

Students' Behavioral Problems and Teachers' Discipline Strategies in Class

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Received: 2 April 2022

Revised: 16 May 2022

Accepted: 28 June 2022

Available Online: 29 June 2022

Volume I (2022), Issue 2, ISSN: 2945-3577

Abstract

Aim: The research was concerned with finding students' most common behavioral problems inside the classroom, the greatest barrier that hinder discipline implementation in class, and identifying teachers' commonly used classroom discipline strategies with an end of developing material in addressing behavioral problems in the classrooms.

Methodology: The study is descriptive research utilizing quantitative approaches. Survey questionnaires were given to 128 randomly selected grade 7 to grade 10 students at Canda National High School for the school year 2019-2020. Weighted mean was used to analyze and interpret data.

Results: The results revealed that the most common behavioral problems inside the classroom are not paying attention to teachers and being the source of distraction (standing, shouting, changing seats); being late, cutting classes, and absenteeism; and verbal bullying (throwing jokes, giving nicknames, insults, etc.). Furthermore, the influence of media, technology, and networking sites, the influence of peers and classmates to misbehave in class, and parents' tolerating their children's wrongdoings ranked as the greatest barriers that hinder discipline implementation in class. When it comes to teachers' classroom discipline strategies, all used discussion, many used involvement, reward, and recognition, while few used hinting, aggression, and punishment.

Conclusion: Apart from other discipline strategies, punishment and aggression have the most negative effects on children. Therefore, the education sector continued banning corporal punishments in the classroom and began using positive discipline strategies such as hinting, involvement, discussion, and giving rewards.

Keywords: *behavioral problems, discipline strategies, teacher's strategies*

INTRODUCTION

Classroom discipline plays a great factor in today's educational system. Teachers, administrators, students, parents, school board members, and citizens usually agree that too much energy and time is devoted to classroom management techniques and discipline interventions (Romi, Lewis, Roache & Riley, 2011; Jeloudar, 2011; Tangliben, 2014).

Lopes and Oliveira (2017) agree that classroom management is a complex challenge that affects teachers, administrators, students, and parents. Thus, discipline programs should fit into each, and school discipline practices that could communicate new answers to the age-old question of why students misbehave at school.

Teachers struggle with classroom disturbance (Simón & Alonso-Tapia, 2016). Along this, the need for this also study emerged because of the reform attempts and discipline intervention program in Canda National High School, the workplace of the researchers. These students' behaviors have placed students, parents, teachers, administrators, and staff in constant fear.

Further, the increase in the number of students sent to the guidance office, dropouts, repetitive absenteeism, and cutting classes among

students in her work is truly noticeable. These problems arising from the ineffective classroom worried the researchers much which led them to investigate this concern. Hoping to help minimize the problems, a proposed Education Information Material in promoting positive discipline in class would be developed based on the findings of the study.

The researchers further aimed to promote and develop awareness on using positive discipline as a non-violent approach to help and guide children to develop positive behavior while respecting their rights to healthy development, protection from violence, and participative learning.

Objectives

The study sought to find students' most common behavioral problems inside the classroom, the greatest barrier that hinder discipline implementation in class and identifies teachers' commonly used classroom discipline strategies.

Specifically, they answered the following research objectives:

1. Identify the most common behavioral problems encountered by teachers inside the classroom.
2. Identify the greatest barrier that hinders discipline implementation in class.

- Identify the teachers' commonly used classroom discipline strategies.

METHODS

Research Design

The study was descriptive research utilizing quantitative approaches to determine the common behavioral problems, barriers in discipline implementation, and teachers' commonly used discipline strategies under study. Calderon and Gonzales (2016) defined descriptive research as the purposive process of gathering, analyzing, classifying, and tabulating data about prevailing conditions, practices, beliefs, processes, trends, and cause-effect relationships and then making adequate and accurate interpretation of such data with or without the aid of statistical methods.

Procedure

The items from the classroom behavioral problems and barriers in discipline implementation were predetermined from the responses to the Focus Group Discussion conducted with selected classroom officers while the items from the classroom discipline questionnaire were lifted from Romi, Lewis, Roache and Riley (2011), Tangliben's (2014), and Oestar's (2016) domains namely aggression, discussion, hinting, involvement, punishment, reward, and recognition. The instruments were content validated by three designated guidance teachers from DepEd Quezon. The validators' suggestions were incorporated into the final form of the instruments.

The study was administered to randomly selected 128 students at Canda National High School ranging from grade 7 to grade 10 for the school year 2019-2020.

Ethical Consideration

With the permission and endorsement from the principal and assistance from class advisers, a survey questionnaire was distributed to the randomly selected samples. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Ensuing research ethics and rules had also been aptly observed by the researchers to circumvent future problems relative to plagiarism, intellectual dishonesty, and the like.

Treatment of Data

For the common disciplinary behaviors and barriers to imposing discipline, selected students for each section ranked their responses from 1 to 10 (greatest to least). For their eight subject teachers' discipline strategies, respondents must tick on the indicators as follows: a scale of 4 means 8 (all teachers), 3 means 5-7 teachers (many), 2 means 1-3 teachers (few), and 1 means 0 (no teacher) has/have been implementing such classroom discipline strategies.

The survey questionnaire will be measured

using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 3.25-4.00 (Always Demonstrates), 2.50-3.24 (Often Demonstrates), 1.75-2.49 (Seldom Demonstrates), and 1.00-1.74 Never Demonstrates. Data were collected, tabulated, and computed using MS Excel format. Weighted mean and rank order of data is employed in the data analysis of the study.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

This part of the study presents the summary of the analysis and interpretation of the gathered data from the questionnaire answered by the respondents per grade level.

Table 1
Classroom Discipline Issues in Class

Statements	G7	G8	G9	G10	Rank
late, cutting classes, truancy, and absenteeism	4	3	3	1	2.5
vandalism and damaging of classroom properties	6	9	6	5	6
physical bullying (hitting, punching, pushing, etc.)	5	4	1	7	5
verbal bullying (throwing jokes, giving nicknames, insults, etc.)	1	2	2	4	1
attending classes after smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, gambling, and playing computer games	9	7	9	9	8
Stealing, hiding, and/or destroying others' personal belongings	10	8	7	10	9
not paying attention to teachers, source of distraction (avoidance of work, standing, shouting, changing seats)	3	1	5	2	2.5
Lying, disrespect, assault to teachers and/or higher authorities	8	10	10	8	10
not wearing proper uniform including earrings for boys, improper haircut/hairstyle, etc.	7	6	8	6	7
cheating/copying someone's assignments, seat works, projects, quizzes, etc.	2	5	4	3	4

Legend: 1 (most common) to 10 (least common) in

behavioral problems observed in class.

Data revealed that verbal bullying is the most common type of violence in schools. It includes throwing jokes, giving nicknames, insults, etc. ranked as the most common behavioral problem in class. Lying, disrespect, and assault on teachers and/or higher authorities ranked as the least form of classroom discipline issues in class.

This was supported by Sun and Shek (2012) when they stated that inattentiveness was one of the most common and the most disruptive to teaching and learning.

Table 2
Barriers to Classroom Discipline Imposition

Statements	G7	G8	G9	G10	Rank
Inadequate time to integrate values education in every subject.	9	8	10	3	8.5
Students lack knowledge of the existing policies and regulations in school.	7	5	9	9	8.5
Students lack role models to imitate in class.	6	4	7	8	6
Students lack fear of teachers and higher authorities.	4	6	4	6	4
Influence of peers and classmates to misbehave in class.	1	3	3	5	3
Parents lack the initiative to assist teachers in monitoring and disciplining students.	5	7	5	7	5
Influence of media, technology, and networking sites.	2	2	2	2	2
Teachers tolerate students' wrongdoings inside the classroom.	1 0	1 0	8	10	10
Students' awareness of the existing Child Protection Policy.	3	1	1	1	1
Parents tolerate their child's wrongdoings.	8	9	6	4	7

Legend: 1 (greatest barrier) to 10 (least barrier) in discipline implementation.

The table shows the summary of rank responses of students from grade 7 to grade 10 in terms of barriers to the implementation of discipline in the classroom.

Students' awareness of the Existing Child Protection Policy ranked as the greatest barrier; they

have a perception that students nowadays are untouchables and protected by law. This even gave them the courage to misbehave or even challenge a teacher because they know that they can complain if teachers discipline them.

Parents play an important role in leading the operative growth and development of their children (Kudari, 2016). Thus, forming a social circle proves to be beneficial to individuals in several ways, such as, solving academic problems, getting involved in leisure activities, sharing one's joys and sorrows, and so forth. When parents listen to their grievances and help them solve their problems, this leads to encouragement of positivity and solutions to problems (Ogunsola, Osuolale, & Ojo, 2014).

Table 3
Aggression

Statements	G 7	G 8	G 9	G 10
1. My teachers give loud reprimands (scolds) when we are noisy.	2.83	1.97	2.82	2.40
2. My teachers throw objects in front of the class to scare us.	1.15	1.00	1.00	1.40
3. My teachers give me an angry stare when he/she looks at us.	1.93	1.49	1.64	2.12
4. My teachers shout our names when we misbehaved in class.	2.60	1.91	2.54	2.28
5. My teachers stamp their hands loudly on the table to get attention.	1.85	1.71	2.00	2.36
Average Weighted Mean	2.07	1.62	2.00	2.11

Legend:
3.25-4.00 Always Demonstrates 2.50-3.24 Often Demonstrates
1.75-2.49 Seldom Demonstrates 1.00-1.74 Never Demonstrates

The table shows that giving a loud reprimand is the most common discipline strategy showing aggression while throwing objects in from of class is the least. Generally, it has an average weighted mean of 2.11 (Seldom Demonstrates).

Paton (2010) in Tangliben (2014) stated that there are negative results of aggression. Therefore, these forms of discipline strategies should be avoided. Moreover, Mcneilege (2014) in the same study as Tangliben (2014) found out that aggressive parenting and teaching is turning children into schoolyard bullies. A parenting researcher, Coulson (2019) warned at a national bullying conference that authoritarian behavior - yelling, threatening, withdrawing privileges, and hitting - is breeding a culture of systematic bullying that will be passed on to the future generations.

Further, the findings of Oestar (2016) revealed that aggression in a teacher's discipline strategy is avoided since it harms the learner's

personality development and rapport with teachers and parents.

Table 4
Discussion

Statement	G 7	G 8	G 9	G 10
1. My teachers discuss rules on the first day of class.	3.83	3.77	4.00	3.76
2. My teachers talk to students personally about their mistakes.	3.00	3.60	3.71	3.12
3. My teachers tell us the expected behavior that they want us to do in their class.	3.53	3.43	3.71	3.56
4. My teachers tell us to imitate students who behave well in class.	3.48	2.37	3.64	2.96
5. My teachers explain to students the consequences of wrong actions.	3.53	3.71	3.71	3.52
Average Weighted Mean	3.47	3.38	3.76	3.38

Legend:
3.25-4.00 Always Demonstrates 2.50-3.24 Often Demonstrates
1.75-2.49 Seldom Demonstrates 1.00-1.74 Never Demonstrates

The table shows that the most common form of discussion technique as a discipline strategy is the discussion of rules on the first day of class while the least common is telling students to imitate students who behaved well in class. Generally, this domain has an average weighted mean of 3.38 (Always Demonstrates).

The following findings have been supported by Glenn (2014) as mentioned by Tangliben (2014) when she stated that discussion is the discipline strategy commonly used by many teachers since it involved discussion of rules on the first day of class, talking to students personally about their mistakes, telling expected behavior that they want students to do in class, telling to imitate students who behave well in class and explaining students the consequences of wrong actions.

Hence, work, academics, health, and family difficulties are all addressed through discussion specifically, counseling (Sunita and Annu, 2013).

Further, school counseling and guidance services are needed to help students solve difficulties, focus on their studies, and become responsible community members (Maganga, 2016).

Table 5
Hinting

Statement	G 7	G 8	G 9	G 10
1. My teachers go near the misbehaving	2.58	1.77	2.43	1.96

student.				
2. My teachers give us eye contact with students who are making noise.	2.90	2.66	3.14	2.92
3. My teachers ask misbehaved students to seat in front of class.	2.03	2.31	3.32	2.08
4. My teachers stop talking when we are not listening to them.	3.15	3.09	3.11	3.12
4. My teachers go out of class when they cannot control our behavior.	1.70	1.97	1.89	1.44
Average Weighted Mean	2.47	2.36	2.78	2.30

Legend:
3.25-4.00 Always Demonstrates 2.50-3.24 Often Demonstrates
1.75-2.49 Seldom Demonstrates 1.00-1.74 Never Demonstrates

The table shows that the most common form of hinting as a discipline strategy is to stop talking when students are not listening while the least common is teachers going near misbehaving students. The responses garnered an average weighted mean of 2.30 (Seldom Demonstrates).

According to Tangliben (2014), these hinting strategies are effective because giving hints such as using low profile intervention which involves quietness, calmness, and inconspicuousness like using the students' names in parts of the lesson can create direct hints to the misbehaving students and can't cause too much disruption of class.

Moreover, sending positive "I" messages according to Gordon (2019), creator of Teacher Effectiveness Training, is a powerful way of humanizing the classroom and ensuring positive discipline. He stressed the importance of eye contact, facial expressions, postures and gestures, and proximity as a preference for verbal confrontation and using low profile intervention which involves quietness, calmness, and inconspicuousness like using the students' names as part of the presentation can create direct hints to the misbehaving kid and can't cause too much disruption of class.

Table 6
Involvement

Statement	G 7	G 8	G 9	G 10
1. My teachers let students conduct their meetings on making class rules.	3.08	3.26	3.36	2.64
2. My teachers assign someone to manage the class when they are away.	3.20	3.31	3.25	3.04

3. My teachers ask a student to list the names of students who are noisy in class.	2.33	2.80	1.79	1.52
4. My teachers invite parents in school to know their children's behavior in class.	2.55	3.14	3.21	3.08
5. My teachers let parents decide rules on disciplining students.	3.40	2.63	2.79	2.56
Average Weighted Mean	2.72	3.03	2.88	2.57

Legend:
 3.25-4.00 Always Demonstrates 2.50-3.24 Often Demonstrates
 1.75-2.49 Seldom Demonstrates 1.00-1.74 Never Demonstrates

The table shows that the most common involvement strategy in disciplining students is inviting parents in school to know about their children's behavior in class. The least was asking students to list names of those noisy in class. Generally, the responses have an average weighted mean of 2.57 (Often Demonstrates).

In the same way, Tangliben (2014) in her study also found out that teachers often demonstrate involvement in discipline strategies in the classroom. According to Davis (2014) in Tangliben (2014), this happens because teachers who involve their children in the rule-making process contend that students are more likely to follow them. This implies that the more a learner feels that they have chosen what to do and how to do it and feels in control while working, the more they will be likely to get engaged and get something worthwhile from it.

More so, teachers should involve students in classroom activities and encourage them to learn both individually and independently (Hussain, Ahmad, Asma, Hakim (2017).

Table 7
Punishment

Statement	G 7	G 8	G 9	G 10
1. My teachers spank/ pinch students who are misbehaving.	1.03	1.09	1.25	1.20
2. My teachers make us stay longer in class when we did something wrong.	1.80	1.71	1.82	1.76
3. My teachers make us stand or go to a corner to realize our mistakes.	1.48	1.57	2.14	1.24
4. My teachers give us extra work if we get low scores in the class.	3.03	2.97	3.07	2.48

5. My teachers send students out of the classroom when we don't bring our assignments or projects.	1.75	2.14	2.00	1.96
Average Weighted Mean	1.82	1.90	2.06	1.73

Legend:
 3.25-4.00 Always Demonstrates 2.50-3.24 Often Demonstrates
 1.75-2.49 Seldom Demonstrates 1.00-1.74 Never Demonstrates

The table shows that the most common punishment as a discipline strategy is to give extra work if having low scores in class while spanking or pinching students who are misbehaving was the least common. Generally, the response garnered an average weighted mean of 1.73 (Never Demonstrates).

This also shows that physical punishments were discouraged. They may sometimes give extra work to students who got low scores and confiscate personal things from students when they are not paying attention, but they refrain from corporal and physical punishments such as spanking, pinching, or tapping misbehaving students, making them stand or go in a corner to realize their mistakes and sending students out of the classroom when they do not bring their assignments and projects. DepEd Order No. 40 s. 2012 states that all kinds of corporal punishments such as hitting, slapping, tying the child, etc. are not allowed in school.

Tangliben (2014) associated the role of punishment, with the application of a series of aggressive punishments. Further, Society for Adolescent Medicine (2014) as mentioned by Tangliben (2014) states that many children who have been subjected to hitting, paddling, or other harsh disciplinary practices have reported subsequent problems with depression, fear, and anger. They have found that victims of corporal punishment often develop deteriorating peer relationships, difficulty with concentration, lowered school achievement, antisocial behavior, intense dislike of authority, somatic complaints, a tendency for school avoidance and school drop-out, and other evidence of negative high-risk adolescent behavior.

