle ground where there is respect because there is no body who is morally up right and is disrespected. So morality is the focus.", "The behavioural aspect that I have seen in the students is that some don't have the zeal to learn. There is no zeal to learn and this is the case with many students coming from the crisis zone because they have spent a lot of years in the house and you need to force them or push them to learn." Stealing in schools is a serious behavioral issue that can stem from various factors, including socioeconomic conditions and a lack of moral guidance. Research indicates that students who engage in stealing may do so as a means of coping with unmet needs or as a result of peer influence (Loeber & Hay, 1997). Addressing the root causes of stealing requires a comprehensive approach that includes fostering a sense of community and responsibility among students. The mention of poor dressing, particularly the absence of a school uniform, suggests that students may not feel a sense of belonging or pride in their school environment. Uniforms can promote equality and reduce distractions related to clothing choices, which can enhance focus on learning (Gentile & Imberman, 2012). The lack of a uniform may contribute to feelings of disconnection from the school community, impacting students' engagement and behavior. The observations regarding laziness and a lack of zeal to learn are particularly concerning, especially for students coming from crisis zones. Research shows that students who have experienced trauma or instability may struggle with motivation and engagement in school (Perry, 2009). This lack of interest can be exacerbated by a perceived irrelevance of the curriculum or a disconnect between students' experiences and what is taught in the classroom. The statement regarding morality highlights the importance of ethical behavior among both teachers and students. When teachers exhibit low morale, it can negatively affect their

teaching effectiveness and the overall classroom environment (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). A positive school culture, characterized by mutual respect and high moral standards, is essential for fostering student engagement and reducing behavioral problems.

Table 19: How Teachers Handle Students behavioural Problems

Themes	Quotations
Counselling	*"Generally, now since they have said teachers should not beat students. At times if a child comes up with a certain unrolling behaviour you don't confront you just ignore. If it is a very bad case after wards you can bring that child up for counselling."* *"We do lot of counselling."* *"By counselling the students on the consequences of bad behaviours."* *"Counselling the students."* *"As a teacher, what I often do is to call the student and counsel him/her."*
Promote friendship	*"Actually for my number of years that I have been working, I don't have any confrontation with students because before we start, I will make them my friend. I will make sure that they understand the way I will react when they do certain things. Even if the students are talking, they know I will just stand and watch at them and other students will say madam is looking at you. I will not even shout at them nor hold a cane."* *"I try to make the student my friend."*
Exercising patience	*"When I started teaching, sometimes I will resort to scolding and shouting. After the first month, we had a session on positive discipline with sisters. I came to understand that the best way to handle is just to be patience. To be patient with them, try to belong with them and then you can better help them."* *"Sometimes you are calm, you allow them to do what they want and, then you connect with them for proper work."* *"I just exercise patience with the students."*
Instill consciousness	*"At times I will throw back their indiscipline to them. I will tell them that one day you will become a teacher like me."* *" I try to make the students to be conscious of their own behaviour."*
Self-control	*"Personally I happened to be a positive discipline classroom educator. I have managed to have learned some skills on how to control my emotions. Imagine talking to students who are disobedience sometimes I go out take some positive time. When I come back, I am calm, I don't react to the anger sometimes I just ignore."*
Adopt good pedagogic approach	*"It starts from individual approach to pedagogic approach because we have pedagogic input and other things but to handle thing is a matter of individuals understanding and calling. If you are called to be a teacher, you will know what to do because everybody teaching was once a student."*
Follow-up	*"I for one I try my best by calling for their attention. At times, I give the student time to feel free and discuss with friend and then call back their attention to class."* *"I engage in follow-up the student."*
Teaching morality	*"You use religious principles in handling behaviour problems."*

