

# Exploring School Management Strategies on Alternatives to Corporal Punishment for Managing Student Aggression in Arusha, Tanzania

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## Abstract

In many African countries, including Tanzania, children often experience immediate physical punishment from parents or caregivers after misbehaving, a practice that extends into schools where students can be caned with permission from the educational authorities. The reliance on corporal punishment, highlights the urgent need for effective, non-violent strategies to manage student misbehaviour, particularly aggression, thus fostering a safer and more supportive educational environment. This qualitative study, aimed at exploring alternative strategies employed by school managements in order to handle students' aggression. It was grounded on the Social Learning Theory and Attachment Theory. Besides, the study employed the multiple-embedded case study design coupled with purposive sampling technique and snowball sampling technique along with the semi-structured interview, focus group discussion and documentary review as data collection methods. Subsequently, the study identified five key strategies namely creating conducive environments that foster security and support, establishing mentorship programmes that provide behavioural models and emotional support, changing teachers' mind-sets so as to promote non-violent conflict resolution, making sure issues concerning student behaviours are discussed during parent- teacher meetings in order to make students align with behavioural expectations and enhancing religious teachings which will provide ethical frameworks and emotional guidance. These strategies align with both Social Learning Theory and Attachment Theory which encourage positive behaviour modelling and establishing secure emotional bonds respectively. The research underscores the necessity for comprehensive support systems which address both behavioural and emotional needs of students to effectively reduce aggression. Furthermore, it is recommended that, school managements should adopt these strategies as a framework for managing students' aggression, moving away from reliance on corporal punishment.

**Keywords:** School Management, corporal punishment, alternatives strategies, student aggression, Tanzania

## Introduction

In today's educational landscape, the unsettling rise of aggression among students creates not only a menace to individual student's well-being but rather destabilises the fabric of academic success. Student's aggression which incorporates verbal, physical and interpersonal actions represent a pervasive and escalating global concern (Hallett et al., 2021; Mérida-López & Extremera, 2022; Moon & McCluskey, 2020). For instance, in the United States of America, research by Castillo-Eitoa et al., (2020) indicates that, 51% of the students engage in aggressive behaviours, which include bullying and physical altercations. In Africa, the situation is particularly alarming, with Tanzania in particular, having reports which indicate that, 90% of the students experience caning as a form of physical violence (HakiElimu, 2020). Such aggressive behaviours among students, often lead to poor academic performance, social isolation, interpersonal conflicts and increased dropout rates (Kuzhiyengal Mambra, & Kotian, 2024; Vuoksima et al., 2021; Winding et al., 2022; Xu et al., 2021; Zedain & Jawad, 2020).

Historically, corporal punishment has been widely employed in schools across many countries as a means of controlling student's aggression. On the same note, teachers within one third and above of countries worldwide, are legally permitted to inflict physical pain on students using sticks, canes, belts or their hands as disciplinary measures (Gershoff, 2017). However, this approach has faced mounting criticism from different scholars and human rights organisations, prompting numerous countries to restrict or ban corporal punishment in educational settings. Consequently, quite a good number of schools' managements, have been compelled to develop alternative disciplinary strategies to manage student's behaviour and aggression, making the exploration of these alternatives increasingly necessary.

In Tanzania, the implementation of Education Circular No. 24 of 2002, attempted to regulate disciplinary measures in schools by limiting corporal punishment to a maximum of four strokes administered exclusively by heads of school or by any teacher on behalf of the heads of schools (URT, 2002).

Importantly, this policy also emphasised alternative disciplinary strategies such as counselling and fostering harmonious relationships as primary means in addressing disciplinary issues. The implementation of this policy has generated mixed responses within the Tanzanian educational community since critics argue that, these restrictions have proven ineffective, particularly in overcrowded schools, with some stakeholders questioning the disparity between home discipline practices (where physical punishment remains common) and school restrictions. Conversely, supporters emphasise that, prohibiting corporal punishment aligns with international standards, notably the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) of 1989, which protects children from all forms of violence.

