Breaking Generational Trauma: Transforming Students' Behavior through Positive Discipline

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Abstract

This article investigates the contrasting approaches to school discipline, focusing on the opposition between corporal punishment and positive discipline. It examines the disadvantageous effects of corporal punishment on children, emphasizing the harsh treatment and perpetuation of social norms associated with such practices. In contrast, the article highlights the transformative potential of positive discipline in enhancing students' self-esteem and behavior. It gives importance to prioritizing safety in the classroom environment and advocating for approaches that foster a sense of security while enforcing rules. While corporal punishment may produce immediate results, the article emphasizes alternative methods prioritizing long-term behavioral changes and emotional well-being. Moreover, it explores how cultural context and educational philosophy influence the implementation of discipline programs in schools, acknowledging the need for culturally responsive approaches and sensitivity to students' diverse needs. By navigating the connection between tradition and progressive practices, this article provides insights into effective discipline strategies that promote a nurturing and conducive learning environment for all students.

Keywords: Classroom Management, Corporal Punishment, Discipline, Education, Positive Discipline, Teachers, Pupil's Well-Being.

Maintaining the standards of excellence for learners is a challenging task for teachers. Instilling discipline inside the classroom can help change and improve behaviors to achieve academic goals in pursuing excellence. Throughout history, discipline has been a battle in the education system on how to develop acceptable behaviors of learners, significantly affecting their performance as learners and as teachers in delivering quality education in the classroom. Various discipline techniques have been employed to effectively ensure that misbehaviors are corrected and taught to avoid committing them repetitively. It has been a debatable issue whether punitive discipline is more effective than avoiding inflicting pain. There are points of view why others resort to punishment to change a behavior, but from adeeper perspective than others, discipline can be effective in non-punitive ways.

Discipline is a deliberate action—or lack thereof—taken to regulate one's behavior. It is the application of rules and regulations, cultural norms and values, and the capacity to control oneself or others, particularly under trying circumstances. Teaching appropriate behavior and helping maladaptive behaviors unlearned with guidance, support, and direction in controlling behavior are all parts of the discipline. It involves setting limits, outlining roles and responsibilities, establishing mutual expectations, and creating a secure, predictable way of life. In the classroom, anti-social behaviors such as not following rules, bullying, truancy, tardiness, cultism, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual harassment, insulting and assaulting, stealing, rioting,

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03-IJTETV4I225_p29-36.indd 29 10-07-2024 18:15:10

striking, starting school fires, "gassing of students," and many more can be found. Such indiscipline will show up later in life if it is not checked.

Conversely, establishing discipline early in life aids in bringing order to other facets of an individual's life, such as our security or armed forces (Bodo, 2020). Reprimanding children is not the only method of discipline. Instead, it guarantees that children acquire the skills they need to become responsible people. (Morin, 2020)

When a student's behavior disrupts an ongoing educational activity or violates a school rule, teachers or school groups may take disciplinary action against him/her. Discipline can help children learn to properly care for themselves, others, and the environment by guiding their conduct or setting limits. School systems establish rules, and pupils who break them face consequences. These norms define the expected standards of school uniforms, punctuality, social conduct, and work ethics. (School Discipline, n.d.)

The importance of discipline in a student's life cannot be overstated. In school, it is critical to adhere to the rules. Students must learn discipline in addition to education since they can only be adequately educated with it. Discipline is a student's ability to execute something or complete a task within a certain amount of time. Discipline refers to maintaining control so that students can achieve their goals. Discipline in a student's life attracts all of the good things, and as a result, students succeed in all aspects of their lives. Discipline is always used to guide a student's life to keep them focused on their objectives. Success, efficiency, and betterment are characteristics of a disciplined existence (Singh, 2020).

According to Khatun and Siddiqui (2018), discipline is a moral trait and the strongest virtue required for success and achieving life's objectives. It is also the process of aligning our body, mind, and soul to obey rules. A disciplined individual does everything correctly and can achieve significant personal and professional achievements. Not a single task can be completed correctly in a lack of discipline. As a result, discipline is necessary for all aspects of life. Discipline is necessary to create a positive learning environment at school. If a child is not disciplined, he will never be able to put his plans into action in real life, which will cost him much later. Children are free to do whatever they want without discipline in school. Establishing a learning environment in the school requires discipline. It helps students grow into strong people. It is a method of setting limits for children so that they understand what is right and wrong. It strengthens the pupils' character, making them stronger and more self-reliant.

Moreover, discipline also improves kids' analytical abilities. As a result, they can apply their knowledge to real-world problems when they are older. It provides a lifelong lesson that children can be moulded in any way when young. Children will continue to practice discipline throughout their lives if they start early. When a youngster learns discipline at school, he/she retains it for the rest of his life. Students who understand the value of discipline adhere to it in school and consequently develop the habit of doing so, as it promotes a child's social development by fostering deeper ties between students, students, and parents, as well as valuing the boundaries of relationships.