Moreover, in relation to mutual respect, based on how teachers handle students with behavioural problems, some of them said they counsel the students as depicted in the statements "Generally now since they have said teachers should not beat students. At times if a child comes up with a certain unrolling behaviour you don't confront you just ignore. If it is a very bad case after wards you can bring that child up for counselling.", "We do lot of counselling." The move away from corporal punishment towards counseling aligns with contemporary educational practices that prioritize positive behavior support and emotional well-being. Research indicates that punitive measures can lead to negative outcomes, including increased aggression and disengagement from school (Walsemann, Gee & Ro, 2013). By focusing on counseling, teachers can address the underlying issues contributing to behavioral problems rather than merely punishing the behavior. The emphasis on counseling also reflects the importance of building mutual respect between teachers and students. When teachers take the time to counsel students, they demonstrate care and investment in their well-being, which can enhance the teacher-student relationship and create a more positive classroom environment (Cornelius-White, 2007).

Moreover, some said they make the student their friends as narrated "Actually for my number of years that I have been working, I don't have any confrontation with students because before we start, I will make them my friend. I will make sure that they understand the way I will react when they do certain things. Even if the students are talking, they know I will just stand and watch at them and other students will say madam is looking at you. I will not even shout at them nor hold a cane." By fostering a friendly relationship with students,

teachers can create a positive learning environment that minimizes confrontations and encourages respectful behavior. The teacher's strategy of establishing friendships with students before addressing behavioral issues is crucial. This approach helps to create a rapport that can prevent confrontations. When students feel connected to their teacher, they are more likely to respond positively to guidance and correction, reducing the likelihood of disruptive behavior (Parsonson, 2012). By making students aware of the teacher's expectations and reactions in a non-confrontational manner, the teacher fosters an environment of mutual respect. This method encourages students to self-regulate their behavior, as they understand the consequences of their actions without the need for punitive measures. Research indicates that when students perceive their teachers as supportive and understanding, they are more likely to exhibit positive behaviors and engage in the learning process (Thapa et al., 2013).

In addition, some said they exercise patience with the students as depicted in the statement "When I started teaching, sometimes I will resort to scolding and shouting. After the first month, we had a session on positive discipline with sisters. I came to understand that the best way to handle is just to be patience. To be patient with them, try to belong with them and then you can better help them." Furthermore, some teachers said they instill consciousness in the students as narrated "At times I will throw back their indiscipline to them. I will tell them that one day you will become a teacher like me." These approaches are rooted in the principles of positive discipline and emphasize the importance of understanding and empathy in teacher-student interactions. The teacher's reflection on moving from scolding and shouting to exercising patience illustrates a significant shift in pedagogical strategies. Seden (2020) indicates that patience in teaching can lead to better student outcomes, as it allows for a more supportive and understanding classroom atmosphere. When teachers practice patience, they create an environment where students feel safe to express themselves and learn from their mistakes. The practice of throwing back indiscipline to students and prompting them to consider their future roles as teachers encourages self-reflection. This method helps students understand the consequences of their actions and fosters a sense of responsibility. Research shows that instilling a sense of consciousness in students can lead to improved behavior and a greater understanding of the impact of their actions on others (Durlak et al., 2011). By encouraging students to think about their future and the responsibilities that come with being a teacher, educators can promote

empathy and a sense of accountability. This approach aligns with the principles of positive discipline, which emphasize teaching students to understand and manage their behavior in a constructive manner (Simonsen et al., 2008).

Again, some teachers said they promote self-control as depicted in the statement "Personally I happened to be a positive discipline classroom educator. I have managed to have learned some skills on how to control my emotions. Imagine talking to students who are disobedience sometimes I go out take some positive time. When I come back, I am calm, I don't react to the anger sometimes I just ignore." The teacher's practice of stepping away to manage emotions before interacting with students demonstrates a key aspect of emotional regulation. Research indicates that teachers who effectively manage their emotions can create a more stable and supportive classroom environment, which in turn fosters self-control among students (Brackett et al., 2012). By modeling self-regulation, teachers can teach students how to handle their emotions and reactions in challenging situations. The approach of ignoring minor misbehavior aligns with positive discipline strategies that emphasize understanding and teaching rather than punishing. This method allows teachers to maintain their composure and avoid escalating conflicts, which can lead to a more respectful and cooperative classroom atmosphere. When teachers respond calmly to disobedience, they help students learn the importance of self-control and the impact of their behavior on others.

