

Strategies of Teachers for Dealing with Student Misbehavior in Classroom

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze different strategies of teachers for dealing with the misbehavior of students in a classroom. The objectives of the study were to determine the most common disruptive misbehavior of students and to explore different strategies used by teachers for dealing with problematic students. The nature of the study is quantitative. Four schools were conveniently selected from Cantt, Saddar Peshawar area. The respondents will be 9th and 10th-class teachers. For data collection, a self-structured close-ended questionnaire was prepared based on a five-point Likert scale. The researcher visited the schools personally and collected the data. The researcher analyzed the data by putting the data into SPSS version 21 and organized it in the form of frequencies and percentages. The researcher used chi-square for the testing of hypotheses.

The study concluded that student misbehaviors affect the smoothness and effectiveness of teaching in the classroom and different strategies adopted by teachers for controlling the disruptive behavior of students in the classroom play an important role in improving student behavior and motivating them toward learning. Recommended measures for dealing with student misbehavior include arranging sessions and seminars for students to understand the roots of their problems and interacting with the parents to understand if the student might be dealing with a stressful situation at home.

Keywords: Classroom misbehavior, teacher strategies, classroom management, educational interventions.

1. Introduction

A classroom is a place where the students develop what they want their future to look like as well as knowledge of the skills needed to reach the goal. The classroom has an important place in the growth of the child. The classroom has two major components i.e., physical and human components. Physical components comprise all the physical objects present in the classroom e.g., books, whiteboard, projector etc., while human components comprise individuals such as teachers and students in the classroom (Hannah, 2013).

A teacher is a key person in an education system. A teacher is a person who is capable of imparting knowledge that will help learners, to build, identify, and to acquire skills that will be used to face the challenges in life. The teacher also provides the learner with knowledge, skills, and values that enhance development (Senge, 2000). Teachers as managers can create an environment, which provides opportunities to learn and change behavior, in which pupils are well-managed and motivated for learning (McBer, 2000).

The teacher-student relationship is a relationship where students have an effective relationship with the teacher. If there is any minor conflict between the student and teacher, the teacher-student relationship is important to solve that conflict. The teacher-student relationship is based upon the interest of the teacher in the student by awarding their work and effort. Teacher behavior also plays an important role in the teacher-student relationship (Fulcher, 2016). Teacher-student relationships can positively impact student behaviors in the classroom. The positive relationship between teacher and a student is much needed and is fundamental in the development of student behavior (Hamre & paint, 2001).

Classroom disruptive behaviors are one of the main challenges for teachers (Demir, 2009; Pane, 2010). Indeed, classroom misbehavior is the most common reason for teachers to refer to school administrators and other school personnel and for teacher burnout (Wang, Hall, and Rahimi, 2015). Research consistently shows that students' misbehavior disrupts classroom order and learning, negatively affecting academic achievement (Sun & Shek, 2012).

Student misbehaviors retard the smoothness and effectiveness of teaching and impede the learning of the student and his/her classmates. Moreover, research findings have shown that student misbehavior not only escalated with time but also lowered academic achievement and increased delinquent behavior (Daniel and Shek, 2012). To lessen these immediate and gradual adverse effects of student misbehaviors, it is of primary importance to identify what exactly are these behaviors inside the classroom.

Disrespect for rules and procedures, wandering around the room, talking out of turn, passive engagement in the classroom, disruption of classmates' work, and moving the furniture in the classroom are just some of the of behaviors referred to by teachers as classroom misbehavior (Briesch, Briesch, and Chafouleas, 2015; Postholm, 2013; Sun and Shek, 2012). Often teachers attribute these classroom misbehaviors to students' lack of interest in school contents, to wrong educational politics, to school and society's permissiveness about misbehavior and violence, and most of all to poor parenting (Ding, Li, Li, and Kulm, 2010; Lopes and Santos, 2013; Riley, Lewis, and Wang, 2012). According to (Goodman 2007), one of the reasons that cause students to be resistant is individual psychological issues.

Student misbehaviors such as disruptive talking, chronic avoidance of work, clowning, interfering with teaching activities, harassing classmates, verbal insults, rudeness towards teachers, defiance, and hostility (Rachel, 2011), range from infrequent to frequent and mild to severe, making them a thorny issue in everyday classrooms.

2. Statement of The Problem

This study aimed to examine the conceptions of junior secondary school student misbehaviors in the classroom and to identify the most common, disruptive, and unacceptable student problem behaviors from teachers' perspective. These behaviors include disruptive talking, chronic avoidance of work, clowning, interfering with teaching activities, harassing classmates, verbal insults, rudeness to teacher, and defiance, which are thorny issues in everyday classrooms.