The State must protect and advance every child's right to a readily available, excellent primary education, according to the 1987 Constitution. In addition to granting them this right, the state must support and uphold their holistic development by advancing their social, intellectual, moral, spiritual, and physical well-being. Children are granted some rights to enhance their overall well-being under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and other national and international laws. In addition to the right to be shielded

03-IJTETV4I225_p29-36.indd 30 10-07-2024 18:15:10

from violence, abuse, neglect, brutality, exploitation, and mistreatment in any form, children in primary education also have the rights to education, health, protection from discrimination, participation and voice-making, religion, and the freedom to rest and play. The Department issued Dep. Ed Order No. 40, s. to uphold the child's right to special protection and to reaffirm its zero-tolerance stance for any act of abuse or violence against children. The Policy Guidelines on Protecting Children in Schools from Abuse, Violence, Exploitation, Discrimination, Bullying, and Other Forms of Abuse is another name for the DepEd Child Protection Policy, which was released in 2012.(Department of Education, 2021)

Citing the World Health Organization's World Report on Violence and Health, Save the Children Philippines Child Protection Advisor Wilma Banaga made it clear that corporal punishment inflicts suffering on children. "It kills thousands of children and injures and physically impairs many more," sheadded. The group noted that in the Philippines and throughout the world, corporal punishment remains the "most prevalent form of violence against children" and that 87 percent of the world's children are "notprotected from corporal punishment by law." (Hernando, 2021)

The primary justification for using physical punishment in schools is when a teacher tries to assist a student in abstaining from bad behavior or motivate them to do well on their assignments (Alsaif,2015). Furthermore, some teachers, such as cruel people, suffer from neurosis or mental disease or lack the essential characteristics of a teacher, such as patience and forbearance. Some folks have religious reasons as well. Some experts believe that biblical passages support the use of the cane. If they are employing the cane to enforce a religious text, they must either reinterpret their religious texts or omit their religious beliefs from the classroom.

Corporal punishment is an appropriate discipline for confident children when used in moderation. Critics attribute the detrimental effects of corporal punishment to its prolonged and excessive application. According to Chigbo (2004), occasional use for significant behavioral difficulties is appropriate because timeout or taking away a toy may not change behavior in a particularly obstinate or hyperactive child.

Corporal punishment establishes clear limits and encourages students to conduct themselves well at school. When children realize that the consequence they experience for misbehaving is comparable to their deeds, they can better decide their conduct, show self-control, and be responsible for their activities.(Williams, 2019).

The role of the teacher goes beyond simply giving instructions to children. Teachers must also manage student behaviors to ensure a fair and effective learning environment. When administered appropriately, punishment has advantages. As a form of conditioning, positive punishment imposes a detrimental consequence right after an undesirable behavior. Short timeouts and losing privileges are common forms of positive punishment (The Advantages of Punishment in the Classroom, 2020).

Zachos et al. (2016) present research data relating to exploring teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and practices concerning school "discipline" in Greek schools. A case study is conducted, and an in-depth semi-structured interview is utilized to collect data. The primary conclusions show what the research participants' teachers believe to be the root causes of discipline issues in schools, how they connect these issues to the broader social reality that students encounter, how their own positive and negative behaviors influence students' behavior, the strategies they employ to prevent and address "discipline" issues, and how they assess their retraining and foundational coursework in order to effectively manage their classrooms.

03-IJTETV4I225_p29-36.indd 31 10-07-2024 18:15:10

According to supporters of corporal punishment at school, the spanking or paddling performed by qualified teachers, administrators, or coaches deters misconduct. The use of intimidation has a significant impact on student conduct. Supporters of corporal punishment feel that spanking or paddling provides a powerful incentive for students to keep in line. The procedure for corporal punishment is quick and efficient. It does not entail lengthy after-school detentions or lengthy in-school suspensions. Principals, teachers, and coaches can give the punishment in a couple of seconds without including pre- and post-punishment dialogues to remind students of the policies that apply to their transgression. As a result, kids do not have to worry about punishment for days or hours. (Tucker, 2017)

Child maltreatment occurs in a variety of settings and locations around the world. (Benbenishty etal.,2021). Everywhere in the world, children are more at risk of being abused, violent, or neglected. The effort to give children a safe environment is making slow and uneven progress. How cutting-edge, locally driven interventions might address socio cultural norms that harm children's growth should be understood. Preventing harm to children is a complex process that is often anchored in a community's sociocultural and religious life, and child protection interventions must be purposeful in identifying and tackling ingrained sociocultural practices that maintain child maltreatment. (Doh et al., 2021)