Finally, some teachers said they adopt individual pedagogic approach, follow –up the students, and engage in the teaching of morals as narrated in the statements "I for one I try my best by calling for their attention. At times, I give the student time to feel free and discuss with friend and then call back their attention to class.", "You use religious principles in handling behaviour problems." The practice of calling for students' attention and allowing them to discuss freely with peers before refocusing on the lesson demonstrates an individualized pedagogic approach. This method acknowledges the diverse learning needs of students and fosters a more inclusive classroom environment. Research indicates that personalized teaching strategies can significantly enhance student engagement and learning outcomes (Gunawardena, Penny, & Kithmini, 2024). The integration of religious principles in handling behavior problems reflects a commitment to moral education. Teaching morals within the context of religious values can provide students with a framework for understanding ethical behavior and decision-making. Studies have shown that moral education can positively influence students'

character development and social behavior (Lapsley &   Narvaez, 2006).

Table 20: *Teachers' Opinion if they Act as Role Model to the Students*

	Themes	Quotations
Act as role model	Dressing well and self-respect	*"Yes, since students look on to the teachers as their super hero, we should respect the way we behave and our dressing."* *"Yes, by dressing well and having self-resect."* *"Yes, I make sure that I dress well before coming to school to teach so that students who do not dress well can start doing so when I talk of poor dressing and it disadvantages."* *"Yes, especially teachers who are train because they relate well with the students, talk with respect, and dress well because students talk back at teachers poorly or insult them."* *"Yes I act as a role model to my students. I come to school in time and check my dressing so they can learn from me."*
	Looking neat	*"Yes they do because what you want students to do, you have to start doing it yourself. For example if you want them to be the neat, you need to be neat."* *"I make sure that I come to school looking neat."*
	Punctual	*"Yes, personally, I act like a role model. Classes begin at 8am. I am in school and they see it. I come before 8am. I ask them are teachers to come before students or students before teachers. You see some responding."* *"Yes, I am often come to class on time so that students who often come late to class can sit up."*
Do not act as role model	Bad teachers' behaviour	*"Conventionally, they should, but unfortunately it is not the case. There are some teachers who are not examples for student and is embarrassing because parents could be doing their best but the teacher is doing the worst. So it is a difficult situation especially in this our present dispensation."* *"Some teachers do not act as role model because they do have bad behavours."* *"Some teachers do have poor behaviour that makes the students not to even admire them."*
	Improper dressing and bad hair cut	*"Not 100 percent as in the case of most young teachers. For some, their own physical appearance is not even a role model to the students. Some of our teachers wear some funny t-shirts, jeans to class, have funny hair style. So it is not quite a role model to the students."* *"Some teachers come to school with poor dressing."* *"There are teachers with funny hair styles which is not the best when teaching."*

Moreover, finding from the teachers if they do act as role model, some said they do while others denied. Specifically, some teachers said they act as role model by dressing well and having self-respect as depicted in the statements "Yes, since students look on to the teachers as their super hero, we should respect the way we behave and our dressing.", "Yes, by dressing well and having self-respect." Many teachers recognize that their dressing and behavior set an example for students. As one teacher noted, students view teachers as superheroes, which underscores the importance of presenting oneself with respect and professionalism. Sampson (2016) indicates that teachers who dress well and maintain a professional appearance can foster a sense of respect and authority in the classroom, which positively influences student behavior and attitudes. The idea that teachers must embody the qualities they wish to instill in their students is crucial. When teachers demonstrate neatness and self-respect, they encourage similar behaviors in their students. Studies show that modeling positive behaviors is an effective strategy for promoting those behaviors among students (Simonsen et al., 2008).