Research on corporal punishment in Tanzania is extensive as evidenced by Alistides and Mwila (2021); Lema and Gwando (2018); Ndossi (2021); Ntigwiyahuligwa and Montgomery (2021) and Zuberi et al., (2025). Besides, Kambuga et al., (2018) found that, despite the government's restrictions, teachers generally favoured corporal punishment while students opposed it. Inversely, Lema and Gwando (2018) discovered

that, some pupils believed that corporal punishment enhanced discipline, the findings which concur with the study by Nampoto (2018) who reported that, in Mtwara, school board members and teachers recommended continuing the practice. Correspondingly, Paul (2020) documented similar pro- corporal punishment sentiments in Bukombe district, although Alistides and Mwila (2021) argued against corporal punishment as it causes anger, fear, harm and injury to students, resulting into absenteeism, truancy and students' dropout among the affected individuals.

Despite the substantial body of knowledge in place, which has extensively examined the issue of managing students' aggression in schools, little has been done specifically on documenting school management strategies regarding alternative disciplinary strategies to corporal punishment in Tanzania. This study therefore, aimed at filling the gap by exploring the strategies the school managements can employ as alternatives to corporal punishment in addressing students' aggression in schools in the Tanzanian context. In this manner, the research can contribute to the existing body of knowledge, the practical experiences from different secondary schools in the Arusha City, Tanzania on the issue under the study. On similar note, the findings may provide evidence-based recommendations for policy refinement within the Tanzanian educational system and other countries worldwide with similar educational settings and challenges.

## **Theoretical Frameworks**

This study was grounded on the Social Learning Theory and Attachment Theory in order to examine alternative disciplinary strategies to corporal punishment in addressing student aggression in Tanzanian secondary schools. These complementary theoretical perspectives provide a comprehensive framework in understanding both the development of aggressive behaviours and the potential efficacy of alternative disciplinary approaches.

### **1. Social Learning Theory**

Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory posits that, aggressive behaviours are acquired through observation, imitation and reinforcement within the social contexts (Bandura & Walters, 1977). This theoretical perspective is particularly relevant in the Tanzanian educational context, where Education Circular No. 24 of 2002 sanctions limited corporal punishment. When the school managements employ physical disciplinary approach as a behavioural management strategy, they potentially normalise the approach as an acceptable one in addressing aggression in schools. Through the mechanism of observational learning, students in turn, may internalise and subsequently replicate the aggressive behaviours they witness in school environments.

The Social Learning Theory suggests that, students learn not only from direct instruction but also from modelling which is the process of observing and imitating behaviours demonstrated by significant others, including teachers and school management. When teachers regularly utilise corporal punishment, they inadvertently provide behavioural models that may reinforce aggressive tendencies they seek to diminish. This theoretical perspective, underscores the importance of implementing

alternative disciplinary approaches that model constructive conflict resolution and pro-social behavioural management tactics.

## **2. Attachment Theory**

Bowlby's (1969, 1973) Attachment Theory provides complementary insights with regard to student aggression, suggesting that, early attachment relationships can establish internal working models that guide future social interactions and emotional regulation capacities (Bretherton, 2013; Bowlby, 1979; Bowlby et al., 1992). In this manner, secure attachment relationships with caregivers often times foster adaptive emotional regulation strategies and pro-social behaviours, whereas insecure attachment patterns may contribute to maladaptive behavioural responses.

In educational settings, insecurely attached students often struggle to manage negative emotions appropriately, potentially manifesting as reactive aggression when confronting stressful situations or perceived threats. In addition, attachment insecurities can compromise students' ability to trust authority figures, including teachers, thereby undermining the effectiveness of school-based behavioural interventions. Thus, when corporal punishment is employed, it may further exacerbate attachment insecurities and erode the student-teacher relationship which is a crucial foundation for effective behavioural management.

## **3. Integrated Theoretical Application**

The integration of both Social Learning Theory and Attachment Theory offers a comprehensive framework for exploring disciplinary alternatives to corporal punishment in Tanzanian secondary schools. This theoretical synthesis highlights the limitations of traditional punitive measures and supports the investigation of alternative approaches that: first, create positive models of conflict resolution and behavioural management, thus disrupting the cycle of observed and imitated aggression (Social Learning Theory); second, foster secure attachment relationships through responsive teacher-student interactions, consequently enhancing students' emotional regulation and trust in authority figures (Attachment Theory); and third, develop school environments that effectively address both the social learning and attachment aspects of student's aggression.