3. Research Objectives

- To explore different strategies used by teachers for dealing with problematic students.

4. Review of Literature

4.1. Classroom Management

Classroom management refers to the set of strategies used by the teacher for increasing students' cooperation and engagement and decreasing students' disruptive behaviors, thus keeping an appropriate learning environment (Postholm, 2013). This involves the management of classroom space, time, and activities, as well as student behavior management, considering the teacher's characteristics, skills, and competencies (Djigić and Stojiljković, 2011).

Lake (2004) claims that the most common classroom management design used in schools focuses on rewards and punishments. Under this approach, adults must control children's behavior because children are not capable of controlling themselves; adults must decide what is right and wrong for children because children are not capable of deciding right and wrong for themselves. However, controlling young children hinders their development of self-esteem and self-identity. Controlling young children may also reinforce the powerlessness they feel in adult environments and could stunt their growth toward equality. The act of controlling children is the act of oppressing children.

It is not unusual however to find classrooms where rules and procedures are not stated clearly and in detail. This may happen if the teacher believes that the students are familiar with classroom rules and that the students do not need to be reminded about those rules (Piwowski, Thiel, and Ophardt, 2013).

4.2. Misbehavior

Kiriakou stated that student misbehavior is any behavior that undermines the teacher's ability to establish and maintain effective learning experience in the classroom. The ranges of student misbehavior are from simple noncompliance (e.g., not paying attention) to overt disruptive behavior (e.g., throwing a missile across the room). He also points out that serious misbehavior, including direct disobedience, physical aggression, or damage, is much less frequent. Misbehavior is defined as the behavior that is considered inappropriate for the setting or situation in which it occurs. While misbehavior in this study can be defined as any kind of behavior that violates the classroom decorum, interferes with the classroom order, and interrupts the process of teaching and learning.

4.3. Student's Classroom Misbehavior

Classroom misbehavior is taken as any activity which annoys, upsets, or distresses teachers, is disorderly of good order in the classroom and causes trouble and leads teachers to comment frequently (Houghton et al 2010). Inconsistencies in rule setting between teachers may also cause disruptive behaviors. Also, when there are no rules or when rules are not explicit, some students may test the boundaries of classroom order and may disturb the class, thus interfering with classroom activities (Tauber, 2007).

Misbehavior is further classified into one of five different types: Aggression, immorality, defiance of authority, class disruptions, and behaving mischievously (Durmuscelebi, 2010).

Student misbehaviors may arise due to several reasons such as low motivation to learn, laziness, socioeconomic backgrounds, and personal problems. Many times, students are not even aware that their behavior is inappropriate for the classroom environment (McCroskey, Richmond, and McCroskey, 2006).

4.4. The Categories of Student's Misbehavior

Types of classroom misbehavior have become a focus for several researchers. It is divided into 17 categories, while six of those categories contain sub-categories. The categories include doing something private, talking out of turn, verbal aggression, disrespecting teachers, non-attentiveness, out of the seat, habitual failure in submitting assignments, physical aggression, copying homework, non-verbal communication, clowning, playing, coming late to class, eating or drinking, not preparing textbook well, and passive engagement in class.

In a previous study conducted in Nigeria, there were nine types of misbehaviors identified. They were aggression, fighting, self-failure, interfering with the work of other children, damaging own property, bullying, vandalism, running around the class, and damaging class furniture. Literature also classifies student misbehavior as being overt and covert. Overt behaviors are open and observable behaviors like students talking during class, using cell phones, eating, or drinking while covert behaviors are passive behaviors like sleeping during class, coming late, leaving class early, and acting bored and disengaged.

4.5. Approaches To Cope with Misbehaviors

Gordon states that before deciding on a course of action in response to a problem, a teacher must decide who "owns the problem." If you own the problem, you must direct the student to solve the problem. If the student owns the problem, however, your role becomes one of providing a sympathetic ear and of helping the student find his or her solutions. When you own the problem and must therefore create a change in the student's behavior, Gordon advocates the use of a no-lose method to resolve the problem (Sternberg and Williams, 2002).

A Rogerian approach underscores the importance of teacher attitudes such as understanding, empathy, and acceptance. The person-centered approach, where the student as the client is made responsible for his or her behavior, could be part of the solution. This could be the focus of an educational yet assertive discipline program (Gatongi, 2007).

Another approach to handling student misbehavior is to use an "I" message. An "I" message is a clear, direct, assertive statement about exactly what a student did that constitutes misbehaving, how the misbehavior affects the teacher's ability to teach, and how the teacher feels about the misbehavior. The goal of an "I" message is to cause a voluntary change in the student's behavior by appealing to the student's conscience and desire to do the right thing (Sternberg and Williams, 2002).

5. Research Methodology

5.1. Nature of the Study

The nature of the study is descriptive. The data was collected through closed-ended questionnaires based on a five-point Likert's Scale.

5.2. The Population of the Study

All the Government Girls High School in Peshawar Cantt (Saddar) area is the total population of the study. The total number of schools in Peshawar Cantt (Saddar) is 6. The total number of teachers is 120 (ASC, 2017-18).

5.3. Sample of the Study

This research study is based on the “Simple Random Sampling” technique. There were 6 schools in Peshawar Cantt area, and only four schools were selected by using simple random sampling technique. The respondents were class 9th and 10th teachers. The total number of teachers in these six schools was 60 and only 40 teachers responded were selected by simple random sampling.

5.4. Tools of Data Collection

For data collection, a self-structured close-ended questionnaire was prepared for the purpose of data collection based on a five-point Likert scale.

5.5. Data Collection

The data was collected through a close-ended questionnaire five-point Likert’s Scale. The researcher visited the schools personally and collected the data.

5.6. Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed the data by putting data into SPSS version 21 and organizing it in the form of frequencies and percentages. The researcher used chi-square for the testing of hypotheses.

6. Data Analysis

Table 1: Indicating Teachers giving praise, and encouraging students to behave well in school

Responses	Frequency	Percentages	Chi-square P-value
SA	9	22.5	28.600a .000
A	24	60.0	
UD	2	5.0	
DA	5	12.5	
SDA	0	0	
Total	40	100.0	

Table 1 indicates that 82.5% of the respondent teachers viewed that Teachers giving praise, encourage students to behave well in school, whereas 5% of the respondents were undecided about the given statement. The chi-square value is 28.600 with a p-value is .000 which is less than the level of significance i.e., 0.05.

Table 2: Indicating Certificates for good attendance/behavior encourages students to behave well

Responses	Frequency	Percentages	Chi-square P-value
SA	18	45.0	18.600a .000
A	15	37.5	
UD	1	2.5	
DA	6	15.0	
SDA	0	0	
Total	40	100.0	

Table 2 indicates that 82.5% of the respondent teachers stated that Certificates for good attendance/behavior encourage students to behave well in school, whereas 2.5% of the respondents were undecided about the given statement. The chi-square value is 18.600 with a p-value is .000 which is less than the level of significance (0.05).

Table 3: Indicating free choice in some lessons makes students behave well in school

Responses	Frequency	Percentages	Chi-square P-value
SA	9	22.5	11.600b .009
A	19	47.5	
UD	7	17.5	
DA	0	0	
SDA	5	12.5	
Total	40	100.0	

Table 3 indicates that 70% of the respondent teachers reported that Free choice in some lessons makes students behave well in school, whereas 17.5% of the respondents were undecided about the statement. The chi-square value is 11.600 with a p-value is .009 which is less than the level of significance (0.05).

Table 4: Indicating having contact with students' parents made students behave well in school

Responses	Frequency	Percentages	Chi-square P-value
SA	11	27.5	35.600b .000
A	25	62.5	
UD	1	2.5	
DA	0	0	
SDA	3	7.5	
Total	40	100.0	

Table 4 indicates that 90% of the respondent teachers shared that having contact with students' parents made the students behave well in school, whereas 2.5% of the respondents were undecided about the given statement. The chi-square value is 35.600 with a p-value is .000 which is less than the level of significance (0.05).

Table 5: Indicating that involving students in decision making encourages students to behave

Responses	Frequency	Percentages	Chi-square P-value
A	23	57.5	25.800a .000
SA	10	25.0	
UD	0	0	

DA	5	12.5	
SDA	2	5.0	
Total	40	100.0	

Table 5 indicates that 82.5% of the respondent teachers viewed that involving students in decision making encourages students to behave well in school, whereas 17.5% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. The chi-square value is 25.800 with a p-value is .000 which is less than the level of significance i.e., 0.05.

Table 6: Indicating a Friendly environment in the classroom motivates students to behave

Responses	Frequency	Percentages	Chi-square P-value
SA	9	22.5	17.000b .002
A	17	42.5	
UD	7	17.5	
DA	6	15.0	
SDA	1	2.5	
Total	40	100.0	

Table 6 indicates that 65% of the respondent teachers viewed that a Friendly environment in the classroom motivates students to behave well in school, whereas 17.5% of the respondents were undecided about the statement. The chi-square value is 17.000 with a p-value is .002 which is less than the level of significance (0.05).

Table 7: Indicating Students behave when they understand misbehavior, not themselves, is disliked

Responses	Frequency	Percentages	Chi-square P-value
SA	11	27.5	34.000b .000
A	21	52.5	
UD	1	2.5	
DA	5	12.5	
SDA	2	5.0	
Total	40	100.0	

Table 7 indicates that 80% of the respondent teachers viewed that students behave well when they understand that it is their misbehavior the teacher dislikes, not them, whereas 2.5% of the respondents were undecided about the given statement. The chi-square value is 34.000 with a p-value is .000 which is less than the level of significance (0.05).

Table 8: Indicates By encouraging students to talk about their feelings and listening to them attentively encourages students to behave well in school

Responses	Frequency	Percentages	Chi-square P-value
SA	12	30.0	36.500a .000
A	21	52.5	
UD	1	2.5	
DA	5	12.5	
SDA	1	2.5	
Total	40	100.0	

Table 8 indicates that 82.5% of the respondent teachers viewed encouraging students to talk about their feelings and listening to them attentively encourage students to behave well in school, whereas 2.5% of the respondents were undecided about the given statement. The chi-square value is 36.500 with a p-value is .000 which is less than the level of significance (0.05).

Table 9: Indicating The supportive collaboration of teachers in educating students increases students' social-emotional skills

Responses	Frequency	Percentages	Chi-square P-value
SA	15	37.5	21.200a .000
A	19	47.5	
UD	1	2.5	
DA	5	12.5	
SDA	0	0	
Total	40	100.0	

Table 9 indicates that 85% of the teachers viewed that the supportive collaboration of teachers in educating students increases students' social-emotional skills, whereas 2.5% of the respondents were undecided about the given statement. The chi-square value is 21.200 with a p-value is .000 which is less than the level of significance i.e., 0.05.

Table 10: Indicating Teachers improve student behavior by giving punishment

Responses	Frequency	Percentages	Chi-square P-value
SA	6	15.0	11.250b .024
A	12	30.0	
UD	14	35.0	
DA	3	7.5	
SDA	5	12.5	
Total	40	100.0	

Table 10 indicates that 45% of the respondent's teachers viewed that teachers improve student behavior by giving punishment, whereas 35% of the respondents were undecided about the statement. The chi-square value is 11.250 with a p-value is .024 which is less than the level of significant i.e., 0.05.

7. Findings, Conclusions, And Recommendations

7.1. Findings

- 82.5% of the respondent teachers viewed that Teachers giving praise, encourage students to behave well in school.
- 82.5% of the respondent teachers stated that Certificates for good attendance/behavior encourage students to behave well in school.
- 70% of the respondent teachers reported that Free choice in some lessons makes students behave well in school.
- 90% of the respondent teachers viewed that Having contact with students' parents allows them to behave well in school.
- 82.5% of the respondent teachers viewed that involving students in decision making encourages students to behave well in school.
- 65% of the respondent teachers viewed that a Friendly environment in the classroom motivates students to behave well in school.
- 80% of the respondent teachers viewed that Students behave well when they understand that it is their misbehavior teacher dislike, not them.
- 82.5% of the respondent teachers viewed that encouraging the students to talk about their feelings and listening to them attentively encourages students to behave well in school.
- 85% of the respondent teachers viewed that the supportive collaboration of teachers in educating students increases students' social-emotional skills.
- 45% of the respondent teachers viewed that teachers improve student behavior by giving punishment.).

8. Recommendations

- The principal may arrange different seminars and training for the teachers in which different strategies regarding how to deal with misbehaving students in the classroom may be taught.
- Teachers may arrange a seminar once a week where they talk about the impact of the misbehavior of students on their academic performance and at the end, they may allow students to talk about their feelings and experiences.
- Teacher-student relationships may be based on mutual understanding.
- Counselling sessions for misbehaving students to understand the roots of the problem would help to get the students' perspective on how they view their misbehavior.

9. Conclusion

It is concluded from the study that student misbehavior in the classroom such as disruptive talking, chronic avoidance of work, clowning, interfering with teaching activities, and rudeness towards the teacher disturbs the teaching-learning process. Student misbehaviors affect the smoothness and effectiveness of teaching in the classroom. The study also concluded that different strategies adopted

by teachers for controlling the disruptive behavior of students in the classroom play an important role in improving student behavior and motivating them towards learning. These strategies include teachers praising students and awarding certificates for good behavior to encourage positive conduct in school.

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