In addition, some teachers said they act as role model because they often come to school neat as explain "Yes they do because what you want students to do, you have to start doing it yourself. For example if you want them to be the neat, you need to be neat." Finally, some teachers are seen as role model because they are often punctual in class as narrated in the statement "Yes, personally, I act like a role model. Classes begin at 8am. I am in school and they see it. I come before 8am. I ask them are teachers to come before students or students before teachers. You see some responding." Punctuality is another critical aspect of being a role model. Teachers who arrive on time and set a standard for their students demonstrate the value of responsibility and commitment. As one teacher mentioned, being present before students reinforces the expectation that students should also be punctual. Research supports the notion that when teachers model punctuality, it encourages students to adopt similar habits, fostering a culture of respect and responsibility in the classroom (Hattie, 2009). By being punctual, teachers help create a structured and organized learning environment. This structure is essential for effective classroom management and contributes to a positive learning atmosphere where students feel secure and focused on

their studies.

On the contrary, some teachers said they are teachers who do not act as role model because they come to school with improper dressing and funny hair style as narrated in the statements "Not 100 percent as in the case of most young teachers. For some, their own physical appearance is not even a role model to the students. Some of our teachers wear some funny t-shirts, jeans to class, have funny hair style. So it is not quite a role model to the students.", "Some teachers come to school with poor dressing." Moreover, some teachers were refused of colleagues acting as role model because of bad behaviour as narrated in the statements "Conventionally, they should, but unfortunately it is not the case. There are some teachers who are not examples for student and is embarrassing because parents could be doing their best but the teacher is doing the worst. So it is a difficult situation especially in this our present dispensation.", "Some teachers do not act as role model because they do have bad behavours." Some teachers acknowledge that their physical appearance, including wearing inappropriate clothing and having unconventional hairstyles, does not set a positive example for students. This perception can undermine the authority of teachers and diminish their role as role models. Khatri's (2011) indicates that teachers' appearances can influence students' respect and engagement in the classroom, as students often look to their teachers for cues on appropriate behavior and professionalism. The findings also indicate that some teachers exhibit behaviors that are not conducive to being role models. When teachers engage in unprofessional conduct, it can create a challenging environment for students who are trying to learn positive behaviors. Research shows that teachers who model negative behaviors can inadvertently encourage similar behaviors in their students, leading to a cycle of disrespect and disengagement (Ali, 2019).

Table 21: How Some Teachers Promote a Sense of Belonging in Students

Themes	Quotations
Force class participation	*"When I am asking question in class, I force some students to participate and ask questions equally to find out why he is so quite."* *"When I realize that a student is not confident in class, I make sure he/she often participate in lessons."* *"I promote class participation for all students in class."*
Making friendship	*"When you start talking and discover that there is a student who is always quite, or behaving as if he/she is not wanted, I make that student my friend to try bringing the student out of the shell."* *"I make the students my friend."* *"I try to foster friendship."*
Encouragement	*"What I see works for me and my students is word of affirmation. I try to surround them with positive energy, telling them you can do it. Just by coping the notes, you can do it and it really works word of affirmation."*
Adopt good pedagogy	*"You must understand that though teaching, you are a family. When you understand the family sense, you treat those students as your children or brothers and sisters."*
Acknowledging	*"The sense of belonging for example, you ask a question in class, only one person answers the question, I hail this person, what do I do, I bring the sense of belonging in a way that the student knows doesn't mean one has to be intelligent. It is simply because the person tried to read more. I don't try to hail one person and leave the other ones, I say all of them can do it."*
No training on psycho-social support	*"To me if i were to assess it, is not even like 50 because they are just teaching but not trained for care like psycho-social support and those types of things."*

In relation to fostering a sense of belonging among the students, some teachers said they do while a few do not. For teachers that foster a sense of belonging in the students, one of the ways is by forcing class participation as depicted in the statement "When I am asking question in class, I force some students to participate and ask questions equally to find out why he is so quite.", "When I realize that a student is not confident in class, I make sure he/she often participate in lessons." Forcing class participation can be seen as a method to engage students who may be reluctant to speak up. Teachers who actively involve quieter students in discussions can help them feel more included and valued in the classroom. This aligns with Zengilowski, Lee, Gaines, Park, Choi, & Schallert, (2023) research indicating that active participation is crucial for developing a sense of belonging among students, as it fosters connections with peers and teachers. While forcing participation can have positive outcomes, it may also create anxiety for some students. Not all students respond well to being put on the spot, and for some, this pressure can lead to feelings of discomfort rather than belonging. It is essential for teachers to balance the need for participation with sensitivity to individual

student needs and comfort levels (Tomlinson, 2003).