In this manner, by employing the integrated framework which has been advocated by different scholars, the present study will therefore be in the position to effectually examine how school management strategies align with evidence-based alternative disciplinary strategies to corporal punishment, subsequently addressing the complex psychological and social factors that contribute to student aggression in Tanzanian secondary schools in relation to both Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) and Attachment Theory (Bowlby's, 1969, 1973).

## **Methodology**

### **1. Research Approach and Design**

This study employed a qualitative research approach, coupled with multiple-embedded case study design to explore alternative disciplinary strategies to corporal

punishment in addressing student's aggression in public secondary schools. This methodological choice, aligns with the study's theoretical framework which integrates Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) and Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1969, 1973), the dual-theories which emphasise the importance of understanding contextual factors and subjective experiences in behavioural manifestations.

The qualitative approach was selected due to the fact that, it privileges rich descriptive data over numerical measurements, thereby allowing participants to articulate their lived experiences with regard to alternative strategies regarding disciplinary issues in schools. Moreover, the multiple-embedded case study design was used in the current study since, it provided a robust framework for examining the complex, context-dependent nature of student's aggression management across different school settings within the Arusha City Council, Tanzania. Moreover, the chosen design facilitated a nuanced exploration of how school management conceptualises, implements and evaluates alternative disciplinary approaches in Tanzania's educational policies, economic and socio-cultural contexts.

## **2. Sampling Procedures**

Purposive sampling technique was employed to select two public secondary schools in Arusha City Council where student's aggression has been documented and the situation is particularly alarming, thus allowing the researchers to secure the information-rich cases critical to the phenomenon under investigation. Within these schools, criterion-based purposive sampling identified eight key informants in managerial positions including heads of school, discipline masters/mistresses, school counsellors and school board chairpersons whose key responsibilities directly involve them in student's behavioural management and policy implementation at the school level.

Besides, snowball sampling technique was utilised to identify and recruit 11 students who had exhibited aggressive behaviours and 9 students who had experienced victimisation. This methodological decision helped the researchers to capture pertinent data with regard to the current study given the fact that, direct engagement with both perpetrators and victims would provide essential strategies on disciplinary effectiveness that could not be captured through administrative accounts alone. The total sample of 28 participants ensured data saturation while remaining manageable for in-depth qualitative analysis.

## **3. Data Collection Methods**

Triangulation was achieved through multiple data collection methods. Initially, semi-structured interviews were conducted with schools' management personnel in order to explore their perceptions, experiences and challenges regarding alternative disciplinary strategies. These interviews were carried out for 45-60 minutes each. In addition, the interview proceedings were recorded on Digital Voice Recorder (DVR) upon the participant's approval for the credibility of the information during interviews sessions. Besides, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were carried out with aggressive students and victimised students to examine their experiences with different disciplinary approaches and perceptions of their effectiveness. This methodological choice recognised the power

dynamics inherent in discussions about school discipline since it created safe spaces for open dialogue. Furthermore, documentary analysis examined school discipline policies, incident reports and intervention records to understand the formal frameworks guiding disciplinary actions and their practical implementation. In that manner, the method provided the researchers with valuable contextual data and enabled examination of the gaps existing between policy and practice.

#### **4. Data Analysis Procedures**

Thematic analysis was employed following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six- phase framework as follows: Initially, data familiarisation through repeated reading of transcripts and field notes was carried out by the researchers. Thereafter, generation of initial codes was done which involved systematic coding across the entire dataset by fitting the codes with the theme. Besides, the researchers searched for themes by collating codes into potential themes and gathering relevant data.

Moreover, the research reviewed the themes by checking themes against coded extracts and the entire dataset. On top of that, the process of defining and naming themes by refining specifics of each theme and generating clear definitions was done. Furthermore, the researchers produced the report after compiling the extract and executing the final analysis in relation to research questions and literature.

#### **5. Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations**

Trustworthiness was established through: Credibility by prolonged engagement in the field, and triangulation of data sources along with methods. Besides, transferability was realised after thick description of context and participant characteristics whilst dependability was considered by maintenance of an audit trail documenting methodological decisions. Furthermore, conformability was discerned when reflexive journaling to acknowledge researcher positionality was reckoned.

Correspondingly, the study adhered to stringent ethical standards, including compliance with the University of Dodoma (UDOM) plagiarism policy of 2018. On the same note, institutional approval was obtained through research permits and ethical clearance (MA.84/261/02/A/72/142) from the Research Ethics Committee. Informed consent was secured from all mature participants, while assent of students was complemented by parental/guardian consent. Particular attention was paid to protecting vulnerable participants, especially students. This was observed through strict anonymization procedures, secure data storage and the provision of school counselling resources for any participants experiencing distress during the research process.

