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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Don Bosco's Educational Pedagogy and the Maintenance of Student Discipline in Secondary Schools in Tanzania^aAnthony O. Achondo, ^bProsperity M Mwila, ^bMichaela Mhagama^a PhD Scholar, Department of Education Foundations: St. Augustine University of Tanzania.^b Academician, Department of Education Foundations: St. Augustine University of Tanzania.**Corresponding Author**Anthony O. Achondo, Email: anthonyachondo@gmail.com**Author's Contributions**

All authors contributed equally to this research.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the role of Don Bosco's educational pedagogy in maintaining student discipline in Tanzanian secondary schools, emphasizing the reasoning processes that guide student behavior. Guided by a pragmatic worldview, the research employed a mixed-methods approach with a concurrent triangulation design (QUAN + QUAL) to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously. The study was conducted in four purposively selected Don Bosco secondary schools in Moshi, Dodoma, Shinyanga, and Iringa, representing both early and recent implementations of the Preventive System across diverse socio-cultural contexts. The sample comprised 399 participants, including heads of schools, academic and discipline teachers, students, and parents. Data were collected through structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Findings reveal that Don Bosco's pedagogy fosters discipline through preventive strategies, promotion of respect, fairness, moral and ethical guidance, learning from mistakes, and positive student-teacher relationships. Both teachers and students perceive the pedagogy as effective in reducing behavioral infractions and promoting self-regulated, responsible, and ethical conduct. Variations in teacher consistency and the application of empathetic measures indicate that effectiveness depends on uniform implementation and teacher preparedness. A statistically significant relationship was observed between the application of the Preventive System and reduced indiscipline (Pearson $\chi^2 = 16.496$, $p = 0.00$), confirming its influence on student behavior. The study recommends continuous teacher professional development, reinforcement of preventive and reflective practices, and integration of moral guidance to sustain long-term discipline and holistic student development. These findings provide insights into applying value-based pedagogical approaches for behavior management in Tanzanian secondary schools.

Keywords: Don Bosco pedagogy; student discipline; preventive system; secondary schools; Tanzania; self-regulation; ethical education

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the study by outlining the background to the problem of student discipline in secondary schools, the statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope and delimitation, conceptual

framework, and definitions of key terms. The chapter situates the study within broader educational and disciplinary discourses, highlighting the relevance of Don Bosco's educational pedagogy as a value-based and preventive approach to maintaining discipline among students in Tanzanian secondary schools.

Student discipline in secondary schools is not an isolated phenomenon but a behavioral outcome shaped by the interaction between pedagogical practices, school environments, and students' developmental processes (Bear, 2010; Welsh & Little, 2018). Discipline in this study is understood as students' obedience to school rules, self-control, respect for authority, and reduction of misconduct. These attributes are significantly influenced by the nature of educational pedagogy adopted within a school (McIntosh et al., 2018). Don Bosco's educational pedagogy provides a philosophical and practical framework through which discipline is cultivated by emphasizing reason, religion, loving-kindness, trust, joy, prevention, and respect. Rather than enforcing discipline through coercion, this pedagogy seeks to guide students toward internalizing values and developing responsible behavior through mentorship, dialogue, and supportive relationships.

The influence of Don Bosco's pedagogy on student discipline operates through several intervening processes, including the development of self-regulation, moral reasoning, and social responsibility, as well as opportunities for participation, familiarity, and positive engagement within the school community (Bear, 2010). Through reason, students are encouraged to understand the rationale behind rules; through religion and moral instruction, ethical values and conscience are nurtured; and through loving-kindness and trust, students experience care and acceptance that promote positive behavior. These elements collectively create a preventive environment that reduces reliance on punitive measures such as corporal punishment, which has been shown to have harmful psychological and educational consequences (Finkelhor et al., 2019; Abdi-Idris, 2023).

Historically, school discipline in many education systems relied heavily on punitive approaches, including corporal punishment, based on the belief that fear would deter misconduct (Welsh & Little, 2018). However, growing empirical evidence has demonstrated that such practices are ineffective in promoting long-term behavioral change and often undermine students' well-being and engagement (Finkelhor et al., 2019; Mahlangu et al., 2021). As a result, there has been a global shift toward alternative disciplinary approaches that emphasize positive behavior support, restorative practices, social-emotional learning, and inclusive school climates (Bear, 2010). These approaches aim to address the root causes of indiscipline while promoting fairness, equity,

and holistic student development.

In Tanzania, challenges related to student discipline persist despite policy frameworks intended to regulate behavior in schools. Studies indicate that punitive disciplinary practices negatively affect attendance, student well-being, and academic engagement (Alistides & Mwila, 2022). At the same time, there is growing acceptance of non-punitive and preventive approaches that emphasize moral guidance, positive relationships, and supportive school environments (Lumanto & Mwila, 2022). Within this context, Don Bosco's Preventive System offers a promising alternative that aligns with Tanzania's educational aspirations for character development, responsible citizenship, and academic excellence.

Don Bosco's pedagogy was introduced in Tanzania in the 1980s with the establishment of Don Bosco secondary schools in Iringa, Dodoma, and Shinyanga, and later in Moshi in the early 2000s. Since then, the Preventive System has been adapted to the Tanzanian socio-cultural and educational context while maintaining its foundational principles. This adaptation includes training teachers as mentors rather than enforcers, integrating moral and faith-based guidance with national curricula, and fostering inclusive and supportive school environments. These schools therefore provide an appropriate context for examining how Don Bosco's educational pedagogy functions as a strategy for maintaining student discipline.

Despite its long-standing implementation, there is limited empirical evidence on how effectively Don Bosco's pedagogy promotes discipline, self-regulation, and positive student behavior within Tanzanian secondary schools. This gap underscores the need for systematic investigation into the mechanisms through which the Preventive System influences discipline. By examining Don Bosco's pedagogy as a strategy for maintaining student discipline, this study seeks to contribute to educational research and inform educators and policymakers on effective, holistic, and value-based approaches to discipline in secondary schools in Tanzania.

Research Objective

To identify ways of reasoning in maintaining students' discipline in Don Bosco Secondary Schools in Tanzania.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Theoretical Review

The Preventive System, an educational pedagogy

formulated by St. John Bosco, represents a profound and enduring framework that continues to shape educational practices worldwide. Don Bosco, an influential Italian Roman Catholic priest, educator, and writer of the 19th century, was born on August 16, 1815, in Castelnuovo, Italy, and died on January 31, 1888, in Turin, Italy (Coello, 2016). His Preventive System rests on fundamental principles such as reason, religion, loving-kindness, familial familiarity, trust, joy, accompaniment, prevention, respect for the individual, and the absence of corporal punishment.

Don Bosco's concept of reason is rich and multifaceted, integrating principles of justice, reasonableness, rationality, and motivation. Justice, in this context, requires both educators and students to adhere to established rules, ensuring that everyone's rights and obligations are respected (Coello, 2016). This adherence promotes a fair and just environment where accountability is maintained across all parties involved. Reasonableness dictates that expectations placed on students should be age-appropriate and feasible, particularly regarding work assignments and disciplinary measures. By ensuring that demands are realistic and considerate of the students' capabilities, a supportive and understanding educational atmosphere is created. Rationality involves clearly communicating the rationale behind decisions and demands, as well as their expected benefits, to the students. This transparency helps students understand the purpose behind rules and actions, thereby fostering compliance and engagement (Sergio, 2006). Motivation is about inspiring students to actively participate in the educational program. This requires creating an environment that encourages cooperation and engagement, helping students take ownership of their learning journey.

Don Bosco's pedagogy is deeply rooted in the Catholic faith, asserting that faith in Jesus Christ and commitment to the Church are essential for spiritual, human, psychological, and intellectual growth. He emphasized the importance of religious practices in fostering comprehensive development. According to Don Bosco, religion provides a vital moral and ethical framework that not only supports personal growth but also enhances communal harmony and well-being (Njiru, 2012). He believed that engaging in religious practices helps individuals develop a strong sense of morality, guiding them to make ethical decisions and leading to a more just and compassionate society. Furthermore, Don Bosco saw the integration of faith into

education as a way to nurture the whole person, addressing their spiritual needs alongside their intellectual and emotional development. This holistic approach ensures that students are not only academically competent but also grounded in values that promote kindness, integrity, and responsibility. By embedding faith and religious practices into the educational process, Don Bosco aimed to create an environment where students could grow into well-rounded individuals who contribute positively to their communities and live fulfilling lives rooted in their faith (Coello, 2016; Salesian, 2014).