Table 8
Reward and Recognition

Statement	G 7	G 8	G 9	G 10
1. My teachers praise students who performed well in class.	3.43	3.11	3.32	3.40
2. My teachers report students' good behavior to their parents.	3.18	3.26	3.11	3.40
3. My teachers treat or give gifts and prizes to students who got high scores.	1.95	1.83	2.32	3.12

4. My teachers mention the name of the student who got the highest score.	3.35	3.46	3.25	3.44
5. My teachers give less work to students who behaved well in class.	2.73	2.49	2.43	2.16
Average Weighted Mean	2.93	2.83	2.89	3.10

Legend:

3.25-4.00 Always Demonstrates
1.75-2.49 Seldom Demonstrates

2.50-3.24 Often Demonstrates
1.00-1.74 Never Demonstrates

The table shows that mentioning the name of the student who got the highest score topped the most common reward and recognition discipline strategies of teachers while treating or giving gifts and prizes to students who got high scores got the least response. The average weighted mean for reward and recognition was 3.10 (Often Demonstrates).

Jeloudar (2011) and Jeloudar, Yunus, Roslan, and Nor (2012) cited smiles, words of praise, and other signs of affection for special activities, extra privileges, and material items as examples of rewards and recognition. The result suggests that teachers always praise or give positive remarks to students who performed well in class. They also report students' good behavior to their parents and mention the name of students who got the highest score. On the other hand, teachers often treat or give gifts to students who got high scores while they seldom give less work to students who behaved well in class.

Praising students, recognizing their good behaviors, and giving them rewards when they obey rules are always demonstrated because these strategies are effective. Praising and recognizing their good behaviors inspire them to repeat the behavior often. Meanwhile, giving awards is a bit common strategy because it encourages extrinsic motivation, as effective educators; we should imply intrinsic motivation more to make them good citizens in the future.

Tangliben (2014) said that recognition of good behavior and discussions with misbehaving students on their actions are productive because students experiencing this discipline strategy are more responsible, less distracted, and more positive towards their teachers and schoolwork.

Table 9
Discipline Strategies

Discipline Strategies	G7	G 8	G 9	G 10	WA M	VD
Aggression	2.07	1.62	2.00	2.11	1.95	Few
Discussion	3.47	3.38	3.76	3.38	3.50	All
Hinting	2.47	2.36	2.78	2.30	2.48	Few

Involvement	2.72	3.03	2.88	2.57	2.80	Many
Punishment	1.14	1.77	1.61	2.89	1.96	Few
Reward/ Recognition	3.32	3.23	2.31	3.37	2.45	Few

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 All (8); 2.50-3.24 Many (4-7);
1.75-2.49 Few (1-3); 1.00-1.74 None (0)

The table revealed that few teachers used aggression as a discipline strategy, all used discussion, few used hinting, many used involvements, few used punishments, and many used rewards and/or recognition.

Conclusion

Based on the above-mentioned findings, it can be further concluded that teachers usually use involvement, hinting, discussion, and recognition in disciplining students as evidenced by the obtained composite mean.

The collective results of the assessment of the classroom discipline of the respondents are supported by the concepts propounded by the Society for Adolescent Medicine (2014) as mentioned in Tangliben (2014). This stated that apart from other discipline strategies, punishment and aggression have the most negative effects on children. Therefore, the education sector continued banning corporal punishments in the classroom and began using positive discipline strategies such as hinting, involvement, discussion, and giving rewards.

Moreover, Tangliben (2014) mentioned that hinting, discussion, recognition, and involvement result in fewer students' behavior and more responsibility rather than using aggression and punishment which promote more misbehavior and less responsibility for students.

Given the findings of the study, researchers may conduct a more in-depth study on classroom behaviors, discipline strategies, and barriers to discipline implementation using qualitative approaches and/or mixed methodologies. Further studies should be done by finding the relationship between classroom discipline strategies and other variables using appropriate statistical treatment.

Teachers should strictly implement guidelines on positive discipline when disciplining students' misbehavior. More so, the administration should pay attention to the findings of the study as a basis for more strengthened school policies and programs.

Acknowledgment

The author would like to express her heartfelt gratitude to the writers of the many papers/works cited in this review article; without their outstanding contributions, this study would not exist. Heartfelt gratitude is also offered to the writers' families for their unwavering love and support. This document is

sincerely dedicated to God the Almighty's Greater

Glory.

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