The findings showed that school physical punishment is common worldwide, including in countries where restrictions are in place, and does not appear to decrease with time; measuring variations prevents conclusive conclusions. For children, it is linked to physical, intellectual, mental health, and behavioral issues. Boys, black kids in the United States, and students who were exposed to domestic abuse were the most vulnerable to corporal punishment. It is unclear whether a student's impairment puts them at risk. The likelihood of corporal punishment was lower in schools that employed a mental health professional and trained staff in safety procedures. Schools that employed a mental health professional and trained staff in safety procedures were less likely to use corporal punishment. Teachers' attitudes about corporal punishment, as well as their use of violence in other situations, put students at risk. Low socio-economic position (of the student or the school environment) raised risk, whereas high levels of state social capital decreased risk. (Heekes et al., 2020)

According to Cuartas (2021), internal validity disputes over the existing data have largely obscured the question of whether spanking is detrimental to socio-emotional development (SE). This longitudinal study examined the impact of spanking on the social and emotional development of Bhutanese children (N + 1377; M age + 50.5 months; 50% girls). He evaluated the internal validity of estimates using robustness checks and conservative methods (i.e., child-fixed effects and lagged-dependent variables), adhering to best-practice recommendations for reducing selection bias concerns in observational development research.

Even after correcting for all time-invariant covariates and baseline levels of SE skills, spanking predicted declines in SE skills of.09-.17 SD across all approaches. These data support the theory that' spanking can affect young children's social and emotional development.

In another study conducted by Cuartas et al. (2021), the researchers expressed that despite research relating corporal punishment to adverse child outcomes, spanking is still widely used around the world. The researchers compared children who were spanked (N = 40) to children who were not spanked (N = 107) to see if spanking affected brain function in response to cues that suggested the presence of environmental danger.

03-IJTETV4I225_p29-36.indd 32 10-07-2024 18:15:10

Children who were spanked displayed increased activity in several areas of the medial and lateral prefrontal cortex (PFC), including the bilateral frontal pole, dorsomedial PFC, dorsal anterior cingulate cortex, and left middle frontal gyrus in response to frightening versus neutral stimuli. These findings imply that spanking, like more severe kinds of abuse, may change brain responses to environmental dangers.

Moreover, Vltelll (2017) stated that there has been extensive research into the effects of physical discipline on children, and the results have been mixed. Despite this, the general agreement appears to be that corporal punishment can contribute to later issues, such as aggressive behavior and acting-out episodes in children as young as two or three years old. Other factors, however, appear to have a more substantial impact on how children who have been subjected to corporal punishment develop later in life. The quality of parenting children receive is one of the most crucial aspects. Children who have had positive parenting experiences, such as positive verbal encouragement, positive demonstrations of affection, and positive physical touch, are less likely to be affected by corporal punishment than children who have been raised brutally. There can be significant gender disparities as well, with warm maternal care typically overcoming the challenges that boys might otherwise face as a result of harsh discipline from their father (though this can be the other way around for girls). The influence of corporal punishment on whether a child develops later behavior issues has been linked to early exposure to rejection, antagonism, or neglect from one or both parents. Even after accounting for a child's age, gender, and social background, children who are disciplined by parents who can control their emotions appear to be more likely to become violent themselves than children who are disciplined by parents who are unable to control their emotions.

Based on the results of the research conducted by Sichon and Guhao (2020), how was punishment for pupils implemented? For the 2016-2017 academic year, 13 school heads from both elementary and secondary schools in Sarangani Province Division were interviewed using a qualitative phenomenological technique. Focus groups and in-depth interviews were conducted to gather information. The interview results were transcribed, translated, and coded to create themes. The experiences of school leaders revealed the following themes: parental engagement and involvement (on the one hand); parental indifference and non-engagement (on the other hand); adoption of a child protection policy by the entire school; varying degrees of teacher acceptance; teacher inadequacy and inconsistency; and continued student indiscipline. In response to their difficulties enforcing student discipline, the following themes were created: parental involvement and collaboration; teacher guidance and support; use of "positive discipline," varying degrees of instructor acceptance; and use of creative methods. The following themes emerged from their discussions: parental engagement is critical to student discipline; schools should be steadfast in their execution; be positive and constructive; teachers require knowledge and support; and discipline should be current and relevant.

Positive discipline, rather than punishment or rewards, is a more effective technique to manage unruly pupils in the classroom. It enables kids to learn and change their behavior to match classroom standards while teaching them how to make better choices as they mature. Positive discipline is the process of training or instructing a pupil to follow a set of rules or a code of behavior over time. Rather than managing kids' conduct, teachers can utilize constructive discipline to help children develop self-control and make positive choices. Punitive punishment toward children—suspensions, forceful policing, