

**Student Leadership Quality and the Discipline of Students in Mbarara City North
Secondary Schools**



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Declaration

I Paul Byamugisha, hereby declare to the best of my knowledge that this research dissertation is my work and has never been presented to any institution of higher learning.

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Approval

This dissertation entitled "Student Leadership Quality and the Discipline of Students in Mbarara City North Secondary Schools" has been submitted with our approval.

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Mrs. Anne Tweheyo Otwine

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my volleyball team of St. Kizito Preparatory Seminary 2024 for their motivation to my coaching career. May God bless their talents to greater heights.

Acknowledgement

In the first place, I heartily thank the almighty God for His providence that has sustained me and my work up to this level. More appreciation goes to my supervisors Twebaze Richard (PhD) and Mrs. Anne Tweheyo Otwine for their guidance from the start of this project up to this far. I heartily appreciate Dr. Irene Aheisibwe for her unwavering support, encouragement, motivation and all sacrifices she made to boost me to complete my work in time.

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List of Acronyms

BSU: Bishop Stuart University

MEAP: Masters of Education Administration and Planning

MOES: Ministry of Education and Sports

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

SS: Secondary School

Abstract

The study assesses the impact of student leadership quality on the discipline of students of Mbarara City North secondary schools. The objectives of the study included: assessing the quality of student leadership in secondary schools in Mbarara City North, determining the levels of discipline of students in these secondary schools, and then examining the relationship between student leadership quality and the discipline of students in these secondary schools. The researcher used cross-sectional research design, in which both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used. The area of study was Mbarara City North particularly in three divisions, namely: Kakiika, Kamukuzi and Biharwe. The population of the study comprised of head teachers, prefects and students from the six randomly selected schools in which a sample of 296 respondents was considered. The study employed both simple random and purposive sampling techniques. The methods of data collection were majorly survey, interviews and focus group discussions; and these used questionnaires and interviews as tools of data collection. The study followed the basic ethical considerations through a rightful procedure universally accepted by the university. Moreover, a community engagement and Covid-19 mitigation plans were well laid and followed. The study findings on the assessment of the quality of student leadership in Mbarara City North secondary schools resulted into a mean score of 4.202 which is close to the maximum score of 5, implying a high quality of leadership. This is supported by some of the responses from the interviews. *“Student leaders in this school are really very serious and of good quality”* the head teacher of School B said. The study findings on determining the levels of discipline resulted in a mean score of 4.16 which implies a high level of discipline. This is supported by some responses from some of the student leaders. *“Our fellow students have good discipline in general”* the head boy of School E said. The association between the quality of students’ leadership and students’ discipline in Mbarara City North secondary schools showed a correlation coefficient of 0.547 which indicated a moderate score showing a very high positive relationship between the two. Conclusions of the study point to a high quality of leadership among student leaders of Mbarara City North secondary schools. Secondly, the study findings point to good discipline among the students. Finally, the study findings show a significant relationship between student leadership quality and the discipline of students in Mbarara City North secondary schools. The researcher made some recommendations. On Objective one, the researcher recommended school administrators to continue developing leadership skills among the student leaders. On Objective Two, different stakeholders were recommended to improve on the discipline of students.

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study both general and specific objectives, research questions, conceptual framework, scope of the study, significance of the study, and explanation of key terms.

Background of the Study

This section presents the historical background, theoretical background, conceptual background, and contextual background. These make up the foundational framework on the entire study.

Historical Background

Globally, in ancient times, student leadership entailed training of students in the management of prevailing social issues including discipline (Adams & Semaadderi, 2019). In the 19th Century, several cases of indiscipline reported in schools were counteracted with punishments and retributions from school administration (Scribner & Warnick, 2021). In 1950s among American high schools, most of the reported cases of indiscipline were solved by teachers (Ksinan et al., 2019). In Malaysia, Asia, indiscipline problem in schools was ranked as a major problem among students of primary and secondary schools (Yahaya et al., 2019). As a result, there was a creation of student bodies in schools to curb down the escalating disciplinary vices, known as Students Leadership Teams (Naimie et al., 2018). Around the same time in Brazilian schools, teachers faced conflicts and disagreements among students such as bullying, violence and incivility which necessitated formation of student leaders known as prefects (Rizzotto & Franca, 2022). According to the report of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and

Development of 2019, the Brazilian school policy of establishing student leadership was an igniting factor reducing indiscipline among high school students (OECD, 2019).

In Africa, the issue of students' discipline in secondary schools has been a pillar to success of education over the years, while indiscipline has been a common challenge persistently. In Nigeria, around 1843 when Methodist missionaries started formal schools, there were cases of indiscipline which were counteracted with community patrolling and engagement; and this caused a lot of mental, emotional and physical damages in society (Odebode, 2019). These acts of indiscipline were either been carried out individually by the students or as a group (Ojedapo, 2013). In Cameroon, around 1970s among the Christian mission Schools, missionaries established student leader groups which were to help the missionaries in monitoring the discipline of students (Ngwokabuenui, 2015). In Ethiopia, secular education started in 1974 and over the years findings reveal that disciplinary problems have been getting worse from time to time (Eshetu, 2014). Several measures including establishment of prefectorial bodies have been looked at as solutions to the prevailing challenge in Ethiopian schools. The Zambian government in 1966 set up educational policies that were majorly meant to curb down the persistent cases of indiscipline among students (Kalimaposso et al., 2023). In South Africa, indiscipline in secondary schools has been described as an evil that has spread and negatively affected learners' behavior (Magabane, 2021). Among the various solutions to this indiscipline has been the use of students to manage their fellow students such as South African Students' forum established in 2016 and Ophrah Winfrey Leadership Academy (Mkandla, 2019). In Kenya, secondary schools established student leadership as early as in the 18th Century (Semali & Vumilia, 2016). Most notable was in 1967 after independence with coalition of student leadership fora among various secondary schools (Omote et al., 2020).

In Uganda, educational institutions have stressed improved discipline amongst their students since the start of formal education in the late 18th Century. In 1930s, students' discipline was much linked to political affiliation and revolutions, and as a result, there were reported cases of violence, aggression and strikes (Kiggundu, 2019). In 1954, students advocated for fair treatment at school, and consequently mobilized themselves through charismatic leadership (Byaruhanga, 2006). Around the same time, there was an establishment of “abaana ba Buganda” movement which was a forum for students from Buganda Kingdom (Kiggundu, 2019). After independence, many students built up themselves into coalition groups for more strength in their respective institutions. A study by Makerere University reveals that more secondary schools elected student leaders to give platform for freedom of speech and better management of discipline (Lukendo, 2015). In 1970, the Parliament of Uganda enumerated how educational institutions were to be governed, managed and controlled, including freedoms and rights of students. Later in 2008, the same act was amended to cater for student leadership in post primary educational institutions. In 1988, there was an establishment of UNSA [Uganda National Students' Association]; an umbrella mobilizing all students in the country, and it is existent until now (Parveen & Kumar, 2012). This association upholds student leadership in schools, and has interest in students' discipline among others (Ankwasiize, 2018).

A report from the office of Education of Mbarara City (Feb. 2022) revealed increased cases of indiscipline of secondary school learners notably after COVID-19. The outlined common cases included absenteeism, poor time management, absconding from co-curricular activities, disrespect to class authorities, defiance, resentment, bullying, escapism, alcoholism, hooliganism, smoking, disrespect to school dress codes, conflicts, and bad peer relations among others. The report suggested various measures of curbing down this indiscipline such as

strengthening supervision, punishment, guidance and counseling, reparations, effecting school rules and regulations and empowering student leaders among others.

Theoretical background

This study was based on the Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura which states that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling and is influenced by factors such as attention, motivation, attitudes, and emotions (Cherry, 2022). According to this theory, behavior and learning are determined by both environment and cognitive factors of an individual. This implies that the discipline of learners has a lot to do with both their surrounding environment and age (Mcleod, 2023).

The Social learning theory was preferred to guide this study because of its emphasis on factors that influence people's behavior. Therefore the discipline of learners can be influenced by what they observe in school leadership environment, models and imitation of actions that are rewarded. Student leaders can be models of discipline in schools, whereby learners can imitate the prefects' behavior. The study, therefore, used this theory as a background to investigate the relationship between the quality of student leadership and the discipline of secondary school students in Mbarara City North.

Conceptual Background

This study had “student leadership quality” as the independent variable and “students’ discipline” as the dependent variable. “Student leadership quality” is the standard of the governance of the learners in high school; it is the degree of excellence of students who take active headship roles in their education and develop positive skills in the process of their service (Campbellsville, 2019). It is the measure from the assessment of the headship of student leaders insofar as they have the ability to shape and influence their followers’ values, attributes and

behaviors through a dynamic relationship (Diggele, 2020). Under student leadership quality, the researcher studied the following sub-variables; teamwork, conflict resolution skills, and communication skills.

Discipline is the dependent variable and it refers to the practice of training people to obey rules or code of behavior; it is the training of oneself or others to follow a set of rules or guidelines with a goal of promoting self-control and good habits such as punctuality, time management, respect for property, obedience to school authorities and rules, and participation in extra-curricular activities among others (Makoelle et al., 2023). Student discipline looks at the ability of students to do what needs to be done and avoiding what needs to be avoided (Bear, 2020). In this study, student discipline was conceptualized as attendance and punctuality, time management, and participation in extracurricular activities.

It should, however be noted that student discipline is broad and so entails other elements such as respect for rules and authority, classroom behavior, homework and assignment completion, conflict management, uniform and dress code compliance, technology management, respect for property, and peer relations, among others (Makoelle et al., 2023).

Contextual Background

The Ministry of Education and Sports gives room for establishment of student leadership in post primary schools (Education Act, 2008, Part VI, Section 30). By this mandate, students have a right to have student leaders to play some roles in school, some of which involves enhancing discipline of fellow students. There are over 8,000 secondary schools in Uganda, according to the report from the ministry of Education and Sports (MoES, 2022). In particular, there are 17 secondary schools in Mbarara City North with 7,523 students as at the close of the 2023 academic year (Tumwebaze, 2022). Given this large number of learners, the staff alone

cannot manage to control, represent and attend to students' needs and welfare, and subsequently manage their discipline.

Secondary schools in Mbarara City North ought to have functioning leadership bodies, as mandated by the Ministry of Education and Sports (Education Act, 2008, Part VI, 30). This leadership is responsible for the moral and behavioral watch over the students so as to have a peaceful learning environment in school. Prefects are representatives of their colleagues and links to the administration (Ehiane, 2014). When this leadership is fully functioning, there will be good discipline among students in school.

A report from the office of the Inspector of Schools in Mbarara City (Feb. 2022) however revealed that there were rampant and escalating cases of indiscipline among secondary school learners reflected in absenteeism, late coming, absconding from extracurricular activities, disrespect to rules and regulations, and unhealthy peer relationships among others. Given this fact, the researcher was interested in finding out whether good student leadership could be of great importance in solving disciplinary challenges in secondary schools in Mbarara City North.

Statement of the Problem

In a secondary school, students are expected to be disciplined so as to be groomed into better persons. This discipline entails punctuality, time management, participation in co-curricular activities, obedience to school rules and authorities, responsive behaviors, and fulfillment of academic obligations among others. When students are disciplined, they achieve a lot from school and subsequently, the millennium goals of Education are achieved. In order to realize this, stakeholders in the management of secondary schools ought to lay strategies of managing the discipline of their learners (Ofoyuru & Okema, 2021). Schools need to have clear rules that prescribe the standard of discipline expected of students (Ehiane, 2014). Among

stakeholders in ensuring good discipline among students are their own leaders, namely; the prefects. These student leaders have to be prepared so as to be effective in fulfilling their duties of management of the discipline of their fellows (Atkinson, 2020).

The report from the Mbarara City Education officer (Dec., 2022) revealed that there were various cases of indiscipline among some students of some secondary schools such as absenteeism, late coming, disrespect to authority and rules, absconding from co-curricular activities, improper classroom behavior, lack of seriousness in doing classwork, disrespecting school uniform, disrespecting school property, and unhealthy peer relationships, among others. The report showed that 14.3% of students were irregular at attending school, 11.9% failed to manage class time, 33.6% did not like participating in co-curricular activities, 15.8% were disobedient to class authorities among others (Dec., 2022). In addition, a report from the Mbarara City Inspector of schools showed that many head teachers were complaining about increasing cases of indiscipline among students especially after the Covid-19 season (Feb., 2022). This was attributed to the long period of inactive school learning whereby many students learnt bad behavior majorly by circumstance.

From the above facts, there was a gap created by continued registered cases of indiscipline in secondary schools in Mbarara City North which was a threat to proper education in the city. Despite the several disciplinary policies and subsequent strategies to control the behavior of learners, there seemed to be a gap not yet filled. Under this study, the researcher investigated the role of student leadership in as far as its quality has an effect on controlling the discipline of students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of student leadership quality on the discipline of students in Mbarara City North secondary schools.

Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives

1. To find out the quality of student leadership in secondary schools in Mbarara City North
2. To determine the levels of discipline of students in Mbarara City North secondary schools
3. To examine the relationship between student leadership quality and the discipline of students in secondary schools in Mbarara City North

Research Questions

This study had the following as research questions;

1. What is the quality of student leadership in secondary schools in Mbarara City North?
2. What is the level of discipline of students in secondary schools in Mbarara City North?

Hypothesis

H₀ There is no statistically significant relationship between the quality of student leadership and discipline among students in Mbarara City North.

Scope of the Study

Under this study, the scope entailed; content scope, geographical scope, population scope and time scope as given below.

Content Scope

The study focused on assessing the quality of student leadership, determining the levels of discipline, and examining the relationship between student leadership quality and the

discipline among secondary school students in Mbarara City North. The quality of student leadership was expounded on leaders' effective communication, teamwork and collaboration, and possession of conflict-resolution skills. The discipline of students was explicated basing on students' attendance and punctuality, time management, their participation in extra-curricular activities, and their obedience to authority and rules.

Geographical Scope

The study was carried out in selected secondary schools in Mbarara City North, one of the two constituencies of Mbarara City. Mbarara City is located in the western part of Uganda (Mbwalatum, 2020). It is the second largest city in Uganda, after Kampala, the capital city. Mbarara City North comprises of 3 divisions, namely: Kakiika, Kamukuzi and Biharwe, with 17 secondary schools (Ampurire, 2019). The city lies west of Masaka on the road to Kabale, about 270 kms (168 mi) by road South-West of Kampala (Google, 2023). The city coordinates are 00 36 48S, 30 39 30E (Latitude: -0.6132; Longitude: 30.6582); lying at an average elevation at about 1,147 metres (3,763 ft) above sea level (Floodmap, 2019).