According to Njiru, (2012) Don Bosco advised that the directors of Salesian institutions should aim to be loved rather than feared. The love he envisioned was spiritually mature, impartial, generous, selfless, and self-sacrificing. He believed that students should not only be loved but also be made aware that they are genuinely cared for. This approach nurtures a positive and supportive environment conducive to learning and personal development. By fostering an atmosphere of genuine care and compassion, educators can build strong, trust-based relationships with students. This emotional connection encourages students to engage more deeply with their education and develop holistically (Sergio, 2006). Assistance, as articulated by Don Bosco, has dual meanings. The first aspect, meeting needs, involves addressing the essential needs of young people, such as food, clothing, shelter, education, and employment (Nambiri, 2009). This holistic approach ensures that all aspects of a student's well-being are considered, creating a foundation for their overall development and success. The second aspect, vigilance and presence, refers to the educator's constant presence and availability to the young, providing guidance and support in any educational situation (Coello, 2016). This consistent presence fosters a sense of security and belonging among students, helping them feel valued and supported. By integrating these two dimensions of assistance, Don Bosco's approach ensures that students receive comprehensive care that addresses both their immediate needs and their need for continuous guidance and reassurance (Bosco, 2003).

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a mixed-methods research approach grounded in a pragmatic worldview to examine the effectiveness of Don Bosco's educational pedagogy in maintaining student discipline in Don

Bosco secondary schools in Tanzania. A concurrent triangulation design (QUAN + QUAL) was employed, allowing quantitative and qualitative data to be collected and analyzed simultaneously in order to enhance the depth, credibility, and validity of the findings. The study was conducted in four purposively selected Don Bosco secondary schools located in Moshi, Dodoma, Shinyanga, and Iringa, representing both early and recent implementations of the Preventive System across diverse socio-cultural contexts. The target population comprised heads of schools, academic and discipline teachers, teachers, students, and parents, from which a total sample of 399 participants was drawn using a combination of purposive, stratified random, simple random, and snowball sampling techniques. This diversity enabled the study to capture both institutional-level trends and lived experiences related to discipline practices.

Data were collected using multiple instruments, including structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis, ensuring methodological triangulation. Validity was enhanced through a pilot study, expert content validation, triangulation, and member checking, while reliability was ensured through internal consistency

testing using Cronbach's alpha, test-retest procedures, and audit trails for qualitative dependability. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically to capture participants' perceptions and experiences of Don Bosco's Preventive System. Ethical considerations guided all stages of the study, including institutional approvals, informed consent, confidentiality, and responsible data handling. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings provided a comprehensive understanding of how Don Bosco's pedagogy contributes to discipline maintenance and holistic student development across different regional contexts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The objective of this study aimed at determining the ways of reasoning in which Don Bosco pedagogy maintains students' discipline within the schools in Tanzania. Teachers and students were provided with a closed ended question that required them to say whether the pedagogy helps in preventing serious misconducts in the schools. Their responses were then quantified to generate percentages as presented in figure 1.

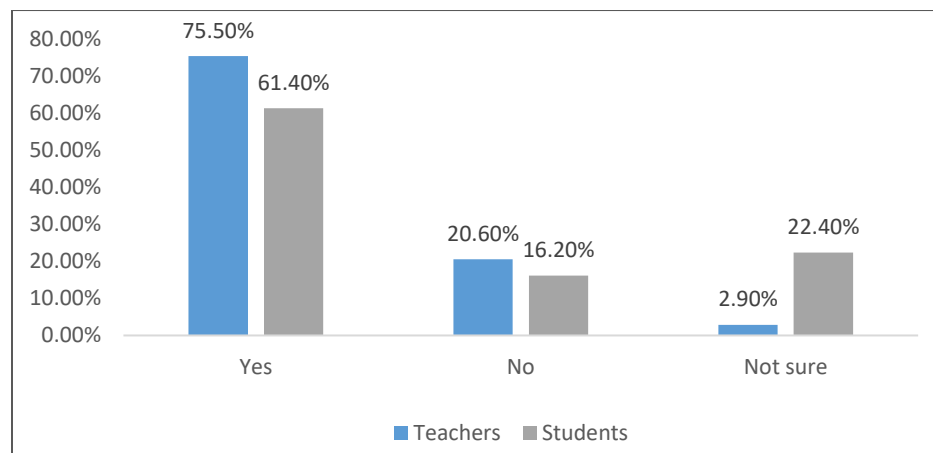


Figure 1. *Students' and teachers responses on whether Don Bosco pedagogy prevents serious misconduct*
Source: Field Data (2025)

Regarding the effectiveness of Don Bosco pedagogy in preventing serious misconduct, 75.5% of teachers and 61.4% of students responded positively, while 20.6% of teachers and 16.2% of students responded negatively, and 2.9% of teachers and 22.4% of students were unsure. This shows that the majority of both teachers and students perceive the pedagogy as effective in reducing serious misconduct. Thus, the preventive

strategies are widely considered to guide students toward positive behaviour and mitigate serious behavioral issues in schools. These findings align with Abbas et al. (2020) who highlighted that non-punitive and preventive measures effectively reduce behavioral infractions. Although some teachers and students responded negatively or were unsure. This suggests that some of the teachers and students do not fully

perceive the pedagogy as effective. This can be possibly due to gaps in implementation or unclear links between preventive strategies and behaviour. These variations in perception may influence the consistency of student adherence to behavioral expectations and the overall effectiveness of discipline.

The students were provided with a Likert scale having

seven statements reflecting ways in which the pedagogy maintains discipline in the schools. The students agreed or disagreed with each of the statements and their responses were quantified to generate frequencies, percentages and mean scores as presented in table 1.

Table 1. Students' responses on ways of reasoning by which Don Bosco pedagogy maintains discipline in schools

| Statements | SA | | A | | U | | D | | SD | | Mean |
|---|-----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|-----|------|------|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | |
| Don Bosco's educational system promotes respect among students reasoning. | 180 | 58.4 | 82 | 26.6 | 12 | 3.9 | 5 | 1.6 | 29 | 9.4 | 4.2 |
| The disciplinary actions taken at school reflect Don Bosco's values of kindness, reasoning and understanding. | 79 | 25.6 | 94 | 30.5 | 29 | 9.4 | 17 | 5.5 | 89 | 28.9 | 3.2 |
| Don Bosco's approach to discipline focuses on prevention rather than punishment. | 140 | 45.5 | 79 | 25.6 | 23 | 7.5 | 11 | 3.6 | 55 | 17.9 | 3.8 |
| Teachers in my school consistently follow Don Bosco's principles when dealing with students without reasoning and discipline. | 37 | 12.0 | 77 | 25.0 | 41 | 13.3 | 39 | 12.7 | 114 | 37.0 | 2.6 |
| Don Bosco's system helps students learn from their mistakes and improve behavior. | 168 | 54.5 | 99 | 32.1 | 19 | 6.2 | 6 | 1.9 | 16 | 5.2 | 4.3 |
| I feel that Don Bosco's approach to discipline is fair and just. | 143 | 46.4 | 85 | 27.6 | 23 | 7.5 | 21 | 6.8 | 36 | 11.7 | 3.9 |
| The discipline system at my school encourages good relationships between students and teachers. | 112 | 36.4 | 78 | 25.3 | 37 | 12.0 | 23 | 7.5 | 58 | 18.8 | 3.5 |
| Average mean score | | | | | | | | | | | 3.7 |

Source: Field Data (2025)

Respect Promotion for Discipline

Concerning promoting respect among students, 58.4% strongly agreed and 26.6% agreed while 3.9% were neutral, 1.6% disagreed and 9.4% strongly disagreed, giving a mean score of 4.2. This shows that most students perceive Don Bosco pedagogy as contributing to maintaining discipline by fostering respect among peers. The findings suggest that promoting respect is considered a key way to strengthen discipline in the schools. These results align with Jenkins and Ueno (2017) who found that positive behavioral strategies

improve student conduct. Similarly, Glasser control theory of motivation (1998) explains that fulfilling relational needs shapes self-regulated behaviour, indicating that respect functions as a stabilizing factor in students' conduct and contributes to a positive learning environment that supports discipline. However, some students disagreed or were neutral, which implies that a minority do not see the pedagogy as effective in promoting respect or linking respect to discipline. Such differences in perception may affect how these students respond to behavioral expectations and influence overall patterns of behaviour and compliance within the

school.