### **Results And Discussion**

This section analyses the findings through the theoretical lenses of Social Learning Theory and Bowlby's Attachment Theory, addressing the research question "What strategies do school management use to manage student's aggression in public secondary schools in Tanzania?" With regard to the study's objective, five key thematic disciplinary strategies emerged, each demonstrating how school management teams can

collaboratively tackle student's aggression by functioning as role models and secure attachment figures for students.

### 1. Creating a Favourable School Environment

The findings revealed that, school management teams were implementing various strategies to manage students' aggression. Central to these efforts is creating a favourable teaching and learning environment that serves as both a modelling context in relation to Social Learning Theory and a secure base in relation to Attachment Theory. On this, during the interview session, one school counsellor explained:

*The environment which is friendlier to students is very important. We have been trying to do our best to make sure that, our learning environment is supportive to students. Sometimes, students act aggressively as a reaction against the nature of environment they face within the school. As teachers, we have established some programmes aimed at helping students get rid of aggression therefore making them enjoy the school life [Interview with the School counsellor, School D1, May, 2024].*

This strategy aligns with the Attachment Theory's emphasis on creating safe environments where students feel emotionally comfortable. During the interview, the Head of School D2 stressed that:

*All teachers should collaborate with students to find out the panacea by contemplating on what steps to be taken to at least minimise the spreads of all forms of aggression in our school. As a team, we should create auspicious environment in which students feel loved and supported [Interview with the Head of School D1, May, 2024].*

Along similar lines, the statement highlights the attachment-based approach of fostering caring relationships as another Head of School reinforced this idea by asserting that:

*For students to feel comfortable, we, teachers, regularly we emphasize on morals and ethics. We have been insisting them to love and respect each other, teach them with love and encourage effective communication among themselves, teachers and parents. Frankly speaking good and supportive learning environment avoids the possibility of aggression to occur [Interview with the Head of School D2, May, 2024].*

These findings reveal how SLT operates in practice. That is, when teachers model respectful and ethical behaviour, students observe and internalise these patterns. Concurrently, through the lens of Attachment Theory, when students feel securely attached to their teachers and school milieu, they develop emotional regulation skills that reduce aggressive tendencies.

In the same vein, quite a good number of literatures support these contentions as Akman (2021) in Turkey found that, supportive teacher behaviours and safe learning

environments significantly lessen students' aggressive behaviours. Besides, Da Cunha et al., (2021) noted that, structured classrooms can influence the diminishing of aggression by enhancing students' social responsibility. Further, Konold et al., (2017) identified that, a friendly environment discourages physical and verbal aggressive behaviour, while the study by Jaleel and Kotian (2024) investigates psychosocial and environmental factors influencing aggression in higher secondary students, highlighting the need for comprehensive preventive strategies. Notably, these findings align with both theoretical frameworks specifically, the Social Learning Theory which emphasises modelling and observational learning, while the Attachment Theory focuses on the importance of secure relationships in emotional regulation.

## 2. Establishing Student Mentors and Academic Advisors

The data revealed that, mentoring and academic advising programmes, provide individualised support that addresses both observational learning needs in relation to Social Learning Theory and attachment requirements as asserted by the Head of School D1 that:

*To make this system effective and productive, we put students into groups of which, each group has their mentor who also acts as their academic advisor. Each teacher is given a certain number of students according to his or her positions which determines the roles. One teacher can deal with 10 -25 students and not more. Indeed, this has brought a positive impact [Interview, with the Head of School D2, May, 2024].*

This approach directly applies the Attachment Theory principles by creating a secure bond between students and a designated adult figure as proven by the school board chairperson who elaborated that:

*The mentors and advisors help our students change their behaviour since they serve as their primary advisors and act as guardians. They normally communicate with parents of each student on phone which fosters a strong tie among students, teachers and parents [Interview with the School Board Chairperson, School D1, May, 2024].*

In addition, this approach has created a comprehensive attachment network while simultaneously providing positive behaviour models consistent with SLT as the students' testimony confirmed the programme's effectiveness that:

*Parents are pleased with this programme of mentors and academic advisors since teachers are taking this programme as one of the best ways to reduce aggression and improve students' behaviour. Since we started this programme, most of us have improved their behaviours [FGD, School D1, May, 2024].*

In that regard, the mentorship strategy aligns with research by Afzal, Sami and Munawar (2024), who highlighted how mentors help students overcome psychological, social, emotional, and academic challenges. Likewise, Fernández et al., (2022) emphasised the school climate's role in preventing peer aggression through mentoring

whilst Xu et al., (2022) as well as Eneasator, U. E., Nwankwo and Nwokolo (2020) in Nigeria, recommended improving mentoring strategies for aggressive students, whereas Castillo-Eito et al., (2020) found psychosocial interventions being so effective in reducing aggression amongst adolescents.

However, the documentary review revealed that, despite mentorship efforts, some students still exhibited aggressive behaviours, thus leading to absenteeism and dropouts. Data showed that, two out of seven absent students during Form IV National Examinations in 2023, were aggressive boys. This suggests that, while mentorship provides important attachment figures and behavioural models, additional interventions are necessary for some students.

### 3. Changing Teachers' Mind-sets on Corporal Punishment

The study findings indicate that, shifting from corporal punishment to more humanistic approaches better aligns with both theoretical frameworks. According to Social Learning Theory, corporal punishment models aggressive behaviour that students may imitate whereas the Attachment Theory perspective, stresses that, corporal punishment damages the secure attachment relationship between teachers and students.

Remarkably, a school counsellor emphasised the need for mind-set change after pointing out that:

*I suggest a change in mind-set amongst teachers. To the best of my knowledge, for teachers to refrain from using corporal punishment is of paramount importance. This type of punishment tortures students but they do not change them, but rather making them more resistant and crueller [Interview with the School counsellor School D1, May, 2024].*

Moreover, Students lamented that:

*This form of punishment is extremely agonizing, frequently causing lasting emotional, physical damage and psychological harm. As far as we are concerned, teachers should think of alternative disciplinary strategies, for sure students are suffering [Students in FGD, School D1, May, 2024].*

These findings are in line with Bowlby's (1969) Attachment Theory, which emphasises that, punitive measures damage the teacher-student relationship, thus creating insecurity and mistrust that exacerbate behavioural issues. Similarly, through the lens of Social Learning Theory, corporal punishment demonstrates to students that, physical aggression is an acceptable way to resolve conflicts given the fact that, the approach leads to the impairment of students-teachers relationship in schools.

Quite a good number of literatures support alternative approaches such as Saleem et al., (2022) in Pakistan, suggested face-to-face workshops and online training to foster positive perspectives on discipline. Similarly, Ngwokabuenui (2015) in Cameroon, recommended that, teachers should correct students' mistakes with love rather than negative labelling. Likewise, Makewa et al., (2017) in Kenya, advocated for alternative discipline methods that avoid physical pain. Generally, these approaches align with both theories by promoting secure attachments and modelling positive conflict resolution.

#### **4. Ensuring that matters related to student behaviours are tabled during Parent-Teacher Meetings**

Based on the findings, it was noted that parental meetings create a collaborative framework that extends both attachment networks and consistent behavioural modelling between home and school environments. On this regard, one discipline mistress explained:

*Usually, during the parent–teacher meetings, one of the agenda items is to discuss the role of parents in supporting their children at home. This is done alongside evaluating the efforts made by teachers to assist students in various areas. These meetings serve as an ideal platform to remind parents of their responsibilities and how to nurture their children at home [Interview with the Discipline Mistress, School D2, May, 2024].*

In the same vein, the Head of School D2 highlighted the diversity of students' backgrounds:

*Our students come from diverse backgrounds and households, which shape their behaviours and attitudes in different ways. In that regard, these deeply ingrained traits cannot be changed overnight but rather it requires time and consistent effort. However, through strong collaboration among teachers, school administration, and parents, we can make significant progress in mitigating aggression and fostering positive conduct among our students [Interview with the Head of School D2, May, 2024].*

Notably, the school board chairperson acknowledged the value of collaborative approaches:

*As parents, we are fortunate to have caring and dedicated teachers who are concerned with our students' progress. They have been actively engaging us in various school matters, including the issue of students' aggression. I sincerely appreciate the parents who respond to these calls and attend meetings—their commitment strengthens our collective effort to address this challenge in our school [Interview with the School Board Chairperson, School D2, May, 2024].*

