

Discipline or Classroom Management

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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this literature review are twofold. Firstly, it explains discipline and causes of students' misbehavior and classroom management. In this sense, this review focuses on discipline in the conflict of the educational platform elements; and related the philosophic literature. Secondly, this review draws a conclusion by summarizing the opinions and influencing of discipline upon school environment and students' learning. In this regard, this study discusses two models for dealing with classroom discipline: *psychoanalytic method* and *behavior modification*. Although two models apply different methods for dealing with classroom discipline, this study suggests that, to create a successful classroom management, educators should use both of them instead of applying only the one.

Keywords: *discipline, classroom management, psychoanalytic method, behavior modification, misbehavior*

INTRODUCTION

Classroom management or lack of discipline is one of the most difficult and complex problem of schools today. This problem continues to be a concern of inexperienced teachers as well as experienced teachers and school administrators. To solve this problem, lots of things have been written or said by educators, parents, philosophers or other people who interested in.

Although student behavior problems have for years been a major concern of teachers, administrators and parents, many researches indicate that this kind of problems are getting more and more instead of decreasing in many schools around the world. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to focus on the following questions: Why do some students set fourth antisocial behaviors while others not? What are the causes? How can teachers solve students' misbehaving problems or what are the effective methods to deal with these kinds of problems? When dealing with the problems what is the role of punishment? Is punishment really necessary in the education? If it is necessary, what kind of punishment should be used? How does punishment affect a child's emotional and cognitive development? In other words, if discipline is necessary to correct the behavior of children, what

type of discipline should be used? Is the discipline consistent with good teaching practices? Does the discipline offer opportunity for student understanding and self-monitoring of behavior? Is the discipline consistent with school and district policy?

When reviewing the literature, different teaching experiences emerge clearly. In a sense, this study gives readers a chance to rethink different teaching experiences and make a self-criticism. Therefore, some reactions might be as follows: When the students did something wrong, what was the reaction. And "What should the teachers have done? In reality, this review gives readers different point of view about how can the teacher educate their students as well as understanding their mistakes as a teacher.

In the first part of this study, after explaining the discipline, this study briefly reviews the research literature on discipline and then regarding the posed questions the study explains the causes of students' misbehavior and classroom management. In the second part, this study addresses general beliefs about discipline in the conflict of the educational platform elements; and related the philosophic literature. In the last part of the study, the study will draw a conclusion by summarizing the opinions and influencing of discipline upon school environment and students' learning.

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What is the discipline?

The word “discipline” has been used with so many different meanings. Webster’s Dictionary gives the following definitions. (1) The development of mental faculties (i.e., mental discipline) by instruction and exercise; (2) training to act in accordance with established rules; (3) indoctrination to rule; and (4) training through suffering (1953).

Is "discipline" concerned with preventing misconduct or with punishing it? The word, according to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, refers to both prevention and remediation. It can be "training that is expected to produce a specified character or pattern of behavior" or "controlled behavior resulting from such training"; but it can also be "punishment intended to correct or train."

Jones (1979) says that "discipline, most simply stated, is the business of enforcing simple classroom rules that facilitate learning and minimize disruption" (p. 26). Variations on this definition are offered by Duke (1989), Strother (1985).

Although some educators view disciplinary activities as irritating intrusions into school life, which is not necessary, on my point of view, discipline means teaching the child the certain rules of life. The expectation from the child is to adapt and internalise these rules for himself.

Two Models of Discipline

In American education two conflicting sets of attitudes toward discipline, which have influenced thinking on this problem to this day began to emerge in the early Nineteenth Century. One point of view maintained that the teacher’s primary disciplinary task was to keep order, silence, and decorum in the classroom. Advocates of this position affirmed “It is not a question of influencing the thinking of the pupil nor emotional reactions of the pupil but solely of securing the desired behavior” (Rich, 1925, p.296). The management of discipline was seen as a

prerequisite to the proper educational growth of students. At the present time educators advocating this view have urged recourse to the “old fashioned” discipline of authority with prompt obedience in response to commands (Sunshine, 1973, p.10).

The opposing point of view called for teachers to place primary importance on developing a sense of personal worth a sense of inner-control for the children in the classroom. Advocates of this position affirmed that “...character effects are most important not whether noise continues or stops” (Kilpatrick, 1925, p.317). Today, educators taking this same view have insisted that proper guidance of unrestrained human action constitutes the essence of the educative process. Over the years, many variables- social, religious, economic- have contributed to the relative popularity of one view of discipline over the other (Sunshine, 1973, p.10).

In general, there are two models for dealing with classroom discipline. One of them is a Psychoanalytic, emphasizing the importance of teacher attitudes, understanding, empathy and acceptance of problem behavior. The second one is Behavior Modification that focuses on the modification procedures for general classroom discipline problems and individual deviant behavior. This approach places less emphasis on the teachers understanding of the underlying causes of aberrant behavior than on the teacher’s need to control and direct the classroom environment of the misbehaving student.

Proponents of psychoanalytic models of discipline claim that teachers must understand a child’s motivational system (i.e., his inner drives and needs) before they can either guide student learning or change undesirable behavior. According to Dreikurs, Cruikshank & Pepper (1971), teachers must understand that a child’s behavior is purposive. That is, all behavior is goal directed and indicates the ways in which the child has adapted to his environment. Thus, the child misbehaves because he has failed to develop correct ideas concerning how to adapt.

“Psychoanalytic models of discipline are based on analytic models of Man. Such models have been proposed by the analysts Freud, Jung, Adler,

Fromm, Rogers and Sullivan among others. Although these models have commonalities, each places emphasis on somewhat different assumptions and concepts. For example, Freud and Jung regard Man as a complex energy system, which maintains itself by means of transactions with the environment. These transactions make possible the survival and propagation of the species, and the ongoing evolutionary development of Man. Later theorists such as Adler, Horney, Fromm and Sullivan regarded Man as a social creature who could only be explained in terms of social variables” (Sunshine, 1973, p.12).

As for behavior modification, behaviorists believe that with the proper modification procedures, every child can be taught desirable behavior. According to behaviorists, three general steps should be followed in the employment of behavior modification principles. During the first step, the specific behaviors to be modified must be clearly and explicitly identified. Once the specified behaviors have been identified, the procedures to weaken the undesirable behavior (step two), and procedures to strengthen the desirable behavior (step three) must be implemented. Usually deviant behavior is weakened through the processes of extinction and punishment, whereas desirable behavior is strengthened through the processes of positive reinforcement and modelling (Sunshine, 1973, p.23-24).

DISCIPLINE OR PUNISHMENT

According to the analytic view, discipline is not equivalent to forms of punishment such as isolation, removal, denial of privileges, or corporal punishment (Dreikurs, Crunwald & Pepper, 1971). In fact, punishment is viewed as a poor form of discipline since it stresses only what not to do rather than teaching what to do. “According to the Adlerians, discipline should not be imposed by an outside authority but by the individual himself and the by the group of which he is a member. As the child experiences acceptance in his relationships with others, his acceptance of himself gradually increases. Self-approval is probably the most effective form of self-control. When considered in this way, discipline no longer need be seen as a negative force: it becomes instead a source of inner authority that permits freedom of choice” (Sunshine, 1973, p.18-19)

Self-discipline needs to be established by parents early in the child’s training. As the child grows older, there will be an increasing number of situations where adults other than parents will influence self-discipline. In this case, according to Adlerians, another method for developing self-discipline is necessary to provide experiences through which the child can discover the world, express his feelings, and develop his own ideas. Toward this end, the classroom teacher should provide many opportunities for problem solving and cooperative planning.

What are the causes of students’ misbehavior?

Even though many causes can be listed for students’ misbehavior, based on a research of Satchel (1992, p.13-15), four of them are worth to mention:

1. Demographic changes: Changes in familial patterns (single-parent homes and child living in homes in which both parents work) may cause the lack of social skills of children. Economic demands upon families provided the catalyst that obligates wages earners to spend more time at the worksite, rather than at home nurturing their offspring. Parents do not spend adequate time with their children to teach social skills, and therefore, relegated this task to school.
2. Poor interpersonal relations: Students who exhibited antisocial behavior may have been rejected by their peers due to their aggressiveness and use of other forms of antisocial behavior toward the members of their peer group.
3. Lack of cognitive: Children who cannot take the viewpoint of other children or adults find it difficult to manipulate mental activities which involve the ability to take the role of others, as well as to interpret, feel, and accurately meet the needs of others.
4. Lack of skills demonstrated by school staff: The ability of school personal to promote prosocial behavior is linked to their lack of skills in conflict management and resolution due to lack of time which, is

provided for the instruction of personnel in this area.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE

Preventing Classroom Discipline Problems

In 1970 J. S. Kounin wrote and published a famous book titled *Discipline and Group Management in Classrooms*. Results of studies from the kindergarten to university levels were presented, with Kounin focusing particularly on findings from an observational study of 80 elementary classrooms. Undertaken to identify strategies and processes used in effectively and ineffectively managed classrooms, this study produced findings, which have consistently received validation from later researchers.

According to this survey, the effective managers were defined as the teachers who have a minimum of student misbehavior and high levels of time-on-task and ineffective managers having less diversity in dealing their methods. Instead, effective managers were found to be much more skilled at preventing disruptions from occurring in the first place. Kounin went on to identify the specific behaviors these effective managers engaged in to keep students focused on learning and to reduce the likelihood of classroom disruption. These included:

- "Wittiness"--the teacher communicating to the children by his/her behavior that he/she knows what the students are doing and what is going on in the classroom
- Overlapping--attending to different events simultaneously, without being totally diverted by a disruption or other activity
- Smoothness and momentum in lessons--conducting smooth and brisk pacing and providing continuous activity signals or cues (such as standing near inattentive students or directing questions to potentially disruptive students)
- Group alerting--attempting to involve no reciting children in recitation tasks and keeping all students "alerted" to the task at hand
- Stimulating seatwork--providing students seatwork activities that have variety and offer challenge.

Research conducted during the past twenty years has underscored Kounin's findings and elaborated them into a more detailed list of behaviors comprising effective classroom management. The following practices identified in the work of Bowman (1983); Brophy (1983, 1986); Docking (1982); Doyle (1989); Luke (1989); and Strother (1985):

- Holding and communicating high expectations for student learning and behavior. Through the personal warmth and encouragement, they express to students and the classroom requirements they establish, effective manager/teachers make sure that students know they are expected to learn well and behave appropriately.
- Establishing and clearly teaching classroom rules and procedures. Effective managers teach behavioral rules and classroom routines in much the same way as they teach instructional content, and they review these frequently at the beginning of the school year and periodically thereafter. Classroom rules are posted in elementary classrooms.
- Specifying consequences and their relation to student behavior. Effective managers are careful to explain the connection between students' misbehavior and teacher-imposed sanctions. This connection, too, is taught and reviewed as needed.
- Enforcing classroom rules promptly, consistently, and equitably. Effective managers respond quickly to misbehavior, respond in the same way at different times, and impose consistent sanctions regardless of the gender, race, or other personal characteristics of misbehaving students.
- Sharing with students the responsibility for classroom management. Effective managers work to inculcate in students a sense of belonging and self-discipline, rather than viewing discipline as something imposed from the outside.
- Maintaining a brisk pace for instruction and making smooth transitions between activities. Effective managers keep things moving in their classrooms, which increases learning as well as reducing the likelihood of misbehavior.

- Monitoring classroom activities and providing feedback and reinforcement. Effective managers observe and comment on student behavior, and they reinforce appropriate behavior through the provision of verbal, symbolic, and tangible rewards.

Additionally, this list of practices associated with well-disciplined classrooms, researchers have identified other approaches, which are effective in establishing and maintaining positive, orderly classroom environments. For example, engaging in misbehavior is sometimes a response to academic failure, and some researchers (e.g., Gettinger 1988; and Lasley and Wayson 1982) have noted improvements in classroom order when marginal students are provided opportunities to experience academic and social success.

Anderson and Prawat (1983) and others have noted that many students simply do not perceive a connection between their level of effort and the academic or behavioral outcomes they experience. These students have what psychologists call an "external locus of control," and do not believe in their own ability to influence events. Nor, oftentimes, do they have the skills to identify inappropriate behavior and move from inappropriate to appropriate behavior. Researchers have observed behavioral improvements in settings where students are taught to attribute their success or failure to their personal effort, and in which they (1) learn to check their own behavior and judge its appropriateness; (2) talk themselves through a task, using detailed, step-by-step instructions; and (3) learn and apply problem-solving steps when confronting classroom issues.

Brophy (1983) has also noted that the use of cooperative learning structures can increase student task engagement, acquaint students with the benefits of working together, and ease the tensions that sometimes arise among racial/ethnic groups--all of which are related to reductions in the incidence of misbehavior.

The researches have also showed that it is beneficial for teachers to use humor to hold student interest and reduce classroom tensions and to remove distracting materials, such as athletic equipment or art materials that encourage inattention or disruption.

Remediating Classroom Discipline Problems

These same researchers also found that effective managers intervened more quickly when disruptions occurred than did ineffective managers, and their interventions got results more quickly.

What kinds of interventions for dealing with classroom misconduct are supported by research? Based on the researches some effective approaches are listed below:

- Behavior modification approaches. Many researchers (Brophy 1983, 1986; Cobb and Richards 1983; Crouch, Gresham, and Wright 1985; Docking 1982;) have identified reinforcement (verbal, symbolic, or tangible) as effective in improving the classroom conduct of misbehaving students. Researchers have found that the provision of reinforcement does not undermine students' intrinsic motivation, provided the reinforcement is contingent on performance and given sparingly.

Another behavior modification technique supported by research is teaching self-control skills (modelling plus teaching self-instruction, self-monitoring, and self-reinforcement) to improve the conduct of misbehaving students. Brophy (1986) writes: "Contemporary behavior modification approaches involve students more actively in planning and shaping their own behavior through participation in the negotiation of contracts with their teachers and through exposure to training designed to help them to monitor and evaluate their behavior more actively, to learn techniques of self-control and problem solving, and to set goals and reinforce themselves for meeting these goals." (p. 191)

- Group contingencies. The use of structures in which rewards and punishments are meted out to groups based on the behavior of individuals within those groups have been found effective in remediating misbehavior (Brophy 1983, 1986; Luke 1989).
- Prosocial skills training. Training in selfawareness, values clarification, cooperation, and the development of

helping skills has been successfully used to improve the behavior of misbehaving students.

- Peer tutoring. Researchers have found that peer-tutoring structures lower the incidence of misbehavior in classrooms. Depending on the situation, students with behavior problems may serve as either tutors or tutees.

DISCIPLINE IN EDUCATIONAL PLATFORMS

In this part, this study addresses beliefs about discipline in the concept of the educational platform elements such as the aim of education, the image of the learner, the image of the teacher and the preferred kind of teacher-student relationship regarding the philosophic education.

What have the philosophers thought or suggested for discipline or punishment when educators or parents educate their children? According to Locke education is an important influence on people's behaviors; education, more than anything else, makes the great difference to be found in the manners and abilities of men. In *some Thoughts Concerning Education*, Locke recommended practical learning to prepare people to manage their social, economic and social affairs efficiently. This book is primarily about moral education and its role in creating a responsible adult and the importance of virtue as a transmitter of culture. However, Locke's detailed and comprehensive guide ranges over such practical topics as the effectiveness of physical punishment, and gives clues for how best to teach foreign languages to a child. According to him, children come into the world as blank slates, wax to be moulded. So, education must foster growth of a well-rounded personality and encourage initiative, independent, judgement, observation, and critical use of reason. Locke says: "Fear and awe ought to give you (parents or educators) the first power over their (children) minds, and love and friendship in riper years to hold it." (Cahn, 1997, p.147). However, one might argue that love is the most important factor when children are educated. On the other hand, beating and all other sorts of slavish and corporal punishments do not fit the discipline. Instead of corporal punishment, which is effect badly

children' cognitive development, educators should use educative punishment methods. Instead of putting knowledge into the mind suggested by Locke, the role of the educator should motivate students to become critical thinkers as suggested by Freire (Cahn, 1997).

Putting knowledge into the mind (called banking education by Freire) is one of the most important problems caused students' misbehavior in education. In this regard, teachers do not interest students' problem. It is important to treat students for those teachers as objects of assistance. As Freire pointed out, in this educational system, the teacher teaches and the students are taught; the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined; and the teachers talks and the students listen-meekly. In opposition to banking education, Freire endorses a problem-posing education designed to motivate students to become critical thinkers. This education bases on creativity and stimulates true reflection and action upon reality (Freire, 1997). In addition, problem-posing education regards dialogue between the teacher and the student. This is the most important way to understand and to solve students' misbehavior.

As for Rousseau, he rebelled against the traditional idea that human nature was inherently evil and man was born in original sin; rather, he held that a child is born with inherent tendencies that are good but that social institutions make the child evil. Therefore, school, as a social institution, has got very important role. Since Rousseau believed that the child is innately good and that the aim of education should be his natural development, there was little for the teacher to do except stand aside and watch (Cahn, 1997, p.162-175). Maybe there are still some people believe that children are born evil, but if one believes that they are born neither good nor evil, like Rousseau, it might a good idea to look at restructuring our social environment, because good or evil children are the outcomes of their environment.

Dewey believed that discipline is an important part of any purposeful engagement with the world. When we act in a disciplined way, we act consistently with the attainment of what he calls our "ends-in-view" — the goals we have chosen as our own. When we act in ways that are not

disciplined, we act without regard to our ends-in-view, in ways that may actually frustrate our own interests. Dewey does not think of discipline as a matter of control or a precondition of teaching, but as an integral part of education. Further, he is not interested in education as a transfer of information so much as an apprenticeship for a certain sort of social life. In this respect, discipline is required for social membership. In addition, as part of the ability to pursue worthwhile goals, discipline contributes to the creation of a good life. It is not the way teachers treat students; it is a certain way children learn to relate to the world. Dewey sees discipline as inextricably linked to a child's interest (Cahn, 1997, p.301-309)

Regarding teachers-student relationship, Nodding sees the teacher as the "one-caring" and the student as the "cared for". She argues that the relation between them should be the focus of how we think about right and wrong. The teacher may indeed coerce the student into choosing against himself. He may be led to diminish his ethical ideal in the pursuit of achievement goals. Therefore, the teacher's power is awesome. Dealing with the discipline problems, teacher should apply this power as presenting the "effective world" to the students. For Nodding, dialogue is the most fundamental component of the model of care. "Besides engaging the student in dialogue, the teacher also provides a model. To support her students as ones-caring, she must show them herself one-caring" (Cahn, 1997, p.473).

There is no unique approach to educate children, because everyone has different character and it may require different attention. Therefore, when educating children, teachers should apply different methods for different situations. Teachers should be partners with children in the learning enterprise rather than bosses. Learning should be structured so that children enjoy what they are doing while learning. Students should be taught when they are intellectually and emotionally ready to learn rather than in accordance with their chronological age. Curriculum should be designed to meet the needs of students throughout their stages of intellectually, social, physical and emotional development. Regarding to offset students' behavior problems and to foster discipline, teachers should provide learning activities, which allow the child to think, correct mistakes, and develop understanding;

provide a positive, non-threatening teaching environment; and provide opportunities for children to help in the planning of school activities. On the other hand, when teachers try to correct students' misbehaviors, they always should consider the importance of the environment.

To educate the young in properly self-discipline should not be unduly complicated. Children are quick to imitate the adult behavior they see around them and they have no stronger urge than to be "grown up,". The inculcation of proper values and proper self-discipline requires that we act as we wish our children to act. If we would discipline our children, we begin by disciplining ourselves.

CONCLUSION

In this study, after explaining discipline, two models for dealing with classroom discipline were discussed. One of them emphasizes the importance of teacher attitudes, understanding empathy and acceptance of problem behavior called psychoanalytic method and the other one, behavior modification, focuses on the modification procedures for general classroom discipline problems and individual deviant behavior. Although two models apply different methods for dealing with classroom discipline, in my opinion, to create a successful classroom management, educators should use both of them instead of applying only the one.

In addition to this, understanding students' basic psychological needs, establishing positive teacher-student relationship, creating positive peer relationships, working with parents, and enhancing students' motivation and learning are other important factors to create a successful classroom management.

In the second part of this study, while discussing some philosophers' opinions, this study addressed beliefs about discipline in the conflict of the educational platform elements such as the aim of education, the image of the learner, the image of the teacher and the preferred kind of teacher-student relationship regarding the philosophic education. This study aims readers to understand the mistakes and reevaluate the teaching methods. This study recommends that these methods might be a guide

for teachers in educating their students who will be the teachers of next generation.

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