The issue of promoting respect among students was also mentioned during interviews with key informants. Head teachers and academic teachers emphasized that Don Bosco pedagogy creates an environment where students interact positively, follow rules voluntarily, and develop mutual respect through guidance, presence, and daily engagement with teachers. This was evidenced as one head teacher said:

Don Bosco's system emphasizes kindness, guidance, and presence of teachers, which creates a respectful environment where students understand acceptable behavior. By interacting with students daily and reasoning with them, teachers foster mutual respect, and students respond positively, treating both peers and staff with consideration and care.

This was further supported by one academic teacher who said:

Through classroom practices and recreational activities, I encourage self-discipline and participation while treating students with respect. This approach helps build trust and cooperation among learners, making them comfortable in decision-making and fostering respect between students and teachers across different school activities.

Responses from the head of school and the academic teacher indicate that the pedagogy is seen as a means of maintaining discipline through the promotion of respect, positive interactions, and role modeling. These findings imply that Don Bosco pedagogy effectively strengthens discipline by fostering a respectful culture. The findings agree with what was indicated by students in the questionnaires, where most of them strongly agreed or agreed that respect is an essential component of discipline. This agreement between the quantitative and qualitative data demonstrates that both teachers and students recognize the central role that is played by the pedagogy on promoting respect which is an essential element of discipline in the schools.

Kindness in Discipline

Regarding the disciplinary actions at school the data show that 25.6% strongly agreed and 30.5% agreed while 9.4% were neutral, 5.5% disagreed and 28.9% strongly disagreed giving a mean score of 3.2. This suggests that more students were positive with the statement. These findings imply that Don Bosco pedagogy is considered by a portion of students to

maintain discipline through actions that reflect kindness and understanding. Thus students see the use of empathetic disciplinary measures as one of the ways by which behaviour can be guided in the schools. These findings are in agreement with Andrea and Leandry (2021) who reported that non-punitive measures are potentially more effective in managing student behaviour. Similarly, Glasser's Control Theory of Motivation (1998) explains that creating conditions that meet internal needs fosters self-regulated behaviour. The results indicate that kindness and understanding can function as mechanisms through which discipline is reinforced. Positive interactions between teachers and students are perceived as contributing to a supportive environment that guides behaviour.

The presence of students who disagreed or remained neutral indicates that some learners do not see the pedagogy as a means of maintaining discipline through kindness and understanding. These students may perceive the disciplinary actions as ineffective or unrelated to promoting self-control. Their responses suggest that the intended connection between empathetic measures and behavioral regulation is not consistently recognized. Such variation can influence how students respond to rules and expectations within the school. This also shows that gaps in perception may weaken the uniformity of discipline. These observations align with Systems Theory by von Bertalanffy (1968) which notes that inconsistencies in one component can affect the functioning of the entire system. The pattern suggests that when kindness is not perceived equally, the intended behavioral influence of the pedagogy may vary.

During interviews with key informants, participants also emphasized that the core of Don Bosco pedagogy is guiding students before problems occur rather than reacting with punishment. Head teachers and focus group participants explained that preventive measures, reasoning, and moral guidance create a proactive approach to maintaining order. This was illustrated by one head teacher who said:

The preventive system guides students by reasoning, continuous reminders, and participation in extracurricular activities. It avoids corporal punishment and focuses on preventing mistakes, helping students learn the right behavior proactively rather than reacting with punitive measures when mistakes occur.

Similarly, one participant in the group discussions added:

Don Bosco pedagogy aims to influence behavior positively, giving students opportunities to choose and learn from their actions. Instead of punishment, it emphasizes guidance and encouragement, ensuring that students correct themselves while feeling supported, valued, and responsible for their choices.

Responses from the head of school and group discussion participant indicate that the pedagogy is regarded as a tool for maintaining discipline through anticipation, guidance, and structured opportunities for reflection. These findings imply that students are better able to regulate their behavior when preventive strategies are employed. The results correspond with students' questionnaire responses, where most agreed that the approach emphasizes guidance over punishment. This alignment of qualitative and quantitative data confirms that preventive strategies are considered to be effective in promoting disciplined and responsible conduct among learners.

Preventive Discipline Approach

Focusing on Don Bosco's preventive approach to discipline the data show that 45.5% strongly agreed and 25.6% agreed while 7.5% were neutral, 3.6% disagreed and 17.9% strongly disagreed giving a mean score of 3.8. This suggests that more students were positive with the statement. These findings imply that Don Bosco pedagogy is considered by a large number of students to maintain discipline through anticipatory strategies rather than punitive measures. Thus, students see prevention as one of the ways by which discipline can be effectively guided in the schools. These findings are in agreement with Abbas et al. (2020) who found that non-violent approaches are more effective than corporal punishment in maintaining student behaviour. Similarly, Glasser's Control Theory of Motivation (1998) explains that satisfying internal needs fosters self-regulation and reduces misbehaviours. The results indicate that preventive strategies function as a proactive method to encourage orderly conduct among learners. Emphasizing prevention over punishment contributes to an environment where students are guided to self-correct before infractions escalate.

However, some students disagreed or remained neutral this indicates that a minority of learners do not fully consider preventive measures as effective for maintaining discipline. These students may view the pedagogy as insufficient for controlling behaviour or may not understand the link between prevention and

self-regulation. Their perception could influence how they respond to school rules and teacher guidance. Such variation in perception highlights differences between intended preventive practices and student experiences. These differences can affect the consistency of disciplinary outcomes across the school. These observations align with Systems Theory by von Bertalanffy (1968) which suggests that gaps in one part of the system can influence the behaviour of the entire system. The variation shows that students' interpretations of preventive measures may differ depending on teacher practices and peer interactions. When preventive strategies are not fully recognized, the behavioral effect of the pedagogy may vary among students.

Interviews with school stakeholders revealed that Don Bosco's disciplinary approach prioritizes guiding students before problems arise. Key informants, including head teachers and focus group participants, emphasized that structured interactions, reasoning, and opportunities for reflection help students develop self-control and responsibility. This was captured by one head teacher who said:

The preventive system guides students by reasoning, continuous reminders, and participation in extracurricular activities. It avoids corporal punishment and focuses on preventing mistakes, helping students to learn the right behavior proactively rather than reacting with punitive measures when mistakes occur.

A focus group participant added further insight:

Don Bosco pedagogy aims to influence behavior positively, giving students opportunities to choose and learn from their actions. Instead of punishment, it emphasizes guidance and encouragement, ensuring that students correct themselves while feeling supported, valued, and responsible for their choices.

According to the head of school and academic staff, the pedagogy is seen as a mechanism for maintaining discipline through anticipation, reflection, and active student involvement. These findings imply that learners are more capable of self-regulating when preventive strategies are consistently applied. This view aligns with the students' questionnaire responses, where most agreed that discipline is shaped through prevention rather than punitive measures. The convergence between qualitative and quantitative data confirms that

Don Bosco's preventive approach is generally considered to foster responsible, respectful, and orderly behavior among students which in turn contributes to maintaining discipline in the schools.

Teacher Consistency

With respect to the consistency of teachers applying Don Bosco principles the data show that 12.0% strongly agreed and 25.0% agreed while 13.3% were neutral, 12.7% disagreed and 37.0% strongly disagreed giving a mean score of 2.6. This suggests that more students were positive with the statement. These findings imply that Don Bosco pedagogy is considered by some students to maintain discipline through consistent teacher application of its principles. Thus students see adherence to the principles by teachers as one of the ways by which discipline can be structured and supported in the schools. These findings are in agreement with Hecker et al. (2018) who reported that teacher stress and inconsistent application of disciplinary measures influence student behaviour. Similarly, Glasser's Control Theory of Motivation (1998) explains that when students' internal needs are met consistently, they are more likely to exhibit self-regulated behaviour. The results indicate that consistent teacher practices are important for modelling the expected behavioral standards among learners.

The presence of some students disagreed or remained neutral this indicates that there are learners who do not perceive teacher application of the principles as a reliable means of maintaining discipline. These students may consider teacher practices as inconsistent or may not link teacher behaviour to promoting respect and discipline. Their perception could affect how they respond to rules and disciplinary measures in the school. Such variation highlights differences between intended consistent application and the actual experiences of learners. These differences may influence the overall behavioral climate and the effectiveness of the pedagogy. These observations align with Systems Theory by von Bertalanffy (1968) which explains that gaps in one part of a system can affect the functioning of the entire structure. The variation shows that inconsistent teacher behaviour can weaken the intended influence of the pedagogy on discipline. When students do not perceive uniform teacher practices, adherence to expected behaviour may vary.