Another strategy used is by making the students their friends as explained "When you start talking and discover that there is a student who is always quite, or behaving as if he/she is not wanted, I make that student my friend to try bringing the student out of the shell." Some teachers adopt the strategy of encouraging the students as explained "What I see works for me and my students is word of affirmation. I try to surround them with positive energy, telling them you can do it. Just by coping the notes, you can do it and it really works word of affirmation." Teachers who actively seek to befriend quieter or less engaged students can help them feel more included and valued in the classroom. This approach can encourage students to come out of their shells and participate more actively in class discussions. Research by Wang (2023) shows that positive teacher-student relationships are crucial for student engagement and can significantly impact students' emotional and social development. The use of word of affirmation as a strategy to encourage students is a powerful tool in education. By surrounding students with positive energy and affirming their abilities, teachers can boost students' self-esteem and motivation. Mohamoud (2024) indicates that positive affirmations can enhance students' academic performance and overall well-being by fostering a growth mindset.

Again, some teachers do adopt the system of acknowledging the students as narrated "The sense of belonging for example, you ask a question in class, only one person answers the question, I hail this person, what do I do, I bring the sense of belonging in a way that the student knows doesn't mean one has to be intelligent. It is simply because the person tried to read more. I don't try to hail one person and leave the other ones, I say all of them can do it." When teachers acknowledge a student's response, they validate that student's effort and participation. This recognition can significantly enhance the student's sense of belonging, as it communicates that their contributions are valued. Gray & DiLoreto, (2016) indicates that when students feel recognized for their efforts, they are more likely to engage in classroom activities and develop a positive self-concept. The practice of acknowledging all students, rather than focusing solely on those who answer questions correctly, fosters an inclusive classroom environment. This inclusivity is crucial for students who may feel marginalized or less confident in their abilities. Dost (2023) suggests that a sense of belonging is closely linked to students' emotional well-being and academic success, making it essential for teachers to create a supportive atmosphere. When teachers highlight the contributions of various students, it can encourage a culture of peer support and collaboration. Students are more likely to support one another and engage in discussions when they see that their efforts are recognized and valued. This collaborative environment can enhance learning outcomes and strengthen relationships among students.

On the contrary, some teachers do not foster a sense of belonging because they are lacking in the ability to offer psychosocial support as explained "To me if i were to assess it, is not even like 50 because they are just teaching but not trained for care like psycho-social support and those types of things." Many teachers are primarily trained in academic subjects and pedagogical methods, but they often lack training in providing psychosocial support. This deficiency can result in teachers being unable to address the emotional and social needs of their students effectively. As noted in the literature, teachers are frequently overwhelmed by their responsibilities, which can detract from their ability to build supportive relationships with students (Li, 2024). This lack of support can lead to feelings of isolation among students, further exacerbating issues related to their sense of belonging. Strong teacher-student relationships are crucial for promoting a sense of belonging in schools. When teachers are equipped with the skills to provide psychosocial support, they can create a more inclusive and supportive classroom environment. Mahfud (2023) have shown that positive relationships between teachers and students can lead to improved academic performance and emotional well-being. However, without proper training in psychosocial support, teachers may struggle to establish these vital connections.

Testing of Hypothesis One:

Ho1: Mutual respect as a positive discipline tool does not significantly help to curb indiscipline in secondary schools.

Ha1: Mutual respect as a positive discipline approach significantly help to curb indiscipline in secondary schools.

