



The Impact of Students' Disruptive Behavior on the Classroom Management in Secondary Schools of Karachi

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the impact of students' disruptive behavior on the classroom management in the secondary schools of Karachi. The nature of the study was a mixed research approach. The population of the study was all the government and private secondary schools in District Central Karachi. Convenient sampling design was adopted for the study. The total sample size was 30 principals/headmasters, 150 teachers and 120 parents from 30 schools. Two research instruments, a self-administered questionnaire and an interview protocol were used for the collection of data. The quantitative data was inferred through t test, while the qualitative data was analyzed and presented in the discussion. The main findings gathered from the data were description of disruptive behavior, background of the students, age factor, classroom environment, teachers' professional training and support.

Key words: Students, disruptive behavior, classroom management, secondary schools

Introduction

Charles (1999) defines misbehavior as "behavior that is considered inappropriate for the setting or situation in which it occurs" (p. 2). Seidman (2005) also presented his view that the majority of teachers are unwilling to deal with those students who behave negatively in their classrooms. In spite of the fact that many teachers have done special courses related to classroom management, a great number of them did not receive any formal training on how to manage their classroom activities. That is because teaching students who normally behave is not a difficult job but teaching those exhibiting disruptive behavior is a challenge for the teachers. The researchers and other experts have mentioned various factors for students who exhibit disruptive behavior. Boice (1996) stated that sometimes students' misbehavior occurs when the teachers are not well equipped and ill prepared for their classes or making no connection with students. Therefore, the teachers should have enough knowledge and preparation about their subjects to give satisfactory answer to students' queries. Yahaya, Ramli, Hashim, Ibrahim, Rahman and Yahaya (2009) state that discipline was a basic ingredient which plays a pivotal role in the school system upholding the moral values of the learners. It includes a wide range of meaning, glowing from the positive or negative perspective. Nevertheless, it is humans resistant to always on the negative smell which could be considered an important issue if it comprises a group or an individual that declares a friendly relationship within a society. Evertson and Weinstein (2006) defined classroom management is any action which a teacher takes for the creation of environment that facilitates and supports the students both in academic and social learning. This definition shows that effective learning will occur in a supportive environment when there is proper discipline in the classroom. Similarly, Clovin, Kame"enue and Sugai (1999) suggested that rules and regulations are strong preventive elements in classroom organization and management procedures. That is because they establish some behavioral context related to the classroom by specifying what is expected, what will happen, what will be reinforced and what will be taught whenever any unusual behavior occurs.

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Lewis and Sugai (1999) concluded that effective classroom management mainly focuses on preventive procedures rather than reactive because the teacher focuses on those students who behave appropriately. Therefore, positive classroom environment should be established with certain rules and regulations. Smith and Smith (2006) stated that the disruptive behavior of students and violence are the major school disciplinary issues which cause teachers' stress and burnout. According to the studies of Ingersoll and Smith (2003), new teachers teaching competences are significantly damaged when classroom management is ineffective and students' behavior is disruptive. Students' ill manners and misbehavior are prevailing problems affecting schools not only in Karachi but also across the country. Learners' misconduct in the classroom hampers with the teaching-learning process and increase dropout rate is the result of such ill manners students. It is widely accepted that learners' behavioral problems are also thought to be the foremost contributor to teachers' attrition and stress (Yahaya, et, al., 2009). According to the Irish National Teachers' Organization (2002), a few elements of disruptive students were listed, such as physical abuse, verbal abuse, damage to property, theft and general misbehavior as well as talking out of turn, lack of punctuality, avoidance of work, violation of school rules, lying, name calling, bullying, spreading rumors, extortion etc. such type of elements are found to be continuous and repeated disruption occurring in schools. Kellam, Ling, Merisca, Brown and Ialonga (1998) have concluded the typical behavior of students that would be targeted is mainly disruptive and aggressive behavior in the classroom. The example of this kind of behavior of students include verbal disruption, noncompliance, teasing others, taking others property, being out of one's seat, attacking others and damaging property. Sterriberg and Williams (2002) analyzed that one of the major reasons for disruptive and bad behavior is usually a student's failure to cope up with the task. Therefore, it is observed that the noisiest student demonstrates his frustration by disruptive behavior and loud outbursts, as the rest of the students may be found remain passive. In the machinery of school management there is need not only for penalties, in order to prevent repetition of misconduct, but also for positive incentives to right conduct, in order to stimulate pupils to get over difficulties and overcome hurdles (Muhayyuddin, 1952). It has been observed that the causes of students misbehavior is sometimes external, for instance, faulty organization of any phase of school life, undesirable condition at home, or demoralized social surroundings. Whatever the cause of misconduct; the school society should be protected against misbehavior of any its members; its interests cannot be sacrificed to the whims of any individual (Muhayyuddin, 1952).

The Concept of Punishment

The purpose of punishment is to prevent the offender from repeating his offence, and thus to protect others from the harm at his hands. For example, a thief is put into prison, not because he committed the theft, but to keep him away from further thieving and thus to protect the property of others. Similarly, a disruptive child who disturbs others in their work is segregated in a lonely corner where he has no choice of disturbing, and a persistently wicked boy is expelled from the school to save others from contamination. Therefore, Jones (1996) indicated that teachers can rank individual students who demonstrate persistent and serious behavior problems as their main reason of stress. However, the concerned teachers can take prompt and direct action, so to minimize the classroom conflicts by making them socialize and making the classroom environment favorable for learning. Anger and Cole (1991) described that modified school environments can spectacularly change students' behavior. Mainly children with severe behavioral and emotional disorders need to acquire specific new skills, if they are to behave and function successfully in the daily routines. Moreover, the subsequent category of strategies, skill building, usually comprises involvements often termed cognitive-emotional interventions. These skills contain problem-solving, self-instruction, and social skill training. Wood (1990) suggested behavioral interventions in such

words that the term intervention may cover a broad collection of approaches which can be emerged from developmental and social viewpoints, including ecological interventions, social skills training and affective education. According to the study of Madsen and Madsen (1983), teachers can mold the behavior of students by encouraging them with certain spoken or written words, such as spoken-written: wonderful, fantastic, absolutely right, terrific, splendid, marvelous, all right, thank you, clever, well thought out, that shows a great deal of work, that's good work, keep working hard, I agree, you're improved etc. Nordstrom, Bartels and Bucy (2009) have concluded that the leading issues of disruption can be simply resolved by pointing out the students and how their behavior disrupts the teaching-learning process. Similarly, before the student responds adequately, several reminders from the teacher or instructor are needed. Sometimes, students may continue with their administrative measures and disruptive behavior subjecting the learner to some kind of disciplinary action may be required. Thus, it is necessary for the teacher to take firm step to stop the disruptive behavior, ensure the student's participation in the learning process and avoid other students from being affected.

Algozzine, Ruhl, and Ramsey (1991) highlighted some pro-social behaviors for apposite instruction and assessment. For example, (a) following directions, taking turns and working with a partner, (b) working in group or with others, (c) increasing positive relationships, (d) displaying appropriate behavior toward adults and peers, (e) showing interest and caring, (f) demonstrating positive verbal and nonverbal relationships, (g) displaying appropriate affect and (h) settling conflicts without fighting (pp. 22-23). Anderson (1999) clarified that the teaching faculty has the responsibility to promote conflict-free school classrooms and he further recommended five key points for association between faculty and students: Mutual respect between teacher and student, effective communication, willingness to negotiate conflict, shared responsibility for learning and a sense of security in the classroom. Lewis, Heflin, and DiGangi (1991) analyzed that those teachers who use effective teaching strategies can easily promote students' academic and behavioral success. Moreover, teachers must avoid focusing on learners' inappropriate behavior, but they should focus on enviable replacement behaviors. Teachers should adopt friendly ways of teaching and have fun with students, because humor in the classroom is making learning as fun for the students. Therefore, humor can also be used to circumvent escalating behaviors by eliminating the negative focus from the real problem. Ahmad and Smith (1994) stated that bullying is another kind of disruptive behavior of the students, comprising of direct behaviors like taunting, teasing, hitting, stealing and threatening which are started by one or more students against the victim. Moreover, bullying can also be more indirect by originating a learner to be socially isolated in the course of intentional exclusion. Indeed, boys naturally engage in direct bullying manners, while girls who bully are more appropriate to utilize these more slightly indirect strategies, for example enforcing social isolation and spreading rumors (Smith and Sharp, 1994). Batsche and Knoff (1994) concluded whether the form of bullying is direct or indirect, but its key component is physical or psychological intimidation happens frequently in due course to create an unending pattern of abuse and harassment. According to the study of Walker, Ramsey and Gresham (2004), when these students get older, they deliberately wreak havoc in schools. Their defiant, aggressive, hostile and disruptive behavior spoils teaching time and the learning of all students. Moreover, they threaten safety, overwhelm teachers and in the end they ruin their own chances of success in school to become successful individuals in their life. Schon (1983) aptly stated that each child has a need to attend school, so that to acquire knowledge accordingly, because schools are seen as provider of education and every individual has to experience in life today. In this digital era, the world is more globalized and education has become the key element of development and success.