Observations during interviews revealed that consistency in applying Don Bosco principles was a recurrent theme among staff and key informants. Head

teachers and academic teachers emphasized that regular reinforcement of the pedagogy in daily school routines helps maintain order and predictability. This was illustrated by one academic teacher who said:

In all classes, teachers apply Don Bosco principles by being present, modeling correct behavior, and guiding students consistently. Through classroom interactions, recreational activities, and counseling, they ensure that the preventive system is embedded in daily school life, maintaining harmony and orderly conduct.

Similarly, a discipline teacher noted:

Our teaching staff follows the preventive system daily by treating students kindly, building relationships, and reinforcing rules through guidance. This consistency allows learners to feel supported, respond positively to discipline, and engage actively in school activities without fear of punitive consequences.

From these responses, it is evident that head teachers and academic staff view consistent application of the pedagogy as essential for sustaining discipline. These findings imply that learners are more likely to comply with rules when teacher practices are predictable and aligned with Don Bosco principles. The pattern aligns with student questionnaire responses, where most recognized consistency as a key factor in supporting discipline. This convergence suggests that uniform teacher practices reinforce the intended effects of the pedagogy on behavior.

Learning from Mistakes

Focusing on learning from mistakes the data show that 54.5% strongly agreed and 32.1% agreed while 6.2% were neutral, 1.9% disagreed and 5.2% strongly disagreed giving a mean score of 4.3. This suggests that more students were positive with the statement. These findings imply that Don Bosco pedagogy is considered by a large number of students to maintain discipline by encouraging reflection and behavioral improvement. Thus, students see learning from mistakes as one of the ways by which discipline can be enhanced in the schools. These findings are in agreement with Alistides and Mwila (2022) who reported that positive reinforcement and supportive measures help students to correct behaviour and maintain attendance. Similarly, Glasser's Control Theory of Motivation (1998) explains that when students' internal needs are addressed, they are more likely to self-regulate and learn from experiences. The

results indicate that providing opportunities for self-correction functions as a practical mechanism for promoting orderly behaviour. The pedagogy encourages students to view mistakes as learning opportunities which contributes to a disciplined school climate.

Despite the general positive view, some students disagreed or remained neutral this indicates that there are learners who do not consider learning from mistakes as a reliable means of maintaining discipline. These students may perceive the system as ineffective or may not connect reflective practices with behaviour improvement. Their responses highlight differences between the intended use of reflection and the actual student experiences. Such variation can influence how learners respond to rules and corrective guidance within the school. These differences may affect the uniformity of discipline across the student body. These observations align with Systems Theory by von Bertalanffy (1968) which notes that inconsistencies in one component can influence the functioning of the entire system. The distribution shows that student perceptions and engagement with reflection can shape the overall effectiveness of discipline. When students do not value learning from mistakes, the ability of the pedagogy to foster orderly conduct may vary. The pattern of responses suggests that the promotion of self-reflection contributes to maintaining discipline but is experienced differently by learners.

During discussions with parents and discipline teachers, the importance of reflection and learning from mistakes emerged as central to the pedagogy. Respondents emphasized that students are guided to self-correct rather than being punished, which fosters accountability and personal growth. One parent explained:

I have seen my child become more self-aware and responsible after joining Don Bosco School. The system encourages reflection on mistakes, offering guidance and support, which has improved his behavior, time management, and decision-making without fear of punishment, promoting moral and personal growth.

A discipline teacher reinforced this view by stating:

The preventive system allows students to correct their mistakes in a safe environment. They are not attacked but supported, which makes them more open to change, learn from errors, and develop responsibility for their actions, fostering continuous improvement in behavior and discipline.

The responses from the parent and discipline teacher indicate that the pedagogy is regarded as a tool for shaping behavior through self-reflection and corrective guidance. These findings imply that students develop self-regulatory skills and improved conduct when encouraged to learn from mistakes. The questionnaire results show that most students agree that opportunities to reflect on errors enhance their discipline. The agreement between qualitative and quantitative data highlights that reflective practices are integral to the effectiveness of the Don Bosco approach. Thus, by applying the principles of Don Bosco pedagogy, the students are guided on self-discipline and thus they are likely to avoid getting engaged in actions that would be interpreted as being improper.

Fairness in Discipline

With respect to fairness in discipline the data show that 46.4% strongly agreed and 27.6% agreed while 7.5% were neutral, 6.8% disagreed and 11.7% strongly disagreed giving a mean score of 3.9. This suggests that more students were positive with the statement. These findings imply that Don Bosco pedagogy is considered by a large number of students to maintain discipline by applying principles perceived as fair and just. Thus students see fairness as one of the ways by which discipline can be reinforced in the schools. These findings are in agreement with Hunter and Morrell (2021) who found that non-violent and equitable disciplinary approaches contribute to a supportive learning environment. Similarly Glasser's Control Theory of Motivation (1998) explains that fulfilling internal needs such as fairness and belonging promotes self-regulated behaviour among learners. The results indicate that perceived fairness functions as a key factor in encouraging compliance with school rules. Students' recognition of fair treatment supports a positive environment where discipline is maintained without coercion.

Even though, some students disagreed or remained neutral this indicates that there are learners who do not consider the approach as effective for maintaining discipline through fairness. These students may view certain actions as biased or may not see the connection between fair treatment and orderly behaviour. Their perceptions highlight differences between intended fairness and actual student experiences. Such variation can influence how students respond to rules and teacher guidance within the school. These differences may affect the uniformity and consistency of discipline. These observations align with Systems Theory by von

Bertalanffy (1968) which explains that inconsistencies in one part of the system can influence the functioning of the entire structure. The variation in student perceptions shows that experiences of fairness can shape adherence to disciplinary expectations. When fairness is not recognized consistently, students' behaviour may differ, affecting the overall pattern of discipline.

During interviews with key informants, the fairness of Don Bosco's disciplinary approach emerged as a key theme. Parents and students in focus group discussions emphasized that the system treats students equitably, focusing on guidance rather than punishment. This was evidenced by one parent who said:

Don Bosco's disciplinary approach treats students fairly, emphasizing guidance and reasoning rather than punishment. My child now understands consequences and behaves responsibly. The system promotes justice by giving all students equal opportunities to learn from their mistakes while respecting their dignity.

This was further supported by a focus group participant who said:

The approach is based on fairness because every student is guided according to their behavior and needs. Disciplinary measures are consistent, supportive, and non-punitive, which ensures that all learners are treated justly, enhancing trust in teachers and the school system.

These responses indicate that fairness is perceived as a critical mechanism for maintaining discipline through consistent, equitable treatment. These findings imply that learners are more likely to comply with school rules when disciplinary actions are perceived as just. The student questionnaire data also show that most learners agree that fair treatment strengthens discipline. This agreement between qualitative and quantitative data confirms that fairness in disciplinary practices contributes to orderly behavior in schools. Thus by being fair and emphasizing on fairness, the Don Bosco pedagogy is perceived by most of the stakeholders as being a better strategy towards maintaining discipline among students in the schools.

Student-Teacher Relationships

Focusing on student-teacher relationships, 36.4% of students strongly agreed and 25.3% agreed, while 12.0% were neutral, 7.5% disagreed, and 18.8%

strongly disagreed, giving a mean score of 3.5. This shows that most students perceive Don Bosco pedagogy as maintaining discipline by fostering positive interactions between students and teachers. Strong relationships are seen as a key way to sustain discipline, as supportive interactions create trust and mutual respect that encourage adherence to school rules. These findings align with Jenkins and Ueno (2017), who reported that positive relational environments contribute to improved student behaviour. Some students, however, disagreed or remained neutral, suggesting that a minority do not see relationships with teachers as a means of promoting discipline. These learners may perceive interactions as limited or may not recognize the link between positive relationships and orderly behaviour. Such differences in perception can influence how students respond to guidance and rules, affecting the consistency of discipline across the student body. Variation in experiences of teacher support shows that the effectiveness of disciplinary strategies may differ depending on individual student experiences.

The issue of fostering positive student-teacher relationships emerged clearly from discussions with key stakeholders. Head teachers and students noted that the preventive system encourages trust, respect, and open communication. One head teacher observed:

The preventive system builds strong teacher-student relationships by promoting mutual respect, presence, and guidance. Students see teachers as mentors and friends, not enforcers, which creates a positive and cooperative learning environment where both students and teachers interact openly and supportively.

Similarly, a student from the focus group added:

As students, we are comfortable approaching teachers for advice, sharing challenges, and participating in activities together. As the system emphasizes on kindness, guidance, and collaboration fosters friendly relationships, trust, and respect between students and teachers, contributing to a disciplined and harmonious school environment.

These comments suggest that the preventive discipline system is viewed as a key mechanism for maintaining order through strong, positive relationships. The findings imply that students are more likely to follow rules and cooperate when they trust and respect their teachers. Questionnaire data also show that most students agree that positive student-teacher

relationships support discipline. This convergence between qualitative and quantitative data confirms that cultivating good relationships is essential for promoting a disciplined school climate. Teacher respondents were also provided with a Likert

scale having seven statements on the same aspect and requested to indicate their agreement or disagreement with each statement. Their responses were quantified to generate frequencies, percentages and mean scores as presented in table 2

Table 2. Teachers' responses on how the Don Bosco pedagogy maintains students discipline

| Statements | SA | | A | | U | | D | | SD | | Mean |
|--|----|------|----|------|---|------|---|-----|----|-----|------|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | |
| Don Bosco's educational system promotes mutual respect between students and teachers. | 16 | 47.1 | 15 | 44.1 | 2 | 5.9 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.9 | 4.3 |
| The Preventive System encourages a non-punitive approach to discipline that fosters positive behavior changes. | 18 | 52.9 | 15 | 44.1 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.9 | 4.4 |
| Teachers are well-equipped to apply Don Bosco's principles in real classroom situations. | 11 | 32.4 | 14 | 41.2 | 7 | 20.6 | 0 | 0.0 | 2 | 5.9 | 3.9 |
| The disciplinary methods inspired by Don Bosco help reduce behavioral issues in my classroom. | 11 | 32.4 | 15 | 44.1 | 7 | 20.6 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.9 | 4.0 |
| I believe that Don Bosco's pedagogy strengthens the moral and ethical foundation of students. | 16 | 47.1 | 15 | 44.1 | 2 | 5.9 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.9 | 4.3 |
| The Preventive System provides better long-term discipline outcomes than punitive measures. | 21 | 61.8 | 9 | 26.5 | 1 | 2.9 | 2 | 5.9 | 1 | 2.9 | 4.4 |
| I feel confident in using Don Bosco's methods to handle complex disciplinary issues. | 18 | 52.9 | 13 | 38.2 | 2 | 5.9 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.9 | 4.4 |
| Average mean score | | | | | | | | | | | 4.3 |

Source: Field Data (2025)

Mutual Respect Practices

Regarding mutual respect between students and teachers the data show that 47.1% strongly agreed and 44.1% agreed while 5.9% were neutral, 0% disagreed and 2.9% strongly disagreed giving a mean score of 4.3. This suggests that more teachers were positive with the statement. These findings imply that Don Bosco pedagogy is considered by a large number of teachers to maintain discipline by promoting mutual respect. Thus teachers see respect as one of the ways by which positive interactions and orderly conduct can be strengthened in the schools. These findings are in agreement with Jenkins and Ueno (2017) who found

that mutual respect contributes to improved student engagement and behaviour. Similarly Glasser's Control Theory of Motivation (1998) explains that fulfilling needs for love and belonging supports self-regulated behaviour among learners. The results indicate that teacher-student respect functions as a stabilizing factor in classroom management. Positive interactions are perceived as promoting trust and cooperation in the school environment.

Although some teachers were neutral or less positive this indicates that there are educators who do not fully see the pedagogy as a means of maintaining discipline through mutual respect. These teachers may perceive the approach as limited in its effect on behaviour or may

not see the link between respect and effective classroom management. Their responses highlight differences between intended relational strategies and the actual experience in classrooms. Such variation can influence how teachers implement rules and disciplinary practices. Differences in perception may affect the consistency of discipline across classrooms. These observations align with Systems Theory by von Bertalanffy (1968) which notes that inconsistencies in one component can influence the functioning of the entire system. Teacher interpretations and student responses interact to shape the overall disciplinary climate. When mutual respect is not uniformly recognized, its impact on student behaviour may vary. During interviews, the issue of promoting mutual respect between students and teachers was highlighted as a key factor in managing classroom behavior. Participants emphasized that when students feel valued and teachers show genuine care, it creates a climate of trust that reduces conflicts and encourages collaboration. This was illustrated as one discipline teacher said:

The preventive system of Don Bosco creates familiarity and unity between students and teachers. It removes fear and builds strong relationships, as students feel respected and cared for even when making mistakes, fostering trust, cooperation, and mutual respect throughout the school environment.

This was supported by a focus group discussion participant who said

Don Bosco educational system is good because it increases good relationships between students and teachers. By encouraging kindness, politeness, and cooperation, the system ensures respect is maintained while students are comfortable making decisions, which enhances mutual understanding and a peaceful learning atmosphere.

Responses from these key informants mean that the pedagogy is considered to contribute to discipline by fostering trust, cooperation, and a positive social environment. The mutual respect emphasized in the pedagogy encourages students to follow rules voluntarily, reduces defiance, and creates classrooms where learning occurs without constant monitoring or punishment. These findings are in agreement with what teachers indicated, as most of them reported that mutual respect enhances orderly conduct and reduces

disruptive behavior. The alignment between qualitative and quantitative data implies that Don Bosco's approach is believed to maintain discipline by promoting respectful interactions, encouraging self-regulation, and strengthening teacher-student relationships, which together form a stable and harmonious learning environment.

Non-Punitive Approach

Focusing on the Preventive System the data show that 52.9% strongly agreed and 44.1% agreed while 0% were neutral, 0% disagreed and 2.9% strongly disagreed giving a mean score of 4.4. This suggests that more teachers were positive with the statement. These findings imply that Don Bosco pedagogy is considered by a large number of teachers to maintain discipline through non-punitive measures. Thus teachers see non-punitive strategies as one of the ways by which student behaviour can be guided positively in the schools. These findings are in agreement with Abbas et al. (2020) who reported that non-violent approaches are more effective than punitive measures in regulating student conduct. Similarly Glasser's Control Theory of Motivation (1998) explains that satisfying internal needs encourages self-regulated behaviour and reduces misbehaviours. The results indicate that non-punitive approaches function as mechanisms for promoting positive behavioral changes. Teachers perceive that guiding students through understanding and support contributes to an orderly and disciplined environment.

However, a small number of teachers were less positive or neutral this indicates that there are educators who do not fully consider non-punitive strategies as effective for maintaining discipline. These teachers may perceive traditional punitive measures as more immediate or may not see the link between support and behavioral improvement. Their perception highlights differences between intended preventive strategies and actual classroom experiences. Such variation can influence how disciplinary practices are implemented and received by students. Differences may affect consistency in promoting positive behaviour across classrooms. These observations align with Systems Theory by von Bertalanffy (1968) which explains that gaps in one component can affect the functioning of the whole system. Variation in teacher perceptions shows that implementation of non-punitive strategies may differ across contexts. When preventive measures are not fully recognized their influence on student behaviour may vary.

The key informants also highlighted the aspect of applying a non-punitive approach in maintaining discipline. They noted that when guidance and reasoning replace corporal punishment, students internalize rules rather than obey out of fear. This was cemented as one parent said:

I am familiar with the system; it avoids corporal punishment and teaches students through reasoning and guidance. This approach allows children to learn from mistakes, enhances discipline without fear, and encourages positive behavior changes by making them understand consequences and reflect on their daily choices.

This was validated by a discipline teacher who said:

Students respond positively because the system is not hard or painful. It helps them to learn from mistakes and become responsible for their daily choices. The non-punitive preventive approach encourages openness to change, making students more receptive to guidance and fostering lasting behavioral improvements.

Responses from these key informants mean that the pedagogy is seen to maintain discipline by guiding behavior through understanding and support rather than punishment. This approach promotes responsibility, self-reflection, and ownership of actions, which reduces repeated misbehavior. These findings align with teachers' survey responses, where most reported that non-punitive strategies effectively encourage compliance. The agreement implies that the pedagogy contributes to discipline by teaching students to make positive choices, develop self-control, and respond to guidance, creating a consistent, respectful, and safe learning environment across classrooms.

Teacher Preparedness

With respect to teacher preparedness the data show that 32.4% strongly agreed and 41.2% agreed while 20.6% were neutral, 0% disagreed and 5.9% strongly disagreed giving a mean score of 3.9. This suggests that more teachers were positive with the statement. These findings imply that Don Bosco pedagogy is considered by many teachers to maintain discipline by equipping educators with the skills to apply its principles effectively. Thus teachers see professional readiness as one of the ways by which discipline can be reinforced in classroom settings. These findings are in agreement with Andrea and Leandry (2021) who reported that teacher training in positive discipline techniques improves management of student behaviour. Similarly

Glasser's Control Theory of Motivation (1998) explains that teachers' ability to meet students' internal needs promotes self-regulation and compliance. The results indicate that well-equipped teachers are more likely to apply consistent and supportive disciplinary strategies. Adequate preparation is perceived as strengthening the capacity of teachers to maintain orderly conduct.

Some teachers were neutral or less positive this indicates that there are some though few who do not fully consider their preparation as sufficient for maintaining discipline. These teachers may perceive gaps in training or may not see the connection between their skills and student behaviour outcomes. Their responses highlight differences between intended teacher preparedness and actual confidence in applying principles. Such variation can influence the consistency of discipline across classrooms. Differences may affect how effectively rules and behavioral expectations are implemented. These observations align with Systems Theory by von Bertalanffy (1968) which notes that gaps in one component can influence the functioning of the entire system. Variation in teacher preparedness may shape the overall application of the pedagogy in promoting discipline. When some teachers feel less equipped, the intended impact of the preventive system may not be fully realized.

When interviewed, key informants emphasized teacher preparedness as essential for implementing Don Bosco's principles effectively. They highlighted that professional readiness allows educators to structure lessons, integrate moral and life skills, and manage students consistently while fostering self-discipline. This was illustrated as one academic teacher said:

By maintaining discipline through the preventive system, creating a positive and supportive environment, and encouraging self-discipline, critical thinking, and active participation, teachers can apply Don Bosco principles effectively in classrooms, while building trust, guiding reflection, and fostering students' cooperative and responsible behaviors.

This was supported by another academic teacher who said

Lessons are well-planned in the timetable, with time for guidance and life skills education. Through balanced curricula combining academics, vocational skills, and values-based lessons, teachers are equipped to apply Don Bosco principles practically, promoting responsibility and guiding students in daily disciplinary and moral aspects.

Responses from these key informants mean that the pedagogy is considered to reinforce discipline by preparing teachers to anticipate challenges, model ethical behavior, and consistently apply positive strategies. Well-prepared teachers can maintain order while encouraging active participation, ensuring that rules are followed and students develop self-regulation. These findings are in agreement with survey results, where most teachers indicated that training and preparation enhance classroom management. The alignment implies that the pedagogy contributes to discipline by equipping teachers with skills to structure the learning environment, implement preventive strategies, and foster responsible student conduct consistently.

Behavioral Issue Reduction

Focusing on behavioral issue reduction the data show that 32.4% strongly agreed and 44.1% agreed while 20.6% were neutral, 0% disagreed and 2.9% strongly disagreed giving a mean score of 4.0. This suggests that more teachers were positive with the statement. These findings imply that Don Bosco pedagogy is considered by a large number of teachers to maintain discipline by applying methods that reduce behavioral problems in classrooms. Thus teachers see the use of structured and supportive strategies as one of the ways by which discipline can be strengthened in schools. These findings are in agreement with Alistides and Mwila (2022) who reported that positive reinforcement strategies improve student behaviour and engagement. Similarly Glasser's Control Theory of Motivation (1998) explains that when students' internal needs are met, they are more likely to regulate their behaviour and reduce infractions. The results indicate that consistent application of Don Bosco-inspired methods functions as a mechanism for mitigating misconduct. Teachers perceive that these approaches create an environment conducive to learning and self-discipline.

Some teachers were neutral this indicates that a small number of educators do not fully consider these methods as effective in reducing behavioral issues. These teachers may perceive certain strategies as insufficient or may not link them directly to improved behaviour. Their responses highlight differences between intended behavioral strategies and the actual experience in classrooms. Such variation can influence how consistently disciplinary measures are applied. Differences in perception may affect the overall classroom climate and adherence to rules. These observations align with Systems Theory by von

Bertalanffy (1968) which explains that inconsistencies in one component can influence the functioning of the entire system. Variation in teacher perceptions shows that the impact of disciplinary methods may differ depending on implementation. When methods are not uniformly applied or valued, student behaviour may respond differently across classrooms.

During interviews, key informants also spoke on the issue of using Don Bosco-inspired methods to reduce behavioral problems. They emphasized that treating students with respect, using consistent guidance, and encouraging reflection helps students self-regulate and cooperate. This was cemented as one academic teacher said:

By treating students with kindness and respect, encouraging self-discipline, and using practical classroom applications, students are guided to reflect on their actions. This approach fosters cooperation, teamwork, and participation, helping reduce behavioral issues and creating a supportive, well-managed learning environment.

This was supported by a parent who said:

I have noticed my child becoming more respectful, responsible, and disciplined after attending Don Bosco. The preventive system encourages him to correct mistakes, follow rules, and act responsibly, which reduces behavioral issues at school and promotes positive daily routines and moral development.

Responses from these key informants mean that the pedagogy is seen to strengthen discipline by actively mitigating misconduct and fostering a cooperative classroom culture. The methods encourage reflection and moral reasoning, which reduce defiance and enhance student accountability. These findings are in agreement with survey results, where most teachers indicated that such methods reduce infractions and improve engagement. The consistency between the qualitative and quantitative findings implies that the pedagogy contributes to discipline by promoting practical strategies that decrease negative behavior, build self-control, and support a positive and orderly classroom environment.

Moral and Ethical Foundation

With respect to the moral and ethical development of students the data show that 47.1% strongly agreed and 44.1% agreed while 5.9% were neutral, 0% disagreed and 2.9% strongly disagreed giving a mean score of 4.3. This suggests that more teachers were positive with the statement. These findings imply that Don

Bosco pedagogy is considered by a large number of teachers to maintain discipline by fostering strong moral and ethical values among students. Thus teachers see the promotion of moral integrity as one of the ways by which discipline can be enhanced in the schools. These findings are in agreement with Hunter and Morrell (2021) who found that ethical and value-based approaches contribute to a supportive and disciplined learning environment. Similarly, Glasser's Control Theory of Motivation (1998) explains that meeting students' needs for power and belonging encourages self-regulation and ethical behaviour. The results indicate that integrating moral and ethical education functions as a core mechanism for guiding student conduct. Teachers perceive that students with a strong ethical foundation are more likely to comply with school rules.

Although some teachers were neutral this indicates that a minority of teachers do not fully see the pedagogy as effective for maintaining discipline through moral and ethical guidance. These teachers may perceive ethical instruction as insufficient for controlling behaviour or may not directly link it to self-regulation. Their responses highlight differences between intended moral education and the experiences in classroom practice. Such variation can influence how consistently students adopt the values promoted. Differences in perception may affect adherence to school norms and behavioral expectations. These observations align with Systems Theory by von Bertalanffy (1968) which notes that inconsistencies in one part of the system can influence the functioning of the whole. Variation in teacher perceptions suggests that the effectiveness of moral and ethical education in maintaining discipline may differ. When ethical guidance is not fully recognized, the intended behavioral impact may vary among students.

The key informants discussed the aspect of moral and ethical development as a foundation for discipline. They emphasized that instilling values, encouraging ethical behavior, and fostering responsibility help students make better choices and respect rules. This was illustrated as one parent said:

Yes, my child has shown positive changes in self-awareness, responsibility, and moral uprightness. Through prayer, guidance, and the preventive system, Don Bosco's pedagogy fosters respect, honesty, and ethical behavior, strengthening the moral and ethical foundation while promoting self-discipline and responsible

decision-making.

This was validated by a focus group discussion participant who said:

The system shapes students spiritually, mentally, physically, and morally by combining guidance, kindness, and reasoning. Through this pedagogy, students learn ethical behaviors, respect others, and develop discipline, which strengthens their moral foundation and supports responsible actions in school and daily life.

Responses from these key informants mean that the pedagogy is considered to maintain discipline by creating an internalized sense of right and wrong. Students with a strong moral and ethical foundation are more likely to self-regulate, respect school norms, and comply with rules without external enforcement. These findings are in agreement with survey results, where most teachers reported that moral education improves student conduct. The agreement implies that the pedagogy contributes to discipline by guiding ethical behavior, fostering responsibility, and supporting self-regulation in both school and personal contexts.