Evidently, these findings align with the information found from the Head of School's office documents which indicated that, school meetings were being conducted four times per year and in accordance with the government's head teacher guidelines. In addition, the records as per the documentary review revealed that, students' aggression was being regularly discussed as a pressing issue during these meetings. Patently, the documents also showed satisfactory parent attendance and outlined the proposed strategies to address the problem. These findings are in line with the data gathered from interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Through the lens of Attachment Theory, these meetings help to create a consistent attachment environment between home and school. From the Social Learning Theory perspectives, the meetings should ensure that, behavioural expectations and consequences are modelled consistently across contexts.

There are a number of studies which support this approach as Axford et al., (2015) found that, involving parents in disciplinary meetings, is more likely to disclose their children's behaviour, consequently facilitating intervention. Besides, Fatima and Malik (2015) as well as Sibisi et al., (2024) identified parent-teacher collaboration as an effective strategy for handling disciplinary matters including aggression whilst Makhasane and Majong (2023) noted that, addressing aggressive behaviour requires collaboration between parents, school leaders and teachers. Generally, these findings reinforce how parental meetings create consistency in both attachment relationships and behavioural modelling.

### 5. Enhancing Religious Teachings

Significantly, religious teachings provide both moral frameworks that guide behavioural change which is in relation to Social Learning Theory and spiritual attachment figures that extend beyond human relationships as per Attachment Theory. In line with this perspective, the school counsellor of D2 explained:

*We have been inviting Christian and Muslim clergy to participate in our weekly religious sessions to educate students about the merit of getting rid of aggression. The scriptures teach that, fighting is a sinful act in the eyes of God and that, a student who reveres God's will, should not engage in aggressive behaviour. We regularly stress the importance of attending these sessions for their own good [Interview with the School Counsellor, School D2, May, 2024].*

Apparently, the Head of School D1 elaborated that:

*Religious education, guidance and counselling are integral components of our students' education. Regular sessions on Christian teachings are held in their classes and each morning as students gather at the parade ground to pray. We also promote Islamic values of peace and harmony by ensuring that all faiths are respected in our public school. During these sessions, students learn the importance of patience and tolerance [Interview with the Head of School D1, May, 2024].*

The reviewed documents indicated that, religious issues were being regularly allocated 40-minutes faith-based sessions on weekly basis whereby the religious leaders would address topics such as student and education, ethics and morals, educational motivation, vision, cross-curricular issues and holiness. These sessions were being organised within respective religious students' associations, including the Christ's Ambassadors Students Fellowship Tanzania (CASFETA), the Tanzania Young Catholic Students (TYCS), Tanzania Muslim Student Youth Association (TAMSYA) and the Adventist Students Association (ASA). Such lessons were found to have proven particularly impactful in discouraging students from engaging in aggressive behaviour. These findings are similar with those from the interviews and FGDs.

Through the lens of Social Learning Theory, religious teachings model peaceful conflict resolution and ethical behaviour. Similarly, from an Attachment Theory perspective, religious teachings can provide a transcendent secure base that offers

emotional security and moral guidance. Studies support this approach as Japhet (2020) in Kenya found that, religious education impacted behavioural change among students whilst Othoo and Aseu (2022) identified that students' moral development was significantly shaped by Christian religious education curriculum.

On the same note, Binti Haji and Ulfah (2023) in Indonesia, noted that, religious leaders serve as role models for adolescents by providing guidance and referencing religious texts to address negative behaviours. Apparently, Mafie and Kitula (2024) in Arusha, also concluded that, religious education consistently fosters moral behaviour, while Shiddiqoh (2024) emphasised the importance of collaboration between parents and schools in instilling religious values to students in public secondary schools.

Significantly, these findings align with both theoretical frameworks as evidenced by the Attachment Theory which highlights how religious teachings can provide emotional security through spiritual connections, while the Social Learning Theory emphasises how students learn non-aggressive behaviours by observing religious role models and following moral guidance. Collectively, these approaches contribute extensively in creating a harmonious school environment in order to lessen aggression behaviours amongst students.

## **Conclusion**

This qualitative study explored the Tanzanian school management strategies on non-punitive methods for managing students' aggression in Arusha City Council's public secondary schools. Through the theoretical lenses of Social Learning Theory and Attachment Theory, the research identified five alternative strategies employed by school management teams to address aggressive behaviour without resorting to corporal punishment. The study revealed that, school management teams in Arusha were employing multiple interconnected strategies that were aligning with both theoretical frameworks specifically, thus creating conducive school environments where students felt secure and supported, consequently fostering both positive modelling opportunities in relation to Social Learning Theory and secure attachment relationships in relation to Attachment Theory.

Besides, another non-punitive disciplinary approach that was being employed was implementing mentoring and academic advisory systems that would provide individualised support coupled with using both of the behavioural models for students to emulate, which was consistent with the attachment figures who could respond to students' emotional needs. Moreover, other methods being employed included changing teachers' mind-sets regarding discipline, shifting from corporal punishment to alternative approaches that model non-violent conflict resolution and maintain secure teacher-student relationships. Further, matters related to student behaviour were being tabled during parent-teacher meetings to create consistent behavioural expectations across contexts and extend attachment networks between home and school in connection with enhancing religious teachings that provide both ethical frameworks and moral models alongside spiritual attachment connections that offer emotional security and guidance. While the current study was limited to public secondary schools, further research is recommended

to explore the same problem in public primary schools across the country.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should consistently advocate for training programmes targeting teachers, parents, students and other stakeholders, hence highlighting the harmful effects and inappropriate use of corporal punishment. Likewise, parents should be encouraged to instil strong moral values in their children to foster better future generations. Such initiatives will enhance teachers' confidence in adopting humanistic disciplinary approaches while raising parental awareness on guiding children in ways that discourage aggressive behaviour.

### **Theoretical Implications**

These findings strongly align with both theoretical frameworks. The Social Learning Theory, on its part illuminates how each strategy creates opportunities for students to observe and internalise positive behaviours through modelling, reinforcement and observational learning whilst, the Attachment Theory explains how these approaches establish secure emotional bonds that foster self-regulation and pro-social behaviour but also at the same time, reducing aggressive tendencies. The study demonstrates that, effective aggression management, requires addressing both behavioural modelling and emotional security needs. When school management teams integrate these dual strategies, they absolutely create comprehensive support systems that help students develop both the social competencies and emotional regulation skills necessary to reduce aggressive behaviour.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

This qualitative study presents several limitations worth noting. The small sample size and the focus on specifically public secondary schools in Arusha restrict the generalisability of the findings to all Tanzanian secondary schools. Furthermore, the reliance on interviews, FGDs and documentary analysis imply that, there was no direct observation on how these alternative strategies were being implemented in schools. In that regard, future research should aim at overcoming these limitations by carrying out larger-scale studies across diverse geographical and socio-economic contexts in Tanzania in order to assess the transferability of the alternative disciplinary approaches in addressing aggressive behaviour in schools. On similar note, incorporating observational methodologies would help to document the practical implementation of mentoring programmes, parent-teacher platforms and religious education initiatives. Moreover, longitudinal designs could also be employed to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of these strategies in reducing aggressive behaviour in public secondary schools and in other with similar context. Lastly, examining how these approaches can be adapted for different age groups, cultural contexts and types of aggressive behaviour, would enhance the applicability of the findings.

### **Practical Implications**

This study gives valuable practical insights for educational stakeholders in Tanzania and countries with similar contexts. Correspondingly, school management can implement these five strategies as a comprehensive framework for managing students'

aggression without relying on corporal punishment. Relatedly, teacher education programmes can incorporate these approaches into professional development curricula, to help educators develop alternative disciplinary strategies which align with both the Social Learning Theory and Attachment Theory principles.

### Contribution to Knowledge

The novelty of this research lies on its documentation with regard to alternative aggression management strategies within the Tanzanian public secondary school's context, where few previous studies have examined non-punitive approaches. By highlighting the authentic and existing experiences of school management teams and successfully implementing these strategies, this study contributes practical knowledge that informs educational policy makers in Tanzania and potentially other similar educational contexts to advocate for the non-punitive approach.

Consistently, this study demonstrates that, through a thoughtful combination of creating supportive environments, establishing mentorship programmes, changing disciplinary mind-sets, engaging parents and incorporating ethical teachings, school management teams can effectively address students' aggression while fostering positive social and emotional development that benefits the entire school community.\*\*\*

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