Hypotheses

- i. There is no significant difference between the opinion of teachers and parents about the effects of disruptive behavior of students on classroom management.
- ii. There is no significant difference between the opinion of teachers and parents about the effects of disruptive behavior of students on teaching-learning process.

Methodology

The overall strategy of the study was mixed method approach. The population of the study contained on the government and private school teachers and students' guardians of district Central, Karachi. Convenient sampling design was adopted for the study. The total sample size was 30 principals/headmasters, 150 teachers and 120 parents from 30 schools of district central, Karachi. Two research instruments, a self-administered questionnaire of 20 items and an interview protocol were used for the collection of data. The responses of the questionnaire provided numerical data. Interview was used for the collection of qualitative data. Thus, the open-ended questions in interviews provided in-depth knowledge about the disruptive behavior and its impact on the classroom management. Reliability and validity of the instruments were checked through pilot testing, teachers (N= 15) and parents (N=10). The language of the items was modified after the pilot testing. The quantitative data was inferred through statistical techniques and the conclusion of interviews was presented below in the discussion.

Results

Table 1. *Composition of the Sample and Testing Hypothesis No.1*

	Sample	Mean	S.D.	t	Computed Value	Probability	df
Teachers	150	81.14	7.6	1.96	8.63	0.05	268
Parents	120	71.99	16.6				

The above table shows the results that the calculated value of „t“ = 8.63, is greater than the tabulated value of t = 1.96 with df = 269 at $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, a huge difference is found between means and standard deviations of the two groups. It is concluded that null hypothesis is rejected and a significant difference is found between the opinions of teachers and parents about the disruptive behavior of students on the classroom management. In the opinion of teachers, the disruptive behavior of students not only violates the decorum of the classroom but contravene the entire school system. In addition, the parents were quite reluctant to accept the fact that their children have been responsible for the violation of classroom management.

Table 2. *Composition of the Sample and Testing Hypothesis No.2*

	Sample	Mean	S.D.	t	Computed Value	Probability	df
Teachers	150	68.36	15.8	1.96	1.98	0.05	268
Parents	120	65.20	11.5				

The above table shows the results that the calculated value of „t“ = 1.98, is greater than the tabulated value of t = 1.96 with df = 269 at $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, a slight difference is found between means and standard deviations of the two groups. However, it is concluded that null hypothesis is rejected and a little difference is found between the opinions of teachers and parents about the disruptive behavior of students on the teaching-learning process.

Discussion

This study was aimed at the impact of students' disruptive behavior on the classroom

management in secondary schools of Karachi. Almost all the principals and headmasters were found in favor of special training of teachers to tackle such disruptive behavior of students effectively. Teachers' training related to solving the disciplinary issues of students could be compulsory for all teachers, because the disruptive behavior of students challenges the ability and authority of the teachers which create tension in the classroom environment, deviating the attention of other students from learning. Moreover, they suggested that sometimes classroom management gets disturbed when the teaching staff is ill prepared, therefore the teachers need to be well organized, well equipped and having command over their subjects to satisfy the queries of students. The establishment of rules and regulations for classroom management were advised by the heads, suggesting that a reward and punishment policy eliminates the negative aspects of disruptive behavior of the students. Principals opined that students violate the classroom management in certain ways but some of them are ignored, but the serious and intensive rudeness of students have been addressed very strictly. Such types of students having disruptive behaviors are suspended from the schools and in return, apologies as well as black and white undertakings in the presence of their guardians are duly submitted. The headmasters recommended that a cultural influence on students' behavior was significant in many aspects. Therefore, a teacher should be well aware about the students' individual background for positive interaction and communication. The teachers have to adopt a comprehensive behavior plan before they strive to teach the students effectively, therefore if there is a disciplined classroom management, the instruction would be more effective. Some respondents recommended that teachers have so many opportunities to positively change their students' behavior through their effective methods of teaching. In addition, it was also advised that reward system absolutely reinforce students to demonstrate appropriate manners when they are interacting with each other. It was also emphasized that the frequent uses of verbal phrases for example, „thank you“, „please“, „it's ok“, „excuse me“ and „I'm sorry“ can certainly minimize the disturbance level in the classroom.

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