Long-Term Discipline

Focusing on long-term discipline outcomes the data show that 61.8% strongly agreed and 26.5% agreed while 2.9% were neutral, 5.9% disagreed and 2.9% strongly disagreed giving a mean score of 4.4. This suggests that more teachers were positive with the statement. These findings imply that Don Bosco pedagogy is considered by a large number of teachers to maintain discipline by promoting sustainable behaviour management rather than relying on punitive measures. Thus teachers see long-term reinforcement strategies as one of the ways by which discipline can be strengthened in the schools. These findings are in agreement with Abbas et al. (2020) who reported that non-punitive approaches are more effective than corporal punishment in sustaining positive student behaviour. Similarly Glasser's Control Theory of Motivation (1998) explains that addressing students' internal needs leads to self-regulated behaviour and long-term adherence to rules. The results indicate that the Preventive System functions as a mechanism for guiding students toward consistent positive conduct. Teachers perceive that long-term discipline strategies reduce repeated infractions and create a stable learning environment.

Although some teachers were neutral or disagreed this indicates that a minority of educators do not fully

perceive long-term preventive strategies as effective for maintaining discipline. These teachers may perceive punitive measures as more immediate or may not link preventive strategies directly to sustained behavioral improvement. Their responses highlight differences between intended long-term strategies and actual teacher experiences. Such variation can influence how consistently preventive approaches are applied. Differences in perception may affect the uniformity of behaviour management across classrooms. These observations align with Systems Theory by von Bertalanffy (1968) which notes that inconsistencies in one component can influence the functioning of the entire system. Variation in teacher perceptions shows that the effectiveness of long-term strategies may differ depending on implementation. When preventive methods are not fully recognized or applied, the intended outcomes on student behaviour may vary. The key participants also highlighted the issue of achieving sustainable discipline through the Preventive System. They observed that fostering positive relationships and using guidance allows students to internalize rules and develop self-regulation. This was cemented as one discipline teacher said:

The preventive system builds strong teacher-student relationships and a joyful learning environment, allowing students to learn from mistakes without fear. This approach fosters lasting discipline, as children internalize self-regulation and responsibility rather than responding to punishment, creating more sustainable behavioral outcomes.

This was supported by a parent who said

It plays a great role in maintaining discipline at school by allowing students to complete tasks responsibly without fear of punishment. Through reasoning and guidance, the system helps children to develop good habits and responsible behavior, producing better long-term discipline outcomes compared to punitive measures.

Responses from these key informants mean that the pedagogy is viewed as maintaining discipline by promoting consistent, internalized behavior patterns rather than short-term compliance. Students develop habits of responsibility, self-control, and ethical behavior, which reduce repeated infractions and improve classroom order over time. These findings are in agreement with survey results, where most teachers indicated that preventive methods achieve lasting

behavioral improvements. The consistency implies that the pedagogy contributes to discipline by encouraging long-term self-regulation, responsible behavior, and sustained adherence to rules.

Teacher Confidence

With respect to teacher confidence in handling complex disciplinary issues the data show that 52.9% strongly agreed and 38.2% agreed while 5.9% were neutral, 0% disagreed and 2.9% strongly disagreed giving a mean score of 4.4. This suggests that more teachers were positive with the statement. These findings imply that Don Bosco pedagogy is considered by a large number of teachers to maintain discipline by providing methods that increase their confidence in managing challenging situations. Thus teachers see confidence in applying the pedagogy as one of the ways by which discipline can be reinforced effectively in the schools. These findings are in agreement with Andrea and Leandry (2021) who found that teacher professional development and familiarity with positive discipline techniques improve classroom management. Similarly Glasser's Control Theory of Motivation (1998) explains that when teachers are equipped to meet students' internal needs, learners are more likely to exhibit self-regulated behaviour. The results indicate that teacher confidence functions as a stabilizing factor in applying disciplinary strategies. Confident teachers are perceived as better able to implement preventive measures and maintain a positive classroom climate. Although some teachers were neutral or less positive this indicates that a minority of educators do not fully feel confident in using Don Bosco's methods for complex disciplinary issues. These teachers may perceive certain methods as difficult to apply or may not link their confidence directly to student behaviour outcomes. Their responses highlight differences between intended teacher confidence and actual experiences in classrooms. Such variation can influence how consistently complex disciplinary situations are managed. Differences in perception may affect the overall implementation of the pedagogy across classrooms. These observations align with Systems Theory by von Bertalanffy (1968) which notes that inconsistencies in one component can affect the functioning of the entire system. Variation in teacher confidence shows that the effectiveness of the pedagogy in maintaining discipline may differ depending on experience and preparedness. When confidence is not fully established, the impact on student behaviour may be inconsistent. Differences in

teacher self-efficacy may shape the overall disciplinary climate in the school.

When interviewed, key informants also emphasized teacher confidence in handling complex disciplinary issues. They noted that consistent use of preventive principles, trust-building, and structured guidance equip teachers to manage challenging behavior effectively. This was illustrated as one academic teacher said:

My interactions with students outside the classroom, during recreation and play, help me build trust and rapport, making it easier to guide them. This approach equips me to handle complex disciplinary issues confidently by applying preventive principles and fostering cooperation, respect, and self-discipline.

This was supported by a head teacher who said

Through daily practice of the preventive system and continuous reminders to teachers, staff are guided to apply Don Bosco methods effectively. This enables handling complex disciplinary issues with confidence while ensuring consistent application of guidance, reason, and

care, resulting in positive behavioral outcomes for students.

Responses from these key informants mean that the pedagogy is considered to reinforce discipline by increasing teacher self-efficacy. Confident teachers are better able to implement preventive strategies consistently, address challenging situations calmly, and maintain classroom order. These findings are in agreement with survey results, where most teachers reported that confidence enhances their management of students. The agreement implies that the pedagogy contributes to discipline by enabling teachers to handle complex situations, maintain consistency in guidance, and foster a cooperative and well-managed classroom environment.

Teachers were then provided with a closed ended question that requested them to give their general view on the effectiveness of the don Bosco pedagogy towards maintaining discipline in schools. The responses were then quantified to generate percentages as presented in figure 2.

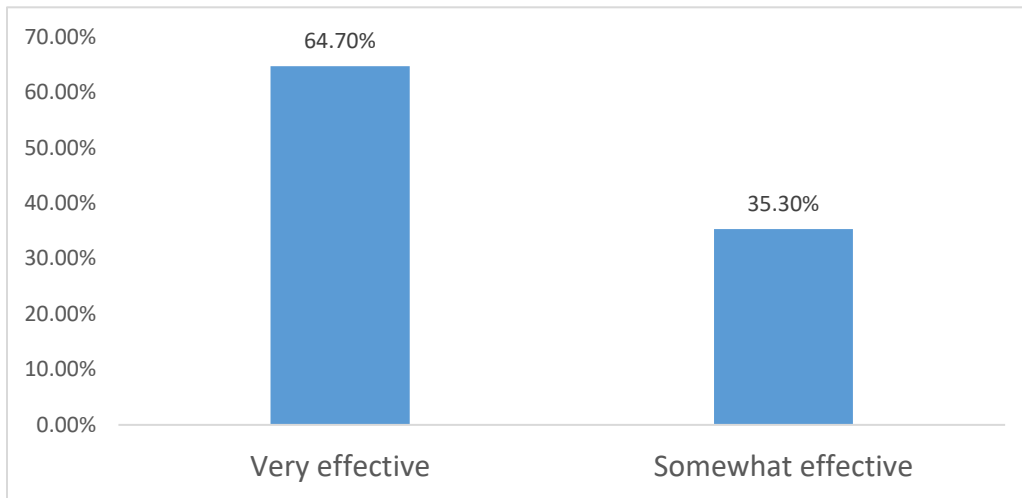


Figure 2. Teachers rating on the effectiveness of Don Bosco pedagogy towards maintaining discipline
Source: Field data (2025)

The data in Figure 2 show that most of the teachers (64.70%) rated Don Bosco pedagogy as effective in maintaining discipline, while a small proportion (35.30%) viewed it as less effective. These findings suggest that most of the teachers consider the pedagogy to be an effective means towards maintaining discipline among students in the schools. These findings align with Achondo, et al (2025), who reported that Don Bosco’s Preventive System strengthens self-

discipline through accompaniment rather than punishment. This agreement confirms that Don Bosco pedagogy contributes to disciplined learning environments, whereas the limited disagreement indicates that some schools may not experience uniform behavioral outcomes. The presence of teachers who rated the pedagogy to be less effective implies that there are some teachers who either do not understand the application of the pedagogy or they are not aware on the advantages of the pedagogy. This also

implies that there might be some teachers in the schools who still believe on the use of punitive strategies when maintaining students' discipline in the schools.