Table 17: Perceived Influence of Mutual Respect on Students' Discipline

		Mutual respect	Students' discipline	Explanatory power of influence in terms of percentage (Cox and Snell)
Pearson test	Pearson Correlation	1	.400**	80.6%
	p-value		<0.001	

N	339	339

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Hypothetically, findings showed that mutual respect significantly and positively correlate with students' discipline (R-value 0.400**, p-value < 0.001). The positivity of the coefficient value implies that students' indiscipline is more likely to be curb / reduce when mutual respect is well promoted in the school and this prediction is high as supported with a high explanatory power of 80.6% (Cox and Snell statistics). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis that states mutual respect as a positive discipline approach significantly help to curb indiscipline in secondary schools was accepted. The findings tie with that of Makola (2022) who sought to establish educators' perceptions on positive learner discipline and findings revealed that positive discipline pursues a preventive approach rather than a punitive one and demands that discipline should be proactive rather than reactive. More so, the participants expressed positive perceptions of positive discipline although some expressed negative perception. Moreover, in the study of Maphosa (2011) on the management of learner indiscipline in schools, findings showed that educators mostly employed punitive disciplinary measures when dealing with both minor and major forms of indiscipline which is contrary to the findings of our study as such measures were found not adequately foster discipline among students. Consequently, staff development workshops were recommended to equip educators with skills to embrace supportive, proactive and cooperative disciplinary measures when dealing with learner indiscipline.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study suggests that in the school referred to adequately practice positive discipline, more of students reported mutual respect confirmed by a high mean which is more than three times higher when compared to the school referred not to practice positive discipline with only few of students reported mutual respect, further confirmed by a low mean. Furthermore, when mutual respect was compared in relation to students' discipline, findings showed a significant difference in students' discipline between the school that adequately reinforce mutual respect and the school that does not. The school that adequately reinforce mutual respect has a high mean value of 19.35 plus or minus 0.20583 which implies high discipline and low indiscipline than the school that does not adequately reinforced mutual respect with a lesser mean of 15.44 plus or minus 0.21899 indicating more students' indiscipline than students' discipline.

And hypothetically, mutual respect significantly and positively correlates with students' discipline. Indicating that students' indiscipline is more likely to be curb / reduce when mutual respect is well promoted in the school and this prediction is high as supported with a high explanatory power. In the school that adequately practice mutual respect, some teachers said they instill mutual respect by counselling students, promoting friendship, exercising patience, promoting self-control, follow-up students, instill consciousness in actions, teach morality, and act as a role model for the students to emulate. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis that states mutual respect as a positive discipline approach significantly help to curb indiscipline in secondary schools was accepted. From the theoretical point of view, Curwin and Mendler model of discipline (1999) suggested strategies for improving classroom behaviour through maximising students' dignity and hope. By this, adopting a mutual respect approach among students which is an indicator of positive school discipline could help foster dignity among students. In addition, we have to be cognizant that when dignity exists among students, discipline must follow suit. Moreover, the Curwin and Mendler model of discipline sees the educator as important in helping the students to make them place value in the life of other students. Therefore, in our secondary schools, teachers and other educators have to take upon themselves and put in place proactive practices that have more potential in fostering adequate discipline among students. This is because a school cannot be that successful when discipline among students is lacking. Thus, while adequate implementation of flexible school rules and regulations are needed, the educators must use their own intuition by adopting other proactive practices. This is because most often, school rules and regulations are reactive approaches. As reiterated by Curwin and Mendler, it is the duty of educators to see to it that students learn and behave appropriately and responsibly because when learners do not behave as expected, their dignity might be damage, motivation to study might reduce, resistance is might increase, and the desire for revenge high. Therefore, going by the findings of our study, educators need to help learners to regain a sense of hope and learning more attractive to ensure success.

It can be recommended that the state through the Ministries of Education should include positive discipline in the curriculum of teacher training institutions. This will enhance their commitment in the teaching learning process. The Regional Delegations of secondary education should include positive disciple as

a requirement for professional development programs, seminal and workshops to equipe teachers with the tools and knowledge of positive discipline in the classroom. The knowledge of Positive discipline will enhance teacher 's and guidance counselors the abilities to identify students with needs.

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