Population Scope

The population of the study comprised of head teachers, prefects and students from six randomly selected secondary schools representative of the seventeen secondary schools in Mbarara City North. The researcher chose head teachers as respondents because they are majorly responsible for the administration and management of student discipline at the top level in a school organogram. Prefects were also considered since they are leaders of students in school and directly link their colleagues to administration; moreover, the area of study was directly involving them. The study also involved students since their discipline is the main area of concern.

Time Scope

The study considered a span of ten years; that is from 2013 to 2023. This is because the problem of indiscipline among secondary students was recurrently increasing in Mbarara City North secondary schools reflected in the various school reports from head teachers, inspectors of schools, and City Education Officers.

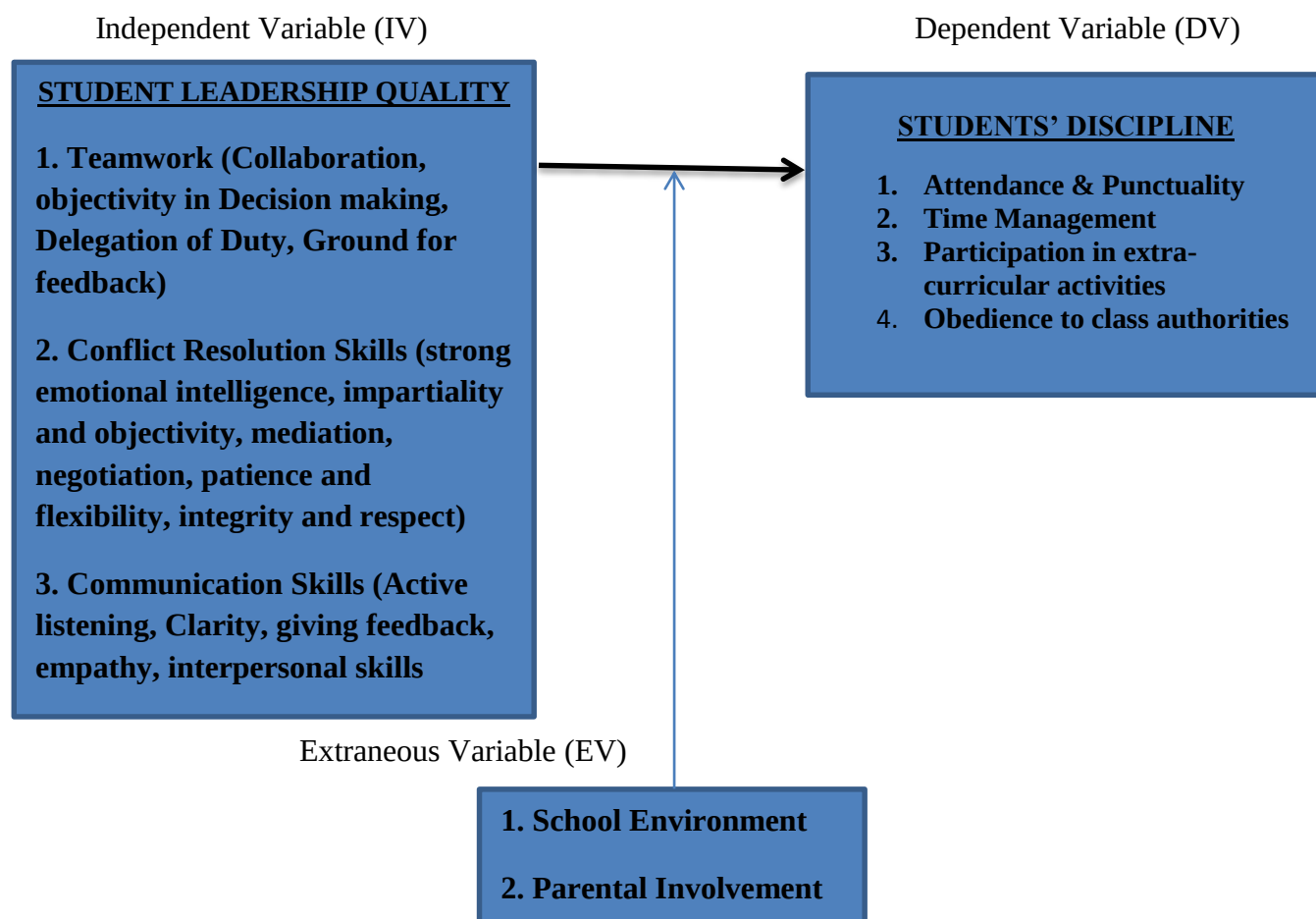
Significance of the Study

The study findings had the following as its significance to different stakeholders;

- To the school administrators as policy makers in schools, this study helped to them in ensuring quality student leadership in their schools.
- To the City Education Officer, Inspectors of Schools and other members on management boards of secondary schools, the study equipped them with facts on discipline of the learners and possible solutions to curb down indiscipline.
- To students in school, the study enabled them understand the effectiveness of their leaders in serving them and be able to assess their leadership quality.
- To parents, the study findings helped them in modeling their children to have good discipline at school and encouraging student leaders to be resourceful in discipline management.
- To students of education planning and management, the findings of this study were a source of new insights especially in the area of student leadership quality and discipline.

Conceptual Frame work

Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework about the quality of student leadership and the Discipline of students in Mbarara City North secondary schools.



Source: Modified from Mcleod, (2023) with permission.

The above figure illustrated how the independent variable (student leadership quality) influenced the dependent variable (discipline of learners). The figure conceptualized the independent variable (student leadership quality) as teamwork, conflict resolution skills, and interpersonal communication skills. The researcher specifically focused on those to measure the quality of student leadership. The dependent variable (student discipline) was conceptualized as attendance, time management, participation in extracurricular activities, and their obedience to

authority and rules. The researcher concentrated on those to study the discipline of secondary school students in Mbarara City North. It should, however be noted that there are other constructs under students' discipline such as classroom behavior, classwork completion, dress code compliance, respect for school property, and peer relations among others.

It should also be noted that there were other factors which influenced the discipline of students, save for the quality of student leadership. These were referred to as extraneous variables (EV). The researcher put in consideration the school environment and parenting styles as the extraneous variables.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter presents a theoretical review and literature related to the study as given by different scholars and researchers. The section expounds literature on an assessment of quality leadership in secondary schools and its influence on the discipline of students.

Theoretical Review

The researcher used the Social Learning theory developed by Albert Bandura in 1963 and later revised in 1977 (McLeod, 2023). This theory states that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling, and is influenced by factors such as attention, motivation, attitudes, and emotions. The theory also suggests that learning occurs when people observe the consequences of other people's behavior, whereby the actions rewarded are more likely to be imitated while those that are punished are avoided (Cherry, 2022). According to Brittany (2022), this theory considers how both environmental and cognitive factors interact to influence human learning and behavior. The author gives four determinants of learning and imitation as attention, retention, motor reproduction, and motivation. In line with the study, the behavior of secondary school students is much more influenced by what they observe, imitate, and eventually model (Marshall, 2022). Their discipline is as a result of what they observe directly through social interaction with others, or indirectly by observing behaviors through media. In this study, the researcher concentrated on how the discipline of students in secondary schools can be influenced by the quality of their own leaders.

Student Leadership in Secondary Schools

Under this assessment, the researcher concentrated on teamwork, conflict resolution skills, and communication skills possessed by student leaders. These were highlighted among the many other constructs of the quality of student leadership because of their primacy in influence.

Teamwork in Student Leadership

Skyline (2023) defines teamwork as a structural approach to working together with others, allowing individuals to combine their unique abilities and strengths in order to achieve a common goal. In the context of student leadership, teamwork is the ability of student leaders to pool strengths and skills of individuals, enabling the student leadership team move in a unified direction to achieve the goals of the institution. In line with this, a study by Hellenic Open University defined teamwork as a means of building relationships between team members bonded by clear and consistent communication (Korovesis, 2023). This means that the student leaders must understand the views held by individual leaders, refine them into common categories of value (Sohmen, 2013). The above scholars defined teamwork with emphasis on the element of working together by giving attention to each individual leader, yet aiming at attaining a common ground on a particular matter.

Teamwork in student leadership breeds collaboration. This is manifested in building and leading diverse teams together which brings different departments for opportunities of learning from one another (Shayna, 2020). In line with this, a study by Galvano (2023) showed that teamwork embraces complexity of diverse personalities that leads to influencing team members' behavior. The quality of student leadership depends on the ability of the student leaders to analyze behaviors and consequently resolve conflicts, motivate students towards positivity, build trust and foster collaboration in school (Simkhada & Bhattarai, 2023). According to Mette et al.,

(2023), this togetherness develops a team of inclusive instructional leaders needed in a school to make a difference.

Teamwork enhances objectivity in decision making. A study on teamwork in leadership found out that teamwork is the driving force for objective decision making which leads to success in any institution (Warde et al., 2014). This is because it promotes rational coordination and improves mindfulness of individual team members. A related study found out that teamwork scored highest among the factors of leadership excellence in educational institutions (McLaughlin et al., 2015). This is because teamwork is a result of the coordinated working of many other leadership skills through which student leaders learn to set goals, delegate responsibility, and give direction to their peers which fosters proper decision making in leadership (Khalil, 2015). From these views, it can be deduced that teamwork sets standard for objective decision making regarding disciplinary issues in a school.

Teamwork promotes delegation of duty. A study in Brazil showed that teamwork fosters delegation in leadership which is important in school settings (Rafaella & Katia, 2023). Delegation prepares students to be professionals since they are entrusted with responsibilities over and above their normal obligation (Gott et al., 2019). A study by Rollins College revealed that delegation among student leaders fosters trust among leaders (Werksman, 2023). In line with this idea, a report from the Ministry of National Education in Turkey showed that delegation among student leaders created and strengthened an effective and organized school culture (Emre, 2023).

Teamwork gives ground for feedback. A study in Lebanon showed that teamwork in leadership fosters feedback and leads to growth of the institution (Khalil, 2015). This involves problem identification, data collection, strategy collection, clear diagnosis of a problem, critical

thinking and identifying ideal solutions to be taken to curb down the problem. Feedback in leadership breeds an organizational culture with the knowledge of management, knowledge of exchange and interpersonal collaboration important for the achievement of educational goals (Medina et al., 2023).

It was, however noted that there is serious need to teach, support and encourage teamwork skills among student leaders (Khalil, 2015). Such skills include: ability of empowering others, humility, conflict resolution, courage, decision making, integrity and honesty, diversity awareness and self-confidence among others. According to him, these skills are vital since they prepare students for career productivity. In line with this, Kirsten (2018) denotes that institutions should prepare students for career readiness by leveraging leadership development programs to further develop knowledge, skills and competences that translate to the changing world of school service.

Also, the above scholars could have come to these conclusions with different factors from those prevailing in secondary schools of Mbarara City North such as different methodologies, different cultural and geographical settings, diverse level of school standards, and divergent levels of understanding. Considering such variations, it is probable that the results of such conclusions could find alteration should all factors in Mbarara City North schools and elsewhere be mismatching.

Conflict Resolution Skills in Student Leadership

Adham (2023) defines conflict as disagreement, tension or opposing viewpoints that can arise among group members when working together. Conflict resolution, on the other hand is the process of resolving disagreements and coming up with solutions that are mutually agreeable to multiple parties (Ayoko, 2016). It is a process of resolving a dispute or conflict permanently, by

adequately addressing each side's interests so that they are satisfied with the outcome (Modh, 2014). According to Modh (2014), conflict is a result of discrepant behavior. It occurs when one party perceives the actions and inactions of the other to be an obstruction (Al-Sibaie et al., 2014). In any institution, more so, in a school, conflict is inevitable, and so, good conflict management tools are essential (Shonk, 2023). Student leaders need conflict management skills in order to construct a work environment where there is proper treatment of peers with respect, kindness and empathy. A study on conflict resolution done by Ligs University outlined some skills needed among leaders such as emotional intelligence, emphasis on impartiality and objectiveness, mediation, negotiation, problem solving, conflict prevention, patience and flexibility, and integrity and respect (Adham, 2023).

Conflict resolution is hinged on strong emotional intelligence. Student leaders need to have emotional intelligence if they are to curb down conflicts in schools (Fibuch & Ahmed, 2019). A study on conflict management in secondary schools revealed that school conflicts occur for many reasons, and so schools need to have the ability to thoroughly examine the root cause of such conflicts (Sintapertiwi et al., 2019). Since conflict among secondary school students is bound to happen, student leaders should be equipped with skills to deal with it since its treatment depends on the level of leadership responsibility (Runde & Flanagan, 2013). Student leaders need to understand the diversity of the school community they are serving such as personality, culture, emotions, and circumstances whose differences affect the behavior of students (Maranga & Sampayo, 2015). A study by Niger Delta University concluded that emotional intelligence is an inevitable skill required of student leaders if there is to be discipline management (Ogoun, 2023).

Conflict resolution requires impartiality and objectivity (Adham, 2023). This is a skill that needs auxiliary skills like consistency, clarity, active listening, and neutrality (Carter & Reynolds, 2017). These skills resolve conflicts among students on basis of good leadership, positive team dynamics and subsequently fairness in the systems. According to Oghenechuko & Godbless (2018), impartiality can best be attained by use of neutral individuals in cases when disagreeing parties cannot come to agreement. Student leaders need to understand that they are peace actors – reconciling conflicts and disagreements amongst their colleagues, and so, should apply leadership frameworks that can create reconciliation, serenity, and harmony in school (Campbell, 2018). The above ideas are in agreement with the study findings on the effect of leadership on conflict management (Erzen & Armagan, 2015).

Conflict resolution entails mediation. Student leaders play a mediating role between their colleagues and the administration, and this reconciles particular conflicts in school (Chandolia & Anastasiou, 2020). This is because most of conflicts among secondary school students are interpersonal, administrative, and managerial. Therefore, student leaders have a significant role in responding to the rising demands of their colleagues and subsequently address them to the higher authorities (Campbell, 2018). The mediating role of student leaders also extends to the understanding that they are managers of their particular offices of assignment tasked to fulfill their obligation of representation of their colleagues (Garg & Mishra, 2020). A related study discovered that dialogue impacted greatly on building peace in cases of conflict among students (Duckworth et al., 2019).

Conflict resolution involves negotiation. This is the ability to influence others to agree or take a particular course of action (Maranga & Sampayo, 2015). A study on leadership negotiation in Nigeria showed that in conflict, there should be negotiation so that the two parties

strive to reach agreement (Oredein & Eigbe, 2014). Negotiation in student leadership allows informed decisions, manages relationships, allocates resources fairly, promotes collaboration, navigates crises, and above all resolves conflicts among students (Sintapertiwi et al., 2019). In order to achieve this, there should be appropriate manners of respect among the students and their leaders (Fusch & Fusch, 2015).

Conflict resolution requires problem-solving skills. Effective student leaders excel in identifying, analyzing and resolving conflicts in their communities (Fibuch & Ahmed, 2019). In a study to examine the choice of conflict management strategies made by servant leaders, it was deduced that leaders should focus on strategies that are more persuasive, humane and participative which would lead to amicable solutions to conflicts among members (Jit et al., 2016). In order to achieve this, leaders should do thorough diagnosis of the conflict with self-restraint, patience, composure and humility (Adham, 2023). This skill navigates challenges, drives innovation, fosters collaboration, and ultimately leads their colleague students to success (Shonk, 2023).

Conflict resolution skills prevent some conflicts. This is possible if there are proper strategies of leadership in the team (Carter & Reynolds, 2017). Student leaders need to possess certain skills such as effective communication, active listening, positivity and collaborative problem-solving as sure means of preventing conflict among students (Adeoye et al., 2023). Moreover, educators and administrators should prioritize the development of the above tactical skills to create a more inclusive and collaborative learning environment. Conflict prevention should be the effort of every student leader because of the negative consequences of conflicts in a school (Garg & Mishra, 2020). A study on managing conflict denoted that successful leaders

are those who can embrace and manage conflict triggers in a positive manner (Fibuch & Ahmed, 2019).

Conflict resolution requires patience and flexibility. This is a requirement in handling disciplinary cases among students (Shonk, 2023). Patience allows leaders to handle conflicts and disagreements with a calm and composed demeanor; it gives them the capacity to listen to different perspectives and work towards better solution (Sintapertiwi et al., 2019). Student leaders have to constantly learn from their experiences of service to patiently deal with the erring colleagues and mediate any conflicts arising through assessment and treatment (Runde & Flanagan, 2013). Patience and flexibility is among the tactical skills advocated for in student leadership meant for promoting harmonious learning environment among students (Adeoye et al., 2023).

Conflict resolution also requires integrity and respect. These are core principles in student leadership because they are essential for building trust, maintaining ethical standards, and creating a positive learning environment (McKibben, 2017). The two leadership competencies entail honesty, ethical behavior, accountability, consistency, trustworthiness, empathy and professional courtesy (Pidgion, 2017). As noted earlier, conflicts and disputes are inevitable in society, and so, student leaders need to be of impeccable character to manage, resolve and remedy any disagreements among their peers (Normore, 2016). In a study by Zimbabwe Open University, there was an acknowledgement that leaders of integrity and respect were trusted in resolving conflicts amicably in societies without taking legal redresses (Rukuni et al., 2015).

Communication Skills in Student Leadership

Communication is defined as the process of exchanging information, ideas, thoughts, or feelings between individuals or groups through various methods such as spoken or written

language, gestures, body language, or electronic means like emails and messages (Gunderman, 2013). Communication skills are very essential in leadership, as shall be discussed below.

Communication, first and foremost necessitates active listening. This is the process of receiving and constructing meaning from spoken and non-verbal messages, and it culminates in communicating a response to the communicating partner (Denise & Theiss, 2022). Active listening includes asking questions and paying attention to rational messages, and this brings about mindfulness: being fully present, taking the perspective of another (Wood, 2015). In line with this, a study by Pavord and Donnelly (2015) highlighted that active listening entailed being genuine, self-disclosure, confidentiality, and knowing your limitations. This expedites smoothness in administration and management intended for a common understanding (West & Turner, 2020).

Effective communication involves clarity. Here, the quality of expressing ideas, information, or messages should be in a way that is easily understood by the audience or receiver (Gunderman & Brown, 2013). This requires using clear and concise language, organizing thoughts logically, avoiding ambiguity, and considering the needs and perspectives of the recipients to ensure that the message is conveyed effectively and without confusion (Kathleen, 2014). There is always a dynamic interaction that takes place among teachers, leaders, administrators and students which requires clear communication so that there is proper understanding (Ashu, 2023). In order to achieve this, student leaders need to be trained (Hidayanti 2023).

Student leadership communication entails empathy. This is the ability to understand and share the feelings, perspectives, and emotions of another person (West & Turner, 2020). Empathy involves not only listening actively to what someone is saying but also trying to

comprehend their point of view and emotions on a deeper level. Lack of empathy hampers creativity development in finding quick solutions to issues raised by students to their prefects (Barseli et al., 2018). This could be so because empathy is part of emotions which affects communication and interpersonal skills (Bach & Grant, 2015). Caution should however be taken that there is need for control of ones emotions and adjusting accordingly with an aim of positivity in the whole matter (Petrovici & Dobrescu, 2014).

Effective communication involves giving feedback. Feedback refers to the information or responses provided by one party to another regarding their message, behavior or performance (West & Turner, 2020). The chain of communication is incomplete without feedback; and so, student leaders ought to understand of innovative methods of transmitting this feedback (Ashu, 2023). A leader who gives feedback has mastered the communication competence that builds and maintains an effective relationship (Gamble & Gamble, 2013). A study on feedback in communication revealed that effective and timely feedback reduces stress, promotes wellness, and improves overall quality of life in a community or institution (Kathleen, 2014).

Communication in leadership promotes interpersonal skills. These are crucial in various personal and professional settings such as assertiveness, adaptability, feedback, emotional intelligence, responsiveness and active listening (Maranga & Sampayo, 2015). A study by Ashu (2023) outlined some of the interpersonal skills as understanding students, sense of humor, effective body language, and positive motivation. Since communication is a human necessity, today's students require a communication curriculum that focuses on developing their interactive skills (Lolli, 2013). This is so because through communication, emotional states such as satisfaction, joy, anger, and sadness can be expressed (Ayagan et al., 2023). Good interpersonal skills among student leaders fosters effective care, builds trust, establishes rapport, develops

teamwork, and leads to successful outcomes (Puscas et al., 2021). These skills also enable student leaders to operate more effectively within complex school environments (Atilgan, 2013). Moreover, they assist community members to live in harmony (Ansari, 2021).

Discipline of Secondary Schools Students

Since discipline is a broad term, the researcher mainly concentrated on school and class attendance, time management, participation in extra-curricular activities, and obedience to class authorities. These were chosen among the many constructs of student discipline mainly because of their impact in shaping the discipline of students (Blandford, 2013).

School and Class Attendance

School attendance is the act of regularly and punctually attending a school or educational institution as required or expected (Collins Dictionary, 2023). It implies student's presence in the classroom or on the school premises during the scheduled learning hours, often mandatory according to school timetable and arrangement. UNESCO (2023) defines school attendance as the attendance at any regular accredited educational institution or program, public or private, for organized learning at any level of education. The following below are some of the benefits of regular and timely attendance of school to the student.

School and class attendance facilitates academic success. A study by Hsu and Plunkett (2016) showed that attendance has a great and positive effect on students' performance in many disciplines since the learners are able to directly attain knowledge from teachers. According to Hidayah et al. (2018), class attendance is a sure factor that affects student performance at school. Modise (2015) advises school authorities that if they need to achieve great academic results, there be laid strategies of emphasizing and effecting attendance. Relatedly, it was noted that

students with good lesson attendance showed higher examination scores (Chilwant & Hundekari, 2013). They however, advised that a keen study be put on finding reasons for absenteeism among some learners.

Attendance gives platform for social interaction among students and teachers. A study by Shaunte (2022) showed that school attendance equips students with social emotional training as a result of interaction with colleagues and instructors. This gives students a chance to mature their thoughts and intellectual capabilities. In addition, Persky (2014) noted that classroom attendance encourages socialization which is a function of encouraging stronger relationships among learners. This positively promotes the development of professional skills, behaviours, attitudes and values. A related study by Ayodele (2017) showed that physical class attendance facilitates critical thinking among attendants due to a common platform accorded them altogether. From the above authors, it is crystal clear that school and class attendances are of great social impact among students and teachers.

Attendance is a sure way of giving accountability in school. A study by UNESCO (2023) showed that school attendance is a measure of presence and participation in the act of learning from which accountability out to be sought. This is because school and class attendances by students are mandatory obligations that students must adhere to. A study by Goulas et al. (2023) showed that student attendance gives ground for responsibility and answerability of students to their parents and guardians. This creates a significant effect on academic scores which are the common means of student accountability (Ayodele, 2017).

School and class attendance shows compliance with school policy. As denoted by UNESCO (2023), attendance in most secondary schools is mandatory, as per school policy. This

means that absconding from this is a violation of school rules and regulations. Moreover, a study by Hidayah et al. (2018) showed that attendance compliance is of great impact on students' performance at school. According to Hartati et al. (2023), school and class attendance of students is a determinant of student discipline whose interest is built more through extrinsic motivation than punishment. This study showed that a policy on attendance ought to be motivational so that it urges students to regularly attend school.

School and class attendance provides ground for monitoring and support. According to Hartati et al. (2023), there should be both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that should urge students to attend school. This is probably the reason Hsu and Plunkett (2016) implored educators to lay pedagogical strategies that tame student attendance with proper monitoring tools. They continued to advise that there be measures of support to learners who have challenges with regular and timely attendances. On this matter, Modise (2015) advised that there be specific tools to monitor student attendances regularly such as record taking every day, engaging learners to find out causes of poor attendance, making follow-ups, and engaging authorities among others.

Time Management

Time management is the process of planning and organizing how one allocates his/her time to specific tasks and activities in a way that maximizes productivity and efficiency (Oxford, 2023). Adebayo (2015) defines time management as a set of practices that work together to help one get more value out of ones' time with the aim of improving the quality of ones' time. The following below are some of the benefits of time management to students insofar as they are part of general discipline of students.

Time management leads to increased academic productivity. Proper time management in school is key to success in academic endeavors (Nadinloyi et al., 2013). This is because it affects an individual's overall performance and achievements (Razali et al., 2018). A study by Wolters and Brady (2021) showed that time management has connections to students' engagement, learning and achievement. By this, the student is able to attain maximally from the teacher, and consequently get good marks. A study by Adebayo (2015) recommended that students have to be conscious of time in performing their academic activities so that the levels of their academic performance can be high. This is in line with the views of Adams and Blair (2019) who held that effective time management is associated with greater academic performance.

Time management leads to goal achievement. Proper time management is key to success in schools due to the fact that there is most efficient use of time through setting goals, creating schedules, and eliminating distractions (Nadinloyi et al., 2013). Goal achievement is as a result of individual's overall performance and achievements insofar as they manage well their time in their daily school life, and being able to make steady flow of their routines in a productive way (Nasrullah & Khan, 2015). In order to achieve this, Adebayo (2015) advises that students have to be conscious of time while performing their academic activities. This is because goal achievement involves understanding the efforts required to address the many aspects of learning through motivation and goal orientation (O'Connell, 2014).

Proper time management among students reduces stress. Academic stress among students is as a result of failure of students to regulate both their studies and their external lives (Adam & Blair, 2019). Therefore, there is need to train students on skills of time management so as to enable them achieve much with less stress (Hafner et al., 2015). Through training time

management skills, students are able to learn how to avoid procrastination: striving hard to complete their assignments on time so as not to fail to meet deadlines (Adebayo, 2015).

Time management enhances proper decision making. Decision making is defined as the process of selecting a choice or course of action from multiple alternatives (Oxford, 2023). Time management is the foundation of students' development of good study habits and strategies for success (Adams & Blair, 2019). In line with this, a study by Ashu (2023) showed that there is always a dynamic interaction that takes place between teachers and students at school that requires making choice among the available options. Taking a choice is a skill that comes with possessing diverse knowledge about a variety of things, from which priorities are sought (Petrovici & Dobrescu, 2014). Therefore, time management skills help learners in coping with strategies that allow them to negotiate with competing demands (Adams & Blair, 2019).

Participation in Extra-curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities are non-academic pursuits that students or individuals engage in outside of their regular school or work obligations such as skill development in sports and games, social connections, personal growth, among others (UNESCO, 2023). These activities help learners become more involved in their school or community activities and so develop social and soft skills. Ingale (2014) defines extra-curricular activities as those activities which try to develop the students' physical, moral, mental, social and emotional capabilities: they are activities which are beyond the curriculum though they are part of school programs. The following below are some of the student benefits of participating in co-curricular activities in school.

Participation in extra-curricular activities helps students to develop different skills such as athletics, ball games, scouting, dramatics, debate, etc. (Sigh, 2017). A study by the University of Toronto showed that participation in these activities creates opportunities for acquiring and developing skills that can even be used in transition of employment and lifelong living (Kovalchuk et al., 2017). Relatedly, these activities stimulate playing, acting, singing, recitation, speaking and narrating in students (Khan & Iqbal, 2014).

Extra-curricular activities are a ground for enriched education. The general aim of participation in these activities is to develop all-round students (Ingale, 2014). This can be attained through self-efficacy, satisfaction, feelings of support, retention, intellectual engagement, enhanced understanding of others, and practical skill acquisition (Stirling & Kerr, 2015). In order to achieve this, there is need to train instructors to ensure that students get the best training and develop career in these activities (Lazaro & Naano, 2016). This emphasis is because of the diverse benefits emanating from such education such as self-confidence, better communication skills, and improved physical and mental abilities (Sami & Irfan, 2020).

Extra-curricular activities build a forum for social engagement. A study on the interest of extra-curricular activities in schools revealed that interest in these activities significantly influenced social self-efficacy in terms of academics, language, morals and overall personality (Achi et al., 2020). Through these activities, students build relationships, collaboration, teamwork, and the ability to make change, communication, and management of conflicts amongst themselves (Mancha & Ahmad, 2016). This is so because participation in co-curricular activities makes it easier and smoother for students' transition and interaction processes (Kovalchuk et al., 2017).

Participation in extra-curricular activities facilitates character building among students. According to Mancha & Ahmad (2016), this helps students to develop their characters and personality. This is so because the basic idea for these activities in schools is training of their mind to facilitate academic achievements and skills development (Singh, 2017). Through cooperation, teamwork, and coordination during extra-curricular activities, students learn the art of character formation and understanding amongst themselves (Khan & Iqbal, 2014). A study by Lazaro and Naano (2016) recommended that governments should emphasize participation in extra-curricular activities in schools since they are means of nurturing characters of learners.

Extra-curricular activities are stress-relievers to students. Many students in school get stress due to pressures from different angles such as academics, family, administration, health, welfare, and finances among others, and so, at the end of the day, they need a reliever to help them overcome some of these challenges (Adams & Blair, 2019). Failure to participate in these activities creates harmful effects to students such as emotional imbalances, sadness, tension and loneliness (Rahman et al., 2021). Adebayo (2015) advises that students should learn to avoid procrastination so as to reduce stress on themselves. Relatedly, Kisango (2016) advises that students should be motivated to love and develop a positive attitude towards extra-curricular activities since the benefits are long lasting.

Obedience to Class Authorities

Obedience is a form of social influence that involves acting on the orders of an authority figure; it is the tendency of individuals to comply with orders or commands from someone in a position of power, even if it goes against their personal beliefs or morals (Cherry, 2023). In any formal setting such as a school, organization, religion or business, there are always authorities

and rules that bind subscribing members (Mastroianni, 2015). Particular to a school setting, obedience to authority and rules is a form of social influence that calls for acting and behaving in compliance to school policies, rules and regulations, whereby failure to comply leads to consequences like punishment, rejection, loss of freedom, and arrests among others (Marshall, 2022).

The psychologist Stanley Milgram (1960) outlined elements of obedience as the presence of authority, command, compliance, social and cultural factors, and personal values. According to him, these five make up obedience to authority and rules, and failure to abide leads to disobedience which leads to conflict with self and others (Coco, 2023). This conflict leads to consequences on an individual since he/she has opted to choose the reverse. In a secondary school setting, there are always Social Representations (SR) which consist of a set of beliefs, ideas, values, symbols, and expectations that form the general modalities of thinking and feeling within a school or particular class (Pozzi et al., 2014). These constitute what all members of the school or class ought to abide by so as to have proper discipline in a school or class respectively.

Obedience of class rules and to authorities among students in a school is influenced by social and cultural factors rotating on personal values (Frimer et al., 2014). These refer to the influences from surrounding environments, norms and societal expectations that work on students' alignment or conflict between his/her personal values and the given command (Hollander, 2015). In order to attain higher levels of obedience among secondary school students, there is need to promote positivity sensitization regarding rules and regulations (Salama et al., 2020). Under this, attention is put on constructive obedience that promotes social harmony and discipline in school. Student leaders in this case ought to be at the forefront of influencing positive behavior among their colleagues (Xiao, 2013).

Other Factors (Extraneous Variables) that affect the Discipline of Students

School Environment

Hsu and Plunkett (2016) defined school environment as the physical, social, and academic surroundings in which students and educators interact in the process and service of education. School environment is the result of unity of various things such as power, state, and other living creatures that interact in the process of learning (Senjaya et al., 2020). These factors in the school directly influence the discipline of learners. Korir and Kipkemboi (2014) contend that a student's discipline and academic success is greatly influenced by the type of school he/she attends, because the school environment is closely linked to interpersonal relations between the student and school. Moreover, a good school environment teaches positive discipline in which students are provided with programs that train students how to obey rules, be responsible, respectful, and this shapes their general discipline (Thakur, 2017). A good school environment also encompasses the school administration's capacity to develop a rapport and understand the feelings and needs of their students if they are to tame the discipline of their students (Adeyemi, 2014).

Parental Involvement

Mbaluka (2017) defined parental involvement as the active participation by parents in shaping and reinforcing appropriate behaviors in their children, where by parents act as moderators of their children's behavior. Marcucci (2019) defined parental involvement as the practices that entail parent communication with their children about education, beliefs or behaviours that parents hold or engage in with the exclusive aim of increasing academic outcomes, discipline and general proper upbringing. Under this, the ultimate responsibility of

learner's behavior rests with their parents or guardians; for they ought to take an active interest in their children's discipline (Manamela, 2015). Habyarimana and Hesbon (2021) emphasize on parental communication as a vital role for parents to tame the discipline of their children. Parents are obliged to share timely information related to students and their teachers, so as to work together towards fostering good discipline of their students. Relatedly, Ismail (2021) emphasized that parents' discipline is a model of their children's discipline; that the discipline of parents can improve their children's discipline, self-esteem, cognitive development, social interaction skills, and academics as well.

The Relationship between Student Leadership Quality and Discipline of Students

A related study by Moi University found out that there was a significant relationship between good quality student leadership and discipline of students in secondary schools (Onditi, 2018). This is because, quality leadership among students is a link between school administration and fellow students in managing school affairs. This is in line with the idea of Mulindwa (2010) who found out that in schools where student leaders were empowered and trained, the discipline of learners was much better. Moreover, induction and administrative support accorded to student leaders played a significant positive role in the management of student discipline.

According to Mwangudza and Mbirithi (2023), the quality of student leadership has a significant relationship on the management of the discipline of students. This is because student leadership is expected to help school administration improve efficiency in school management. Also, Nyaga (2018) noted that training of these student leaders equips them with leadership skills that promote discipline and order in the daily operations of school. She recommended continued

training that would yield high quality of student leadership and consequently improve the discipline of students.

In order to improve student discipline, there is need to involve student leadership. Involvement of student councils in school management enables student leaders participate in discipline management of students since they are able to address their colleagues in what is expected of them at a peer level (Chepchichir et al., 2023). A study by the University of Nairobi revealed that in schools where student councils were not involved in decision making or lacked a communication link between the administration and students, those particular schools were characterized by high levels of indiscipline (Kilonzo, 2017). The involvement of student leadership in some aspects of management equips these leaders with appropriate leadership skills that enable them be effective in managing the discipline of their colleagues.

Discipline management has a close link with academic performance of learners. Mwagi and Monda (2023) denoted that there is a close link between academic performance and the discipline of students, of which student leadership is part. This is because student leaders ought to play a visible role in the management of the discipline of their fellows. In regard to this, each student leader ought to have a leadership perception in oneself to examine the self on how best he or she could be relevant in leadership (Humpries et al., 2015). This will be possible if schools empower student leaders through training programs, frequent meetings, communication and benchmarking, among others (Ndwiga, 2022).

Basing on the above authors, it is evident that there is a relationship between the quality of student leadership and the discipline of students in secondary schools.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, description of the area of study, population, sampling procedures, methods and tools of data collection, research procedure, techniques of data analysis and interpretation, ethical consideration of the study, and limitations of study.

Research Design

Siedlecki (2020) described a research design as the methodical approach, qualitative or quantitative, that is used in investigating a given phenomenon. The researcher used cross-sectional survey research design with both qualitative and quantitative approaches of data collection since data was collected at once. Cross-sectional research design was preferred because of being easy to apply research instruments in a relatively short period of time.

Area of Study

The study was carried out in Mbarara City North. This area comprises of three divisions, namely: Kakiika, Kamukuzi and Biharwe; it borders Rubaya in the North, Isingiro District in the East, Mbarara City South in the South, and Rubaare in the West. This area of study is one of the two constituencies of Mbarara City, in the South-Western part of Uganda. This study area was chosen because many secondary schools in this area have disciplinary challenges among their students. Several reports from different stakeholders revealed recurring instances of indiscipline among students.

Study Population

The population of the study comprised of head teachers, prefects and students from the six selected secondary schools representative of the seventeen secondary schools in Mbarara City

North. The six schools were purposively chosen basing on any two schools in each of the three divisions comprising of Mbarara City North, namely Kakiika, Biharwe and Kamukuzi. The choice of head teachers was based on the fact that they are majorly responsible for the administration and management of student discipline at the top level in a school organogram. Also, they were approached to give in depth information to supplement students' data. Prefects were considered since they are leaders of students in school and directly link their colleagues to administration; moreover, the area of study was directly involving them. The study also involved students since their discipline was the main area of concern.

Sample Size

A sample size is a small portion of the respondents from the population size a researcher selects for observation (Low, 2019). According to the report from the City Education Officer (2023), there are 17 secondary schools in Mbarara City North with 13,288 students. The researcher purposively selected 6 secondary schools, that is, two schools per division. Both private and government aided schools were considered. For purposes of research ethics, these schools were coded as A, B, C, D, E and F. These schools' total enrolment was at 1,901 students by the start of the research.

Table: 3.1: Sample Size

School	School Code	Male Students	Female Students	Total
School 1	A	131	171	311
School 2	B	117	128	245
School 3	C	199	234	433
School 4	D	131	145	276
School 5	E	191	214	405
School 6	F	99	132	231
Total		874	1027	1901

Source: Education Office, Mbarara City, 2023

From these, each school provided at least 10 student leaders to participate in the study, plus one administrator, preferably the head teacher. The total number of respondents was 1,901. The sample size selection was determined by use of Krejcie and Morgan's table of sample size determination (attached as appendix) in which 320 respondents were considered. This number is inclusive of 60 student leaders but exclusive of 6 head teachers.

Sampling Techniques

This study employed both simple random and purposive sampling techniques. Simple Random Sampling Technique was used to select students. This sampling technique was preferred because participants in the same population have equal chances of being selected (Suhairom, 2014). A simple random was applied to the alphabetical list of the names of students from each selected secondary school in which the first 50 participants were selected. Purposive sampling technique was used to select head teachers and prefects. This is because it was the most effective in obtaining information on grounds of position and purpose of the respondents (Rai & Thapa, 2015).

Data Collection Methods

The researcher used three methods, namely: survey, interview and focus group discussion. A survey is a data collection method that involves a set of questions designed to gather specific information, opinions or attitudes depending on research goals and target audience (Rai & Thapa, 2015). This was cross-sectional. The researcher used this method to obtain information from prefects and students. An interview is a data collection method which involves direct interaction between a researcher and a participant, allowing for in-depth exploration of topics (Suhairom, 2014). Interviews were conducted on head teachers. Focus

group discussion method was also used to obtain data from some student leaders and students. This is where a small group of participants is brought together to discuss a specific topic or set of topics with the guidance of a facilitator or researcher (Rai & Thapa, 2015). This method is important since it gives respondents freedom and time to discuss their ideas extensively and concretely. Responses obtained from the above three methods was scaled and scored appropriately.

Data Collection Tools

The researcher collected primary data using questionnaires and interview guides. Questionnaires comprised of majorly open-ended questions and a few close-ended questions to allow discussion and give the desired answers to some questions. Interviews were used to obtain qualitative data especially from head teachers who did not have enough time or commitment to write, or specially identified to give particular information. Open-ended questions were employed in both questionnaires and interview guides to avail the researcher with data from the respondents who had been given liberty to express their minds about the set questions. These questions gave allowance to the respondent to be subjective from which objectivity of one's idea was obtained through comparison of ideas of other respondents over the same matter.

Research Procedure

The researcher obtained clearance from the supervisors assigned to him. The proposal was then presented to the Faculty of Education, whose clearance forwarded him to the Research Ethics Committee (BSU-REC 2024-358). The researcher's work proposal was scrutinized and thoroughly looked into so that if it met the minimum standards, it would be forwarded to the Graduate School Director for clearance. The researcher was then passed to make findings of the study. The researcher was given an introductory letter permitting him to go to the field. The

introductory letter was presented to the Mbarara City North Education Officer seeking permission to conduct research in secondary schools in Mbarara City North, and thereafter preceded to various head teachers of the selected schools. The researcher followed programs given by the head teachers since all the respondents were in a school setting. Once permitted, the researcher informed the respondents about the purpose of the study and requested them to willingly provide information required for realizing the objectives of the research.

Quality Control

Data quality control was determined by calculating the validity and reliability of instruments. Validity in research refers to the extent to which a study accurately measures or reflects what it intends to measure, while reliability refers to the consistency and stability of measurements or results (Siedlecki, 2020).

Validity of Instruments

Here, Content Related Evidence of Validity method was used to determine the degree to which the instruments measured what they intended to measure. A list of objectives, which were to guide the construction of the instrument and a separate list of the items designed specifically to answer the research questions were given to two knowledgeable persons, namely the research supervisors who were independently asked to have a thorough inspection of the items and link each objective with the respective item, assessing the relevancy of the items to the content addressed to the objectives. These persons were asked to rate each item on a 4-point scale namely: not relevant (NR), somewhat relevant (SR), quite relevant (QR), and very relevant (VR). The researcher computed the level of agreement on the items between the two knowledgeable persons as inter-rater agreement (to what extent shall these persons agree?)

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Number of items rated quite relevant and very relevant}}{\text{Total number of items in the questionnaire}}$$

$$CVI = \frac{n}{N}$$

Where: CVI = Content Validity Index

n = Number of items rated relevant

N = Total number of items in the questionnaire

$$CVI = \frac{12}{14}$$

$$CVI=0.86$$

Reliability of Instruments

Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement, that is: the extent to which the results are similar from different forms of the instrument. The researcher applied a Test-Retest Reliability approach in which a given instrument was tested on two different occasions to assess its consistency over time. Primary data was systematically checked, focus maintained, and identification and correcting of errors carried out. The reliability of items was tested using Cronbach Alpha (α) method under Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS). Reliability for the items was attained at the benchmark of $\alpha = 0.86$ which showed good reliability. The items enabled the collection of accurate data.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods as explained below:

Qualitative data from objectives one (student leadership quality) and objective two (students' discipline) was analyzed descriptively and information presented in narrative form. This data was organized into themes and patterns, categorized through content analysis, and then tabulated. The procedure involved presenting information and summarizing such data into

categories or themes for valid inference and interpretation to draw better conclusions for the study.

Quantitative data from questionnaires was sorted, coded, edited and classified into categories as per study objectives. The results from objective three (the relationship between student leadership quality and students' discipline) was summarized and entered into SPSS Version 20, where frequency tables and mean scores were generated for easy interpretation of findings. Ratings was done according to the Likert Scale ranging from 1 to represent strongly disagree (very bad), 2 to represent disagree (bad), 3 to represent not sure (moderate), 4 to represent agree (good) and 5 to represent strongly agree (excellent) on a scale of 1-5. The correlation on the relationship between student leadership quality and the discipline of learners among secondary school students in Mbarara City North was determined to find out whether there is a positive statistical relationship between the two. This was done using Spearman's rho correlation in the SPSS package that resulted into 0.547 score.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher maintained a high level of ethics throughout the whole research process. First of all, the researcher proceeded with research with approval from the relevant university authorities with written letters of proof. This entailed a letter of clearance from the Research Ethics Committee (REC). This is a mandate that the research was officially okayed by the university to proceed. The researcher then proceeded to seek permission from the Mbarara City Education officer and the head teachers of the selected schools. The researcher observed highest levels of prudence, respect and objectivity in the subsequent levels of research.

Respondents were informed as to why and how they have been chosen. Each questionnaire or interview guide contained an opening introductory letter requesting for the respondent's consent in providing the required information for the study.

All those who participated in the study were guaranteed confidentiality and treated with maximum respect and freedom. Firstly, the researcher sought their consent, and then assured them that the information required was to be handled with utmost respect it deserved. Consent of minors was sought through their head teachers. Anonymity, pseudo names and confidentiality, where applicable, were applied. Any material obtained from other sources such as journals, books, newspapers and elsewhere was well acknowledged. The information obtained was purposely for research intentions only.

All the filled questionnaires were well collected, stored properly to be disposed by burning at the end of approval of the thesis. This is because of their bulk on storage.

Chapter Four

Data Presentation and Interpretation

Response Rate

Table 4.1: The Response Rate

Category	Sample Size	Response Rate	Percentage
Head teachers	6	6	100
Student Leaders	60	58	96.7
Students	260	232	89.2
Total	326	296	90.8

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Table 4.1 shows that the sample categories that were targeted participated in the study, making the overall response rate 90.8%. According to Mandela (2023), a response rate of 50% and above is acceptable. Therefore the response rate of the current study was considered acceptable for research. The difference in the response rate (9.2%) that emerged was as a result of few students who did not return the questionnaires, and in one school where we were presented only 8 prefects instead of the required 10

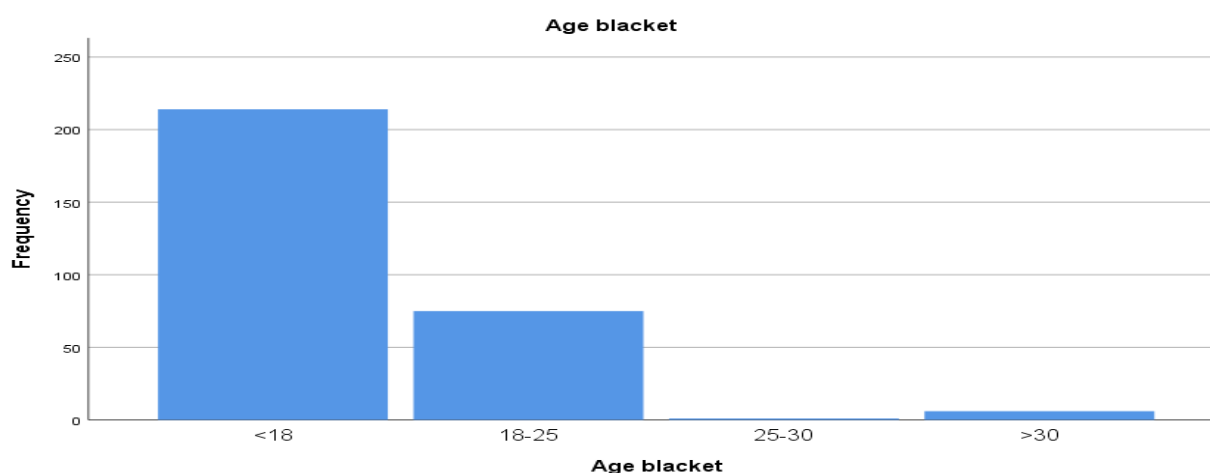
Statistics of Respondents' Characteristics (Age, Gender and Highest Education Level)

Table 4.2: Statistics on Demographic Characteristics

Category	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Age Category (Years)</i>		
Below 18	214	72.3
18-25	75	25.3
25-30	1	0.3
Above 30	6	2.0
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	108	36.5
Female	188	63.5
<i>Highest Education Level</i>		
O' Level	232	78.4
A' Level	58	19.6
Bachelors	5	1.7
Post Graduate	1	0.3
Total	296	100

Source: Primary Data, 2024

A Graph Showing Respondents' Age Categories

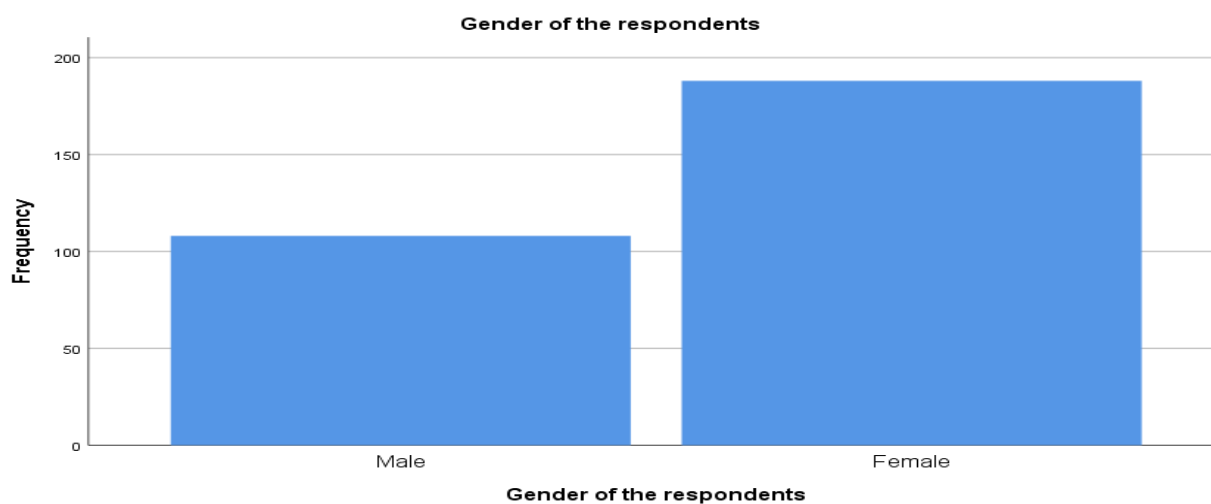


Source: Primary Data, 2024

From the table and graph above, by age, majority of the respondents (214) corresponding to 72.3% were below 18 years, followed by 75 respondents (25.3%) who were between 18 – 25

years; then 6 respondents (2.0%) were above 30 years, and only 1 respondent (0.3%) was between 25 and 30.

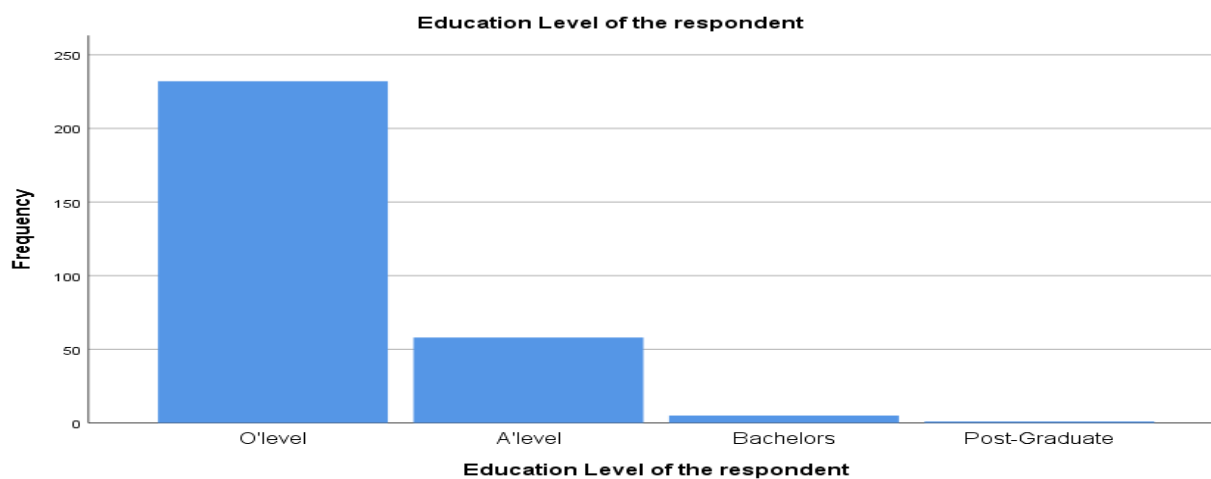
A Graph showing the Gender of the Respondents



Source: Primary Data, 2024

From the table and graph above, by gender, majority of the respondents (188) corresponding to 63.5 were female, and the rest were male, 108, corresponding to 36.49%.

A Graph Showing Highest Education Levels of the Respondents



Source: Primary Data, 2024

From the table and graph above regarding highest education levels of the respondents, majority of the respondents 231 (78.04%) were from O-Level, followed by 59 (19.93%) of A-Level; then followed by 5 (1.9%) respondents who held a Bachelor's Degree, and then 1 (0.34%) respondent who held a Post-Graduate degree. None of the respondents was at a Diploma level.

Objective One: The Quality of Student Leadership in Mbarara City North Secondary Schools

Results on the quality of student leadership under this section were obtained in terms of teamwork and representation of students' interests; conflict resolution skills and collaboration with administration; and effective communication skills among student leaders in the selected schools of Mbarara City.

Table 4.5: Statistics on the Quality of Student Leadership

Quality Domain	Mean	Standard Deviation
Teamwork among student leaders	4.25	0.904
Representing Students' Interests	4.23	0.898
Conflict Resolution Skills	4.16	0.999
Collaboration with teachers and Administrators	4.18	0.951
Effective Communication	4.27	0.962
Overall Leadership quality	4.13	0.935
Average	4.202	0.806

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Team Work among Student Leaders

Teamwork among student leaders was assessed basing on asking whether the leaders were working as a team in executing their duties and also if they represented students' interests. From Table 4.5 above, the mean of the two questions was 4.25 and 4.23, with standard

deviation of 0.904 and 0.898 respectively. This implies that the assessment of teamwork among student leaders of Mbarara City North secondary schools was above average.

While assessing the teamwork among the student leaders, one of the head teachers revealed that:

“The prefects in this school hold weekly meetings to make resolutions that enable them check the management of their duties in school. From these meetings, the prefects assign themselves teams of operations which they call ‘team for ...’ such as for checking smartness of students, orderliness in dormitories, and punctuality for meals, among others. These teams are made up of a minimum of 10 prefects and maximum 15 prefects who are specially chosen as team leaders to man a given resolution. A member of the team may be assigned a different role in the following week. The teams are usually headed by the respective prefects of the particular area such as a dormitory prefect, Kitchen prefect, sports prefect, among others” (Head teacher, School A, interviewed on 20th June, 2024).

Related to the above, the Head teacher of another school noted that:

“Student leadership in our school works as a team in effecting the various assignments under their mandate as prefects. The student leaders in this school collectively manage their duties mainly because there is a school norm of weekly allocation of duties to prefects, from whom a report of their work is always required by the office of the deputy head teacher in charge of discipline. These reports are then discussed by all the prefects once every month with their patron. From these monthly discussions, evaluation is made.

Under here, prefects are always reminded to work as a team in executing their duties. our prefects are obliged to execute their duties as a team, and always hold monthly meetings with their patron. The patron then gives feedback to the Head teacher. We are glad that our prefects have assisted in the management of the discipline of their colleagues, and this has been achieved collectively as a team of prefects” (Head teacher, School C, interviewed on 22nd June, 2024).

While interviewing some prefects from School B, it was reported that prefects of the school have high levels of collaboration which has created a strong bond of leadership and has enabled togetherness in decision making.

“Through this collaboration, we as prefects of this school set standards for objective decision making and some pronouncements on certain matters come as a result of voting. We are united in handling all disciplinary issues and work as a team in assisting the administration” One of the prefects said.

Moreover, these prefects confessed that because of their togetherness, some matters are conclusively handled by the prefects themselves to the extent that the administration is not involved. This trust from the administration emanated from the preference of their modus operandi.

The Head teacher School B noted that:

“Our student leaders normally represent well the interests of their colleague students, to the extent that they will insist on some items that would have perhaps not look convincing to the administration, especially requests for co-

curricular programs. We find ourselves in ad hoc meetings to attend to the interests of students” (Head teacher School B, interviewed on 21st June, 2024)

Related to the above, prefects from School A testified that *“our togetherness in leadership has earned us a lot of trust from our colleagues”* one of the prefects said. It was reported that some students feel their matters are more quickly attended to when addressed to prefects than when forwarded to the administration. This has been achieved as a result of better understanding of their issues amongst their age mates, and hence the trust.

Prefects from one of the schools showed disappointments from some of their colleagues for failure to work together as a team mainly because of pride and laziness. This was reflected in reports on abandonment and neglect of duties, refusal of fulfilling particular tasks, selective obligations, among others. On the same matter, the headmaster of the same school showed similar concern and added that this could be attributed to students’ loss of interest in their duties of state. He noted that some of the prefects were contesting for positions not to serve, but to show off and enjoy the privileges of prefects.

Conflict Resolution Skills among Student Leaders

Conflict resolution skills among student leaders were assessed basing on student leaders’ ability to resolve conflicts and disputes, and also ability of these leaders to work well with teachers and administrators. From the table (4.5) above, the mean of the two questions was 4.16 and 4.18, with standard deviation of 0.999 and 0.951 respectively. This implies that the assessment of conflict resolution skills among student leaders of Mbarara City North secondary schools was above average.

While interacting with some student leaders of School F, it was noticed that: *“Our leaders are instrumental in resolving most of the conflicts that arise in school”* one student said. Several cases of conflicts such as dissatisfaction with meals, entertainment, inter-class conflicts, sports, and dormitory conflicts among others were majorly handled by student leaders. She continued to say that, *“our leaders know what we as students want and we are happy that they represent our interests”*. It was also noted by another student, *“most of our student leaders are always easily accessible to us the students and possess highest levels of understanding.”*

The head teacher of School D noted that:

“Majority of the conflicts among students at this school arise due to failure of students to obey and negotiate with prefects on proper solutions to the committed offences. As a result, some students are forwarded by student leaders to the administration for adamancy. In such cases, the forwarded students face tougher penalties. Students who listen to the advice of the student leaders always resolve their conflicts at that level and this has saved the students and administration a lot of troubles, and eventually discipline is managed” (Head teacher School D, interviewed on 23rd June, 2024).

The head teacher of School E was proud of their school’s student leadership on grounds of possessing strong emotional intelligence that has enabled the school to keep orderly and with less trouble to the administration. He noted that:

“Some student leaders of this school tipping off the administration about background plans of violence by some students. This has often prepared the administration to swing into action of responses in order to arrest the

situations; and in several instances, a lot has been solved and saved” (Head teacher, School E, interviewed on 24th June, 2024).

Related to the above, the prefects of School A reported that:

“Our leadership team possess high levels of impartiality and objectivity while resolving any issues that arise among our colleagues. Particular to this school, whenever a case of conflict is registered, there is always a group of prefects assigned to investigate the details of the matter from which the findings are based on in resolving that particular conflict. In such instances of deliberation, more prefects are engaged to attain highest levels of objectivity” (One of the prefects said in the discussion on 20th June, 2024).

Communication Skills among Student Leaders

Communication skills among student leaders were assessed by asking respondents if these leaders were effective in communicating to students about important issues. From the table (4.5) above, the average score on the question was 4.27 with a standard deviation of 0.962. The assessment on possessing effective communication skills among student leaders of Mbarara City North secondary schools was relatively high since it was above average.

During interview with the Headmaster of School B about communication skills of student leaders, he revealed that:

“Our student leaders have sufficient communication skills that have facilitated proper management of students’ discipline. Majority of our student leaders are good listeners to their colleagues; they give timely feedback to the administration pertaining particular matters of concern. This chain is

reciprocal from the administration to the students. As a school, we are pleased with the communication status of the student leadership” (Head teacher, School B, interviewed on 21st June, 2024).

The administration at School E was pleased with the effective communication skills especially regarding feedback from students to the administration through their student leaders. The Headmaster noted that, *“a series of information from the administration is easily and effectively passed on to students through the student leaders. Reciprocally, there has been harmony, concord and satisfaction between the administration and students.”*

While discussing with some student leaders of School A about the matter of communication skills among the student leaders, one student said, *“there is high level of effectiveness in this area basically because the school facilitates trainings on leadership from which such skills are taught and emphasized. These workshops have sharpened our student leaders and consequently aided them to be good leaders.”*

The Headmistress of School F however testified that *“some of our student leaders have not yet attained the desired communication skills, as we would wish on the side of administration.”* It was reported that there have been instances of hierarchical mishaps in communication and these have sometimes led to bad and undesirable situations. She noted that some student leaders have made decisions on behalf of the administration some of which was contrary to the mind of the administrators. These discrepancies have at times been detrimental to the peace of the school.

Overall Perception of the Quality of Student Leadership

Respondents were also asked about a general overview on the quality of student leadership in these schools. From Table 4.5 above, the average score was 4.13, with a standard deviation of 0.935. This implies that there is relatively high quality student leadership in the secondary schools of Mbarara City North, since the score is above average.

While interacting with the head teacher of School C, he expressed his appreciation to the student leaders in his school for having been able to be a strong force of management arm in the school. He noted that:

“Our student leaders have generally been supportive enough to the administration. Moreover, our students tend to believe in their leaders more often to the extent that some messages are easily acceptable if they are channeled through their prefects”, said the head teacher School C on 22nd June, 2024.

Relatedly, the Headmistress of School F observed that *“the quality of student leadership depends on our school’s preparations to student leadership. As a school, we invest in workshops and regular meetings to equip our students with leadership skills.”*

She however noted some challenges in student leadership especially when some students want to mislead leaders on issues that are prone to compromises such as dress codes, entertainment, trips and finances among others. Relatedly, the head teacher of School E noted that, *“there are some prefects whose behavior is contrary to the desired discipline, yet they should be implementers of discipline among their colleagues.”* As a result, the administration at times crushes with such individuals, yet they are student leaders.

Objective Two: The Discipline of Students in Secondary Schools of Mbarara City North

Results on the discipline of students under this section were obtained in terms of punctuality and regular attendance of students, time management for school activities, participation in co-curricular activities, obedience to school authorities, and overall view on discipline.

Table 4.6: Statistics on the Discipline of Students

Discipline Domain	Mean	Standard Deviation
Punctuality of Students	4.12	1.031
Regular Attendance of Students	4.04	1.013
Time Management for School Activities	4.07	1.024
Participation in Co-curricular Activities	4.65	0.668
Obedience to Authorities	3.95	0.954
Overall Discipline	4.13	0.875
Average	4.16	0.770

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Punctuality and Attendance of Students

From Table 4.6 above, responses on the punctuality and attendance of students as one measure of discipline were scored with a mean of 4.12 and standard deviation of 1.031. These scores reflect high level of punctuality and attendance of students in school activities as reflected in the mean and standard deviation. There is greater variability reflecting more spread out data points from the mean value.

Regarding punctuality and attendance of students, the head teacher of School A revealed that:

“Majority of our students keep time for school activities and regularly attend classes and other mandatory school activities. We, however have some students who are poor at time management. As administration, we have worked hand in hand with prefects to assist these students to improve on time management. We are glad that there is gradual improvement.” (Head teacher, School A, interviewed on 20th June, 2024).

A certain student leader said, *“The few students who come late or do not attend school activities are relatively very few in comparison to the rest of the students”*. He attributed this to school systems that motivate students to regularly attend school and in time.

In a related revelation, the head teacher of School C noted that:

“The students in this school majorly keep time for school activities and regularly attend school. For some good time now, the students have appreciated these values unlike in the past when absenteeism was at its peak. I attribute this to sensitization to both parents and students which has yielded gradual fruits and consequently changed the face of the school. The prefects in this school have also been instrumental in monitoring punctuality and time management among their colleagues.”(Head teacher School C, interviewed on 22nd June, 2024)

The prefects of School E revealed that their colleagues who miss school are at times swayed by the economic factors of attractions to do side businesses.

“Some of our friends who come late to school or miss school for days are usually doing side businesses such as trading charcoal, bananas, chicken, and

other stuff. As a result, their deals at times hinder them from being regular and punctual at school” one of the prefects said.

Time Management of Students

From Table 4.6 above, responses on time management of students were sorted and a score mean of 4.04 was attained, with a standard deviation of 1.013. The mean score shows a high level of time management among students with a relatively high variability of the data scores. This implies that there is high time management among the students of Mbarara City North secondary schools.

The head teacher of School B said that:

“Our students are generally good at keeping time for school activities save for a few who sometimes fail. Majority of our students respect the school timetables since most of the school activities are compulsory. The few optional activities are understandably held with the concerned such as activities of boarding students which differ from those of day scholars. The prefects of this school are very helpful in helping the entire students’ body keep time. These leaders have helped their colleagues appreciate the value of time management to the extent that majority of the students drive themselves in following school programs” (Head teacher School B, interviewed on 21st June, 2024).

The head teacher of School E also appreciated the students in his school for having complied with school policies of time management. He noted that:

“I am happy to report that majority of our students come early to school and timely observed school activities as scheduled on time tables. This is because majority of our students are boarders, and very few are day scholars. Even at this, majority of our students have learnt that time management is key in education, and so, cherish that value. I attribute this to sensitization given to students on assemblies and a call of motivation by the staff during the various meetings and interactions with students. However, there are scanty cases of improper time management on a few students whom I think will cope up eventually” (Head teacher School E, interviewed on 24th June, 2024).

Prefects from School F appreciated the school administration for having put systems to help students manage well their time. *“We appreciate the many efforts and systems that our administrators have put in place to assist us improve on our time management”*, one of the prefects said.

Students’ participation in Co-curricular Activities

From Table 4.6 above, responses on students’ participation in co-curricular activities were sorted and a mean score of 4.65 with a standard deviation of 0.668 were obtained. These scores reflect high levels of participation with lowest variability in the data scores. This implies that majority of the students were actively involved in co-curricular activities in their respective schools.

The Headmistress of School F said that:

“Our students actively participate in co-curricular activities such as games, sports, music, debates, and SESEMAT projects among others. Many of our

students enjoy these activities since they are seen in a spirit of entertainment and enjoyment, with less academic stress. As a motivation, these activities attract highest participation of all the school programs.” (Head teacher, School F, interviewed on 25th June, 2024).

Relatedly, the head teacher of School E noted that, *“there is a shooting admiration for the new O-level curriculum among our students basically because of the element of co-curricular activities imbued in the program”*.

Prefects of School F said that their colleagues enjoyed participating in co-curricular activities. *“This is mainly because the co-curricular activities have less demands compared to other academic obligations”* one of the student leaders said.

Students’ Obedience to Class Authorities

From Table 4.6 above, responses on students’ obedience to class authorities were sorted and scored an average of 3.95 with a standard deviation of 0.954. These scores reflect a moderate compliance on students’ obedience to class authorities. This implies that the students in the secondary schools of Mbarara City North are average in terms of being obedient to class authorities. This attained the lowest average score in all the items of the interviews and questionnaires. It signals low levels of compliance among the students.

The head teacher of School B revealed that:

“The students of this school have of recent exhibited high levels of obedience to school and class rules. I attribute this to functional and empowered student leadership whereby student leaders have taken full charge of most of the

disciplinary activities in this school” (Head teacher, School B, interviewed on 21st June, 2024).

In a related vein, the Head teacher of School A reported that:

“Our students have been averagely compliant in being obedient to school rules. There have been series of workshops to different stakeholders in sensitizing the community members on the importance of being obedient to rules. This milestone has been achieved as a result of the sensitization. We, however, have a few students who still collide with authorities” (Head teacher School F, interviewed on 25th June, 2024).

An interview with the head teacher of School F revealed that there were some stubborn students who obstinately wanted to challenge anything that is meant to bring order in school. She noted that:

“There are particular individuals who repeatedly collide with authorities over disciplinary issues. As a school, several measures have been put in place to curb down such tendencies, but with less success as desired. As a result, we are forced to apply some bitter remedies such as punishments, suspensions, and at times expulsions” (Head teacher, School F, interviewed on 25th June, 2024).

Overall Perception of the Discipline of Students

From Table 4.6 above, the overall mean score of students’ discipline was 4.13, with a standard deviation of 0.875. Comparatively, this shows a considerable good score of discipline among the secondary school students in Mbarara City North. The standard deviation reflects less

variation and dispersion in the data collected. This means that majority of the data scores were close to each other with few outliers.

An interview with the head teacher of School A about the general discipline, he revealed that:

“Our students are collectively well disciplined despite a few cases of indiscipline such as late coming, absenteeism, school dropout, disobedience, theft, and immorality among others. The general perception of discipline in this school is above average. The few cases of indiscipline are well managed by both the student leaders and higher authorities” (Head teacher School A, interviewed on 20th June, 2024).

Also, the head teacher of School B said that *“Our students are generally having good discipline. I attribute this to strong student leadership that is empowered to handle most of the disciplinary cases among the students.”*

Related to the above, the head teacher of School C said that:

“As a school, we are happy with the general discipline of our students. Being a mixed school of both day and boarding students, there are scant cases of indiscipline among students, but even to these, there is assurance of proper management. In addition, the prefects of this school have been empowered enough to control their colleagues’ discipline. As a team of student leaders, they work with the administration to enforce discipline” (Head teacher School C, interviewed on 22nd June, 2024).

Student leaders of School E were happy about the general discipline of their colleagues; however, they noted that there were habitual students who were obstinate despite several warnings and corrections given. *“This is attributed to stubbornness and adamancy that is found in some students who do not take correction”* said the Head Girl School E. The same case was found out from an interaction with prefects of School F in which there were complaints that some students were stubborn to the extent that they directly showed it to the prefects. The student leaders at School D suggested *“a stronger arm of the administration to those students who were obstinate and stubborn”*.

Objective Three: Association between the quality of students’ leadership and students’ discipline in Mbarara City North Secondary schools

Table 4.7: Correlation coefficient of the variables

			Mean Quality	Mean Discipline
Spearman’s rho	Mean Quality	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.547**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	296	296
	Mean Discipline	Correlation Coefficient	.547**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	296	296

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

From the results in Table 4.7, the 2-tailed significance test shows that the correlation coefficient was 0.547 which indicates a moderate score of a positive relationship between the quality of student leadership and the discipline of students of Mbarara City North secondary schools. The correlation significance was at 0.01 level which shows a high significance of the variables. This therefore negates the null hypothesis. Consequently, an alternative hypothesis is

adopted which states that there a very high statistically significant relationship between the quality of student leadership and the discipline of students in Mbarara City North secondary schools.

Chapter Five

Discussions of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter presents the discussions on the findings of the study, conclusions and recommendations. These are the basements on realizing the study intentions of establishing a relationship between student leadership quality and the discipline of students in the secondary schools of Mbarara City North.

Discussions

Objective One: The quality of student leadership in Mbarara City North Secondary Schools

Teamwork among student leaders

The study found out that majority of the respondents (46.3%) strongly agreed that there was teamwork among the student leaders. In addition, 40.5% of the respondents also agreed to the same fact. On the same matter however, 1.4% and 5.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed and also just disagreed respectively. Only 6.1% of the respondents were undecided over the matter. This factual finding represents a datum that majority of the respondents in Mbarara City North Secondary schools credit the student leaders for working in teams. This is in line with Skyline's definition of teamwork as a structural approach to working together with others in order to achieve a common goal (2023). This brings in an element of pooling strength and skills of individuals to move in a unified direction to achieve common goals, as noted by Korovesis (2023).

Research findings showed that majority of the respondents (44.9%) strongly agreed that their student leaders represented the interests of students. Relatedly, 41.6% of the respondents just agreed on the matter. On the contrary, 8.1% of the respondents disagreed and 0.3% strongly disagreed respectively on the matter. Only 5.1% of the respondents were undecided over the matter. These facts majorly present a positive response on the student leaders' ability in representing the interests of their colleagues. As noted by Sohmen (2013), good student leaders understand the views held by individuals, refine them into common categories of value and are able to represent them to respective higher offices. This takes into consideration of building and leading diverse teams together that bring various views of students to be unified into a common representation, so that each one's view is given the attention it deserves, as noted by Shayna (2020). This was also reported by the head teacher of St. Paul High School who noted that their student leaders represented well the views of their colleagues.

This teamwork among leaders is however at times threatened by some individuals who may not value this aspect. Some respondents, though minority were not pleased with teamwork levels among their student leaders. As noted by Simkhada and Bhattarai (2023), teamwork in leadership necessitates high levels of ability to analyze behaviors, resolve conflicts, motivate students towards positivity, and build trust in both the students' body and the administration. This has however been missing among some student leaders in some of the schools in Mbarara City North as revealed in some interviews, such as student leaders of Kashari Secondary School.

Conflict Resolution Skills among Student Leaders

Research findings showed that majority of the respondents 43.9% strongly agreed that their student leaders possessed conflict resolution skills. Relatedly, 41.6% of the respondents

also just agreed to the same matter. Conversely, only 2.0% and 9.1% of the respondents strongly disagreed and just disagreed respectively to the idea that their student leaders possessed conflict resolution skills. Besides, 3.4% of the respondents were undecided over the matter. The above presentation shows that majority of the student leaders in Mbarara City North secondary schools possessed skills that can mitigate conflict and other related disagreements. This is a necessary skill for harmony, understanding and settlement.

Most respondents held that majority of conflicts in secondary schools arose due to lack of negotiation between students and administration. As a result, there is a gap which results into conflict yet there should be negotiation to bridge this gap, as held by Maranga and Sampayo who taught that good leadership (administration) should have the ability to influence others to agree or take a particular course of action (Maranga & Sampayo, 2015). In order to avoid some of the conflicts in secondary schools, administrators ought to have the ability to thoroughly examine the root cause of conflicts among students (Sintapertiwi et al., 2019). This requires strong emotional intelligence among the leaders, as held by some of the interview respondents. By this, student leaders are able to understand the diversity of the school community they are serving.

In order to exhibit conflict resolution skills, student leaders ought to collaborate with both teachers and administrators, as revealed in the research findings. Majority of the respondents (43.2%) strongly agreed that their student leaders collaborated well with teachers and administrators. Also, 42.2% of the respondents agreed to the matter. This reflects the knowledge of the benefits of collaboration in leadership. As noted by Shayna (2020), collaboration builds and leads diverse teams together and brings different departments for opportunities of learning from one another. Moreover, collaboration motivates students towards positivity and builds trust (Simkhada & Bhattarai, 2023).

Communication Skills in Student Leadership

From the research findings, 51.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that their student leaders were effective in communication. Relatedly, 36.1% of them also just agreed to the matter. This shows a high level of agreement, to the extent that majority respondents held that their student leaders possessed clarity of information during communication. Kathleen (2014) taught that this clarity requires use of clear and concise language, organizing thoughts logically among others. This is on the basis of the fact that communication entails exchanging information, ideas and thoughts between individuals and groups as held by Gunderman (2013).

Relatedly, some of the interview responses revealed that a good student leader should be a good listener to his/her colleagues and administration. This is what is called active listening. Wood (2015) explains this active listening as involving asking questions and paying attention to rational messages which eventually brings about mindfulness. In the process of communication, there ought to be empathy, as held by some of the respondents. West and Turner (2020) explain this as the ability to understand and share the feelings, perspectives, and emotions of another person. In student leadership, prefects therefore need to empathically listen to their colleagues in order to clearly understand the matters. In addition, complete communication necessitates giving feedback. This is in line with the idea of Ashu (2023) who held that the chain of communication is incomplete without feedback.

Objective Two: The Discipline of students in Mbarara City North Secondary Schools

Punctuality and Attendance

Regarding punctuality, majority of the respondents (42.6%) strongly agreed that students were punctual at their respective schools. This is in consonant with other 42.2% of the respondents who also just agreed on the matter. However, 11.1% of the respondents disagreed on the same matter, and 2.0% of the respondents strongly disagreed. Only 2.0% of the respondents were undecided on the matter. This statistical presentation shows that majority of the respondents held that students in Mbarara North Secondary schools are always very punctual. According to Hidayah et al. (2018), punctuality is a sure factor that affects student performance at school. Relatedly, Modise (2015) advised school authorities to emphasize punctuality if they need to achieve great academic results. While conducting some interviews, some head teachers attributed this performance on the continued calls of sensitization to both students and parents on the benefits of punctuality to the students' general performance and discipline.

Related to the above was an investigation on attendance scores in general. It was reported by majority of the respondents (44.3%) were in agreement that students in Mbarara City North secondary schools regularly attended schools and class. Closely, 37.5% of the respondents strongly agreed to the same matter. This shows a high performance report regarding the attendance of students at schools and is a reflection of good discipline. Moreover, the benefits of this are countless, including equipping students with social benefits (Shaunte 2022), and also encourages socialization (Ayodele, 2017). According to a report by UNESCO (2023), school attendance is given as a measure of presence and participation in the act of learning from which accountability is sought. This is so because it has a significant effect on academic scores as noted

by Ayodele (2017). Indeed, the same report was given by some head teachers who noted that most of the students who were punctual at school and in class were comparatively performing better.

Time Management

From the research findings, 42.6% of the respondents agreed that students managed their time well. Also, 39.5% of the respondents agreed with the former. These scores show a high rate of performance on the aspect of time management. This was also reflected in some of the interviews held with some student leaders who reported that majority of their colleagues managed their time well. They ascribed this to proper guidance from their teachers and encouragement from their colleagues. They also confessed that time management has enabled them to improve on their academic performances. This academic productivity is key for the achievements of learners (Nadinloyi et al., 2018). Moreover, Adebayo (2015) advised that students have to be conscious of time while performing their academic activities, after all effective time management is associated with greater academic performance (Adams & Blair, 2019).

Participation in Co-curricular Activities

From the research findings, majority of the respondents (72.3%) strongly agreed that students of Mbarara City North secondary schools actively participated in co-curricular activities. Relatedly, 23.6% of the respondents also just agreed that students participated in these activities. These scores reflect very high levels of performance in co-curricular activities, and consequently give a picture of one of the aspects of discipline of secondary school students in Mbarara City North. Conversely, only 3.4% of the respondents disagreed to the statement, and

0.7% of the respondents were undecided. This low score on this matter reflects the above score to the fact that very few students miss out on participation in co-curricular activities. One of the head teachers attributed this high participation in co-curricular activities to the enjoyment part of these activities that attract the attention and passions of students, to the fact that the students feel happy when doing their passions. Relatedly, some other head teachers said that some of these co-curricular activities are admired by students basically because they have less academic stress, and so, students tend to like such programs such as physical education, football, netball, and other games among others.

These high scores are also attributed to students' desires to develop their natural talents such as athletics, ball games, drama, debate and aerobics among others (Sigh, 2017). Indeed, some student leaders revealed that some students have passionately developed their skills and excelled at higher levels majorly because of desires of excellence in their passions. Some students are motivated by their celebrities and in the course of admiration, have in one way or the other worked hard to improve their own performances. Relatedly, active participation in these activities has become a ground for enriched education, especially with the establishment of a new lower secondary school curriculum in which skilling is emphasized. This has enabled students to attain self-confidence, better communication skills, and improved physical and mental abilities (Sami & Irfan, 2020).

Obedience to Class Authorities

Research findings showed that majority of the respondents (51.4%) agreed to the fact that students were obedient to class authorities, and so was 28.7% of the respondents who very strongly agreed. This reflects a high level of obedience to authorities among the students of

Mbarara City North Secondary schools. As defined by Marshall (2022), this obedience to class authorities is a form of social influence that calls for acting and behaving in compliance to policies, rules and regulations whereby failure leads to consequences. The percentage scores here reflect that students in these schools have less challenges of getting punishments emanating from failure to obey class authorities. Probably, this is due to the influence of having good student leadership.

Conversely, 13.2% and 0.3% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed to the idea that students in Mbarara City North secondary schools obeyed class authorities. These respondents reported that the students were not obedient to class authorities. As noted by Coco (2023), failure to obey leads to conflict and consequences are onto the individual (self and others). This also leads to loss of freedom (Marshall, 2022). 6.4% of the respondents were undecided on this matter. According to these, they were not sure whether students of Mbarara City North secondary schools were obedient or not. Comparatively, this is a small number and percentage of the respondents, yet they are entitled to their views.

Objective Three: The Relationship between Student Leadership Quality and the Discipline of Students in Mbarara City North Secondary Schools

Research findings on the association between student leadership quality and the discipline of students showed a high positive relationship with a correlation coefficient of 0.547. This score implies that the null hypothesis is negated. In addition, it means that the discipline of students can be determined by the quality of student leadership.

Responses from some of the interviews supported the above correlation. The head teacher of School B said, *“we can proudly say that the improved discipline of our students has been*

resultant of the good student leadership in this school.” Relatedly, the head teacher of School F said, *“ever since we invested in improving the quality of our student leaders, we started registering great improvement in the conduct of our students.”* According to these speakers, it is evident that they ascertain that good quality of student leadership has a direct positive impact on the discipline of students.

The head girl of School B reported that, *“we as the student leaders of this school are extremely excited about the discipline of our colleagues mainly because we are supported by the administration in easing our work.”* According to her, the involvement of the administration in the management of student discipline gives them a push to achieve more. In a related sense, some students from School D noted that, *“we are proud of our student leaders, and they are also proud of our discipline.”* Another student added that, *“whenever our discipline is queried, our leaders are interrogated, and so, they work hard to ensure that we maintain good discipline.”*

Conclusions

In relation to the first objective concerning assessing the quality of student leadership in Mbarara City North Secondary schools, it is crystal clear that respondents credited the leadership with a high bar, that is, the findings reflected good quality student leadership. This is evidenced by the scores on the various identified aspects of leadership, namely teamwork, representation of students’ interests, conflict resolution skills, collaboration with staff and administration, and effective communication skills. As noted above, all these aspects scored high levels of agreement from the majority of the respondents. This is a clear sign that student leaders in Mbarara City North secondary schools are of good quality.

In relation to objective two concerning the assessment of the discipline of students in Mbarara City North secondary schools, as measured on punctuality, class attendance, time management for school activities, active participation in co-curricular activities, and obedience to class authorities, results from the findings showed high levels of discipline among students. This is evident on the scores on each identified aspect of discipline.

Objective three assessed the relationship between the first two objectives, namely, the relationship between the quality of student leadership and the discipline of students in Mbarara City North secondary schools. From the research findings above, they showed a statistically significant relationship between the quality of student leadership and the discipline of learners. This is reflected in the p-value (0.01) which is below 0.05 which implies a positive statistically significant correlation. This was attained from Spearman's rho of 0.547 which showed a moderate score. In short, student leadership quality can be used to predict the discipline of students in Mbarara City North secondary schools.

Recommendations

Objective One: On the Quality of Student Leadership in Mbarara City North Secondary schools

There is need to organize trainings meant for the development of leadership skills such as workshops, seminars and special training sessions to equip prefects with leadership skills, communication, and other skills. These sharpen student leaders and consequently enable them to be more effective in their duties since they are equipped with the necessary knowledge.

There should be clear roles and responsibilities given to the student leaders. This enables them to clearly understand their duties and expectations, and consequently serve better. Clear knowledge of one's responsibility is an impetus to dutiful service to the school.

There should also be mentorship especially from experienced teachers and mentors who can guide and support them in their leadership journey. Given the research findings, there was an observation of a gap in effective leadership emanating from lack of proper mentorship. As a result, some student leaders were lacking guidance to grow their leadership skills, a reason mentorship is highly recommended by the researcher.

Empowerment of the student leaders should be prioritized in schools. This basically means enabling and authorizing individual student leaders or teams of individuals to take ownership, make decisions, and act on behalf of the school. This enables the student leaders to confidently and authoritatively handle any issues in their jurisdiction and so assist the administration in the management up to a certain level. This also gives them a chance to take calculated risks.

Student leaders should be recognized and rewarded by the school authorities as a way of motivating them in their service to the school. This boosts confidence, encourages healthy competition, retains top talent, builds trust, enhances reputation, and drives continuous improvement among student leaders.

The Students' body should ensure that their leaders represent and voice the students' concerns. This is a way of proper representation and a fulfillment of obligations incumbent on the leaders. Moreover, the students should seek accountability from their leaders in as far as their

duties are concerned. On the other hand, there ought to be collaboration, teamwork and discipline for the smooth running of leadership in the schools.

Objective Two: On the Discipline of Students

Student leaders are recommended to lead by example. This entails setting a good example (positive behavior) for others to follow, demonstrating the behavior, work ethic, and possessing the values that they expect from other colleague students. Student leaders' discipline should show others how to behave.

Student leaders should establish clear expectations in their term of service. This can be done through clear communication, setting specific goals, establishing standards and procedures, and also providing feedback and coaching. This promotes accountability, enhances productivity, and encourages teamwork.

Student leaders should encourage student responsibility. This simply means taking ownership of their actions and behavior. The students should be helped to appreciate acknowledging, owning, and apologizing for their shortcomings. This enables them to own their mistakes, make amends and possibly prevent repetitions of the same or similar misbehavior. This eventually leads to growth in positive behavior among students.

There should be provision of constructive and respectful feedback if there is to be improvement in student discipline. School authorities should be specific and objective in giving students feedback about their discipline, and consequently encourage their students to grow in positive behavior. Together with the student leadership, they should build strong leadership that can hinder bad discipline among the students' body.

Objective Three: On the relationship between Student Leadership Quality and the Discipline of students

There is need to appreciate the fact that good leadership among students has a direct influence on improving and maintaining good discipline among students. By this researchable fact, it is worth noting that there should be means of maintaining and improving student leadership if schools want to have good discipline amongst their students. The above research findings support this recommendation.

Secondly, there is need to give attention to other factors that have some impact on the discipline of students such as school environment and parental involvement. These are among other factors that can influence the discipline of students. As a result, the researcher recommends that the extraneous variables also be given some considerations since they can have an impact on the discipline of students.

Finally, the researcher recommended that school authorities should support researches that can have an impact on improving the standards of schools such as this piece of work. Through such support such as funding, acceptance to do research in schools, encouraging partnerships with universities, there can eventually be researches to solve some of the school and social challenges, and so, the doors to solutions are opened.

Areas for Further Research

Since discipline is a serious issue in secondary schools of Mbarara City North, a related study should be carried out on how it can be improved by schools administrators.

Also, there can be similar studies in another division of Mbarara City South, and the results of the research compared.

There can also be a study on establishing causes of repeated disciplinary issues among secondary school students despite several measures taken by school administration.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for Students

Study Title: *Student Leadership Quality and the Discipline of Students in Mbarara City North*

Secondary Schools

Principal Investigator: Byamugisha Paul, Reg no. 22/BSU/MEAP/2191

Tel. +256788991751/+256705752786

Dear Respondent, you are being asked to join a research study in which the researcher is investigating the Influence of the quality student leadership (in terms of their teamwork, conflict resolution skills, and communication skills) on the discipline of students, with special consideration on secondary schools in Mbarara City North.

You have particularly been chosen to volunteer in this study because you are a stakeholder in student discipline, as a student in this school. Kindly study the questions carefully and provide the most appropriate responses.

Section A: Background Characteristics (Tick the most appropriate)

School.....

1. Age Category: (a)Below 18 years___ (b)18-25___ (c) 26-30___ (d)30 & above___
2. Gender: (a) MALE___ (b) FEMALE___
3. Education Level: S.1___ S.2___ S.3___ S.4___ S.5___ S.6___

In the Sections below (B&C), you are asked to mark the outlined qualifications in a scale of 5 according to your level of agreement as follows:

5 represents **Strongly Agree**

4 represents **Agree**

3 represents **Undecided**

2 represents **Disagree**

1 represents **Strongly Disagree**

Section B: The Quality of Student Leadership in secondary schools in Mbarara City North

	The Quality of student leadership in my school	5	4	3	2	1
1	Student leaders in my school work as a team in executing their duties					
2	Student leaders in my school are effective in representing our interests					
3	Prefects in my school are effective in resolving conflicts and disputes among students					
4	Prefects in my school work well with teachers and administrators					
5	Student leaders in my school are effective in communicating to students about important issues					
6	Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of student leadership in my school					

Section C: Assessing the Discipline of Students of Mbarara City North Secondary Schools

	Discipline of Students in my school	5	4	3	2	1
1	Students of this school are always punctual					
2	Students of this school regularly attend classes					

3	Students of this school properly manage time for all school activities					
4	Students of this school actively participate in co-curricular activities such as sports, drama, debates, community service and STEM projects					
5	Students of this school obey school authorities					
6	Overall, students of this school are well disciplined					

Section D: Give the most appropriate answers

1. Outline the common cases of indiscipline of students in this school

i).....

ii).....

iii).....

2. Suggest possible measures that can solve indiscipline in this school

i).....

ii).....

iii).....

Thank you for your participation in this study

Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Head Teachers

Study Title: *Student Leadership Quality and the Discipline of Students in Mbarara City North*

Secondary Schools

Principal Investigator: Byamugisha Paul, Reg no. 22/BSU/MEAP/2191

Tel. +256788991751/+256705752786

Dear Respondent, you are being asked to join a research study in which the researcher is investigating the Influence of quality student leadership (in terms of their teamwork, conflict resolution skills, and communication skills) on the discipline of students, with special consideration on secondary schools in Mbarara City North.

You have particularly been chosen to volunteer in this study because of your position as the Head teacher of this school. Kindly provide the most appropriate responses.

Section A: Background Characteristics

School.....

1. What is your Age Category: Below 18 years; 18-25; 26-30; or 30 & above?
2. What is your highest level of education?

Section B: Assessing the Quality of Student Leadership in this school.

- i) How do student leaders in this school work as a team in executing their duties (in terms of collaboration, decision making and delegation of duty)?
- ii) How do student leaders in this school effectively represent the interests of students?
- iii) On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the prefects' effectiveness in resolving conflicts and disputes among students?

- iv) To what extent do prefects in this school work well with teachers and administrators?
- v) How effective are student leaders in terms of communication skills in this school?
- vi) On a scale of 1 to 5, how do you rate the quality of student leadership in this school?

Section C: Assessing the Discipline of Students in this school

- i) On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the level of punctuality and time management for school activities among your students?
- ii) On the above scale, how would you rate the level of their participation in co-curricular activities such as sports, drama, debates, community service and STEM projects?
- iii) How obedient are the students to school authorities?
- iv) Overall, how would you rate the general discipline of your students?
- v) What are the common serious cases of indiscipline registered and how has the administration mitigated them?

Thank you for your participation in this study

Appendix 3: Research Budget

	Year 1 (US \$)	Year 2 (US \$)	Year 3 (US \$)	Year 4 (US \$)	Year 5 (US \$)	TOTAL
Personnel	130	0	0	0	0	130
Travel *	100	0	0	0	0	100
Materials and Supplies	90	0	0	0	0	90
Administration	50	0	0	0	0	50
Results dissemination	40	0	0	0	0	40
Contingency	50	0	0	0	0	50
Reimbursement and Time Compensations	80	0	0	0	0	80
Other	10	0	0	0	0	10
Total	470	0	0	0	0	550

Appendix 4: Work Plan for Research

No.	Period	Activity	Comment
1	August, 2022	Admission	Done
2	20 th August, 2022	Start of Lectures	Done
3	May 2023	End of Lectures	Done
4	June, 2023	Presentation of proposed topics	Done
5	August, 2023	Defense of Concept Notes and assignment of supervisors	Done
6	September, 2023	Starting on the Proposal writing	Done
7	February, 2024	Presentation of the Proposal	Done
8	March, 2024	Doing corrections	Done
9	April, 2024	Online Submission of the corrected work	Done
10	April til May, 2024	Field work	Done
11	August, 2024	Presentation and defense of the thesis	Done
12	August, 2024	Submission of corrected work	Done
13	September, 2024	Completion of all Research Works	Done

Appendix 5: Informed Consent Form



BISHOP STUART UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

P.O. Box 09 Mbarara-Uganda Tel: +256 485-

433468 E-mail: rec@bsu.ac.ug

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Study title: Student Leadership Quality and the Discipline of Students in Mbarara City North Secondary Schools

Principal Investigator: Byamugisha Paul, 22/BSU/MEAP/2191, BSU P. O Box 09, Mbarara
Tel. +256788991751/+256705752786

Introduction

What you should know about this study:

1. You are being asked to join a research study.
2. This consent form explains the research study and your part in the study.
3. Please read it carefully and take as much time as you need.
4. You are a volunteer. You can choose not to take part and if you join, you may quit at any time. There will be no penalty if you decide to quit the study.

Brief background to the study

The Researcher is investigating the impact of the quality of student leadership (in terms of their teamwork, conflict resolution skills, and communication skills) on the discipline of secondary

school students, with special consideration of secondary schools in Mbarara City North. The researcher is trying to find out if the quality of the prefects has an impact on the discipline of students.

Purpose of the research project

Is to establish the influence of student leadership quality on the discipline of students in Mbarara City North secondary schools. The researcher shall use a cross-sectional survey research design to cover selected schools in the area in a period of one year.

Why you are being asked to participate?

You have particularly been chosen because you are a stakeholder in student discipline, management and administration.

Risks or discomforts

The researcher does not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in this research.

Benefits

The study will give grounds of improving the discipline of students in Mbarara City North Secondary Schools through improving the quality of student leadership. In addition, the participant shall benefit by being part of this great study whose findings shall have a lifelong impact on the discipline of secondary school students in Mbarara City North.

Incentives or rewards for participating

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the nature of your current relationship with the researcher or Bishop Stuart University, not even in the future. No financial tokens should be expected for your participation, except verbal appreciations for your time of participation given.

Protecting data confidentiality and privacy

All information you supply during research will be held in confidence and privacy. Your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research unless you specifically indicate your consent. Your data will be safely stored in a locked facility to be only accessed by the researcher. Therefore, confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Right to refuse or withdraw

You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Such decision shall be respected by the researcher and shall not affect your relationship with the researcher or the university.

What happens if you leave the study?

In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible. There is no penalty by such a decision.

Who do I ask/call if I have questions or a problem?

If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact the principal investigator: Byamugisha Paul either by telephone at +256788991751/+256705752786, or by email (byamugisha_paul@ymail.com). This research has been reviewed and approved by the university's Research Ethics Committee (REC), and so is meant to observe the respective guidelines. Therefore, if you have any questions regarding this area, please contact the Chairperson, BSU-REC, Dr. Godfrey Zaari Rukundo, P.O. Box 09 Mbarara on Tel: 0772663671.

Legal Rights and Signature or Thumbprint on this consent form

Your signature on this form means

- You have been informed about this study's purpose, procedures, possible benefits and risks
- You have been given the chance to ask questions before you sign
- You have voluntarily agreed to be in this study

Name of adult participant

Signature of participant or

Date

Legally authorized representative

__ Name of person obtaining consent

Signature

Date

___ Print Name of witness

Signature or thumbprint or mark

Date

Appendix 6: Community Engagement Plan

This study considered schools as the communities of study. The Community Engagement Plan therefore describes an array of activities that includes the involvement of community leaders or stakeholders in this research process, dissemination of information, consultation with different institutions and individuals, collaboration in decision making, and seeking guidance from the community leaders regarding the study. This will be executed as follows:

- i) Prior to the conduct of the research, the researcher approached the community leaders (local chairpersons, head teachers, and City Education Officer) concerning the feasibility of the study.
- ii) Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained a written formal letter from the City Education Officer that was presented to the respective school community heads particularly head teachers, and where necessary to the local chairperson.
- iii) During the study process, head teachers, some staff and students were involved in supplying information to the chief investigator. Preliminary findings were shared with the head teachers where it was deemed necessary.
- iv) After final defense of the thesis, the final findings will be shared with the City Education officer, and school communities of the selected schools through their respective head teachers.
- v) At a later time, the school communities shall be sensitized on the research findings since the area of study majorly involved improvement of discipline in secondary schools in Mbarara City North.

Appendix 7: Covid-19 Mitigation Plan

The researcher ensured safety of the respondents regarding covid-19 pandemic threat. Highest levels of cleanliness and hygiene were maintained through observing the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as given by the Ministry of Health. The following applied to this study:

- i) The researcher used a hand washing facility or sanitizer to clean his hands upon entering a school before engaging with school community members.
- ii) The researcher also used a mask as he interacted with school community members to ensure lesser risks of the pandemic.
- iii) The researcher refrained from shaking hands with anyone and remained at a safe distance of at least 5 metres from any person during interactions. In addition, group discussions were conducted at the above mentioned distance apart.
- iv) Students who received questionnaires were advised to sanitize or wash their hands with soap, and were briefed about careful handling of the papers since they are probable carriers of the virus.
- v) The researcher ensured that the study interactions were conducted with utmost care for the safety of the health of all stakeholders in the study.

Appendix 9: REC Clearance Letter

BISHOP STUART UNIVERSITY

P.O.BOX 9, MBARARA

Tel: 0772 512551



Website: www.bsu.ac.ug
E-mail: rec@bsu.ac.ug/info@bsu.ac.ug

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

12/06/2024

To: BYAMUGISHA PAUL

BISHOP STUART UNIVERSITY
+256788991751

Type: Initial Review

Re: BSU-REC-2024-358: STUDENT LEADERSHIP QUALITY AND THE DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS IN MBARARA CITY NORTH SECONDARY SCHOOLS

I am pleased to inform you that at the 27 convened meeting on 16/05/2024, the Bishop Stuart University (BSU) REC meeting voted to approve the above referenced application.
Approval of the research is for the period of 12/06/2024 to 12/06/2025.

As Principal Investigator of the research, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. All co-investigators must be kept informed of the status of the research.
2. Changes, amendments, and addenda to the protocol or the consent form must be submitted to the REC for re-review and approval prior to the activation of the changes.
3. Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or any new information which could change the risk benefit: ratio must be submitted to the REC.
4. Only approved consent forms are to be used in the enrollment of participants. All consent forms signed by participants and/or witnesses should be retained on file. The REC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.
5. Continuing review application must be submitted to the REC **eight weeks** prior to the expiration date of **12/06/2025** in order to continue the study beyond the approved period. Failure to submit a continuing review application in a timely fashion may result in suspension or termination of the study.
6. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence with the REC of record.
7. You are required to register the research protocol with the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) for final clearance to undertake the study in Uganda.

The following is the list of all documents approved in this application by Bishop Stuart University (BSU) REC:

No.	Document Title	Language	Version Number	Version Date
1	Informed Consent forms	English	1	2024-06-07
2	COVID-19 & EBOLA risk management plan for the study	English	1	2024-06-07
3	Community Engagement plan if applicable to your study	English	1	2024-06-07
4	Protocol	English	2	2024-06-07
5	Protocol	English	1	2024-06-07

Yours Sincerely



Godfrey Rukundo
For: Bishop Stuart University (BSU) REC

Appendix 10: Graduate School Clearance Letter

BISHOP STUART UNIVERSITY P.O BOX 09, MBARARA	
Office Tel: 0772590865 Mob Tel: 0782673086	DIRECTORATE OF GRADUATE STUDIES, RESEARCH AND INNOVATIONS Email: pgd@bsu.ac.ug dgsr@bsu.ac.ug Website: www.bsu.ac.ug

15th June, 2024

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR MR. BYAMUGISHA PAUL

This is to introduce to you **Mr. Byamugisha Paul** a student of Bishop Stuart University pursuing Master of Education Administration and Planning, Reg. No; **22/BSU/MEAP/2192** who is conducting his Masters' Research in Mbarara City North.

His research topic is "Student Leadership Quality and Student Discipline in Mbarara City North Secondary Schools"

Any assistance rendered to him is highly appreciated

Yours faithfully



Dr. Johnson Atwine (PhD)
Coordinator - Graduate Studies
Directorate of Graduate Studies, Research and Innovations
Bishop Stuart University




Forwarded to the field.

Appendix 11: Study Limitations

The following are the challenges faced by the researcher.

There was financial limitation in funding the entire research logistics such as transport, scholastic requirements, printing and feeding. The researcher mobilized the finances and other resources as much as he could. Accessibility to some respondents in some schools was a challenge, and also permission to be granted from the selected school authorities was at times difficult. Through negotiations, however, permissions were granted. Relatedly, there were weather disturbances on some days in terms of heavy sunshine, rain and muddy roads.

Some informants opted not to disclose to the researcher the necessary information regarding its truth, acceptance, openness, and objectivity, hence rendering the necessary information less credible. There was failure to clearly understand and interpret questions by some of the respondents. This was seen in the quality of the answers that were given. Relatedly, some respondents opted to be indifferent hence giving unrealistic answers. In such circumstances, the researcher endeavored to seek the most objective and reliable solution.