During interviews with key informants, the teachers and discipline staff highlighted the effectiveness of Don Bosco pedagogy in creating disciplined learning environments. The key informants emphasized that the preventive system promotes positive relationships between students and teachers, encourages self-discipline, and supports active participation in classroom activities. This was made evident as one academic teacher said:

Through the preventive system, I create a positive and supportive environment where students are treated with respect and kindness. By encouraging self-discipline, active participation, and teamwork, I have noticed that most students respond responsibly and reflect on their actions, which makes maintaining discipline in my classroom much easier.

This was further validated by a discipline teacher who added

The preventive system of Don Bosco is very effective and easy to apply when dealing with different student behaviors. It creates familiarity and unity between students and teachers,

builds respect, and allows students to feel cared for even when they make mistakes, fostering a joyful learning environment.

Responses from these key informants imply that Don Bosco pedagogy is viewed as an effective mechanism for maintaining discipline whereby teachers cultivate orderly behavior through guidance, mutual respect, and engagement, rather than punitive measures. By treating students with kindness and creating supportive interactions, teachers help students internalize self-discipline, reflect on their choices, and cooperate with peers. The agreement between the quantitative and qualitative findings altogether indicates that Don Bosco pedagogy is largely perceived by stakeholders to contribute positively to a disciplined school environment, whereas the minority of teachers who rated it as less effective may not fully understand or apply the preventive system consistently.

Both teachers and students provided their views on whether the don Bosco preventive system helps in maintaining students' discipline in the schools. This was a three-response question whereby students and teachers responded on either yes, no or not sure. Their responses were quantified to generate percentages as presented in figure 3.

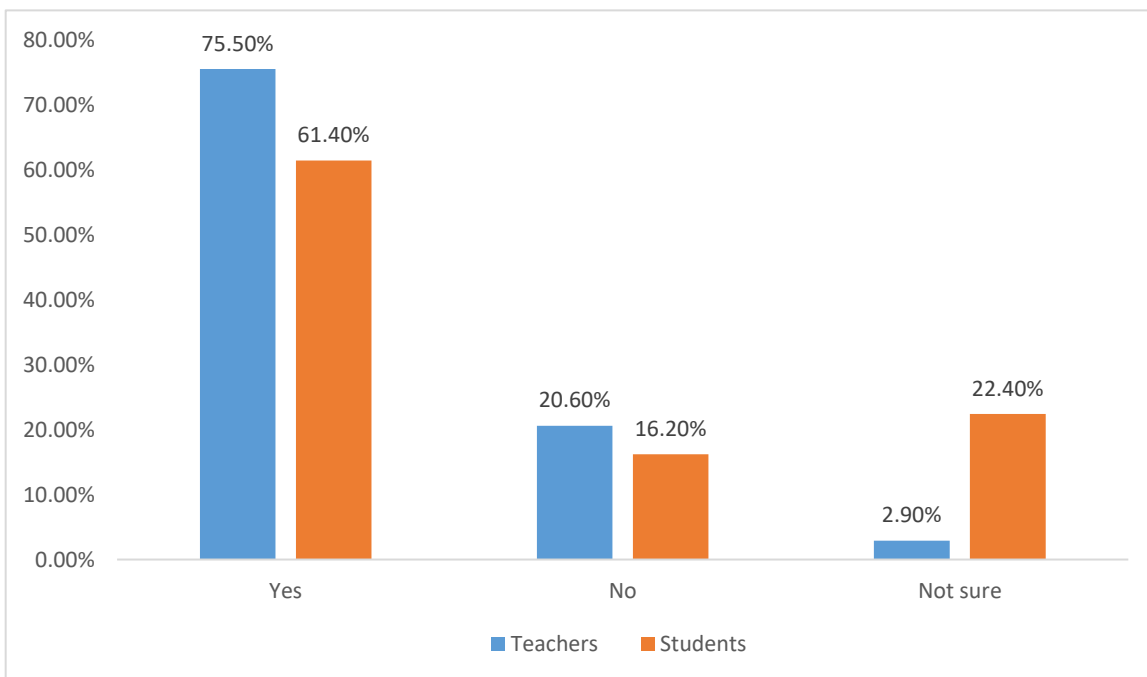


Figure 3.
Source: Field data (2025)

The data in Figure 3 show that most of the teachers and students responded “yes,” indicating that they considered the Don Bosco preventive system to support the maintenance of student discipline, while only a few selected “no” or “not sure.” These findings imply that most of the teachers and students considered the approach to encourage consistent behavioral conduct through moral guidance and routine accompaniment. These findings are in agreement with Judijanto et al. (2025), who also reported that character-centered pedagogical practices strengthen learners’ discipline when applied consistently, and with Toyyibudin et al. (2025), who likewise observed a positive association between school-based value education and improved student discipline. The

presence of some teachers and students who either disagreed or were not sure indicates that the pedagogy has not been well communicated in the schools or some teachers do not use it effectively. This also suggests that there might be some challenges associated with the application of the pedagogy in the schools.

To determine whether there is a relationship between the application of Don Bosco preventive system and the level of students’ discipline, a chi-square test for dependence was run at 95% confidence. The level of students discipline was measured through reduced number of indiscipline cases. The results of hypothesis testing are presented in table 3.

Table 3. Relationship between application of Don Bosco pedagogy and level of students’ discipline

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 16.496 ^a | 2 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 16.761 | 2 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 308 | | |

Source: Field data (2025)

The data in Table 3 show that the Pearson chi-square value was 16.496 with a p-value of 0.00 which is less than the significance level (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. Rejecting the null hypothesis indicates that there is a significant relationship between the application of Don Bosco preventive system and the level of students’ discipline. This means that the application of Don Bosco pedagogy contributes to reduced cases of indiscipline as students are guided through reason, relational presence, and moral formation rather than punitive enforcement. These findings are in agreement with Nampoto (2018) who explained that non-punitive pedagogical approaches strengthen self-regulation and improve student conduct within the school context. Thus, the results affirm that when preventive principles are consistently applied, students demonstrate more responsible behaviour and maintain school order willingly.

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study hold both theoretical and empirical significance. From a theoretical perspective, the results substantiate Glasser’s Control Theory of Motivation (1998) and von Bertalanffy’s Systems Theory (1968), demonstrating that students’ discipline is contingent upon the fulfillment of intrinsic needs, relational dynamics, and the coherent functioning of interconnected educational subsystems. The study

provides empirical support for the premise that preventive, value-oriented pedagogical approaches, exemplified by Don Bosco’s pedagogy, facilitate the internalization of ethical norms, self-regulation, and respectful conduct, rather than relying on punitive measures. Empirically, the research evidences that the implementation of the Preventive System in Tanzanian secondary schools significantly contributes to the reduction of behavioral infractions, enhancement of moral and ethical development, and improvement of student-teacher interactions. These findings underscore the efficacy of structured, non-punitive strategies in fostering disciplined and responsible behavior, highlighting the critical role of teacher preparedness, consistent application of principles, and supportive relational practices. Consequently, the study offers actionable insights for educational policymakers and practitioners seeking to adopt holistic disciplinary frameworks that are both effective and culturally contextualized.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study establishes that Don Bosco pedagogy functions as an effective strategy for maintaining students’ discipline in Tanzanian secondary schools. Preventive strategies, moral and ethical instruction, empathy, fairness, and structured opportunities for reflection collectively foster self-regulated, responsible, and respectful behavior among learners. The

integration of qualitative and quantitative findings, supported by chi-square analysis, demonstrates a statistically significant relationship between the application of the Preventive System and the reduction of indiscipline. However, variations in perceptions of teacher consistency and the implementation of empathetic disciplinary measures indicate that the pedagogy's effectiveness depends on uniform application and active teacher engagement. It is recommended that schools implementing Don Bosco's pedagogical model prioritize ongoing professional development to enhance teacher competence and confidence, institutionalize mechanisms that ensure consistent application of preventive strategies, and cultivate positive student-teacher relationships. Moreover, embedding structured reflection and moral guidance into daily routines will consolidate the principles of the pedagogy, thereby sustaining long-term behavioral improvements and promoting a disciplined, ethical, and conducive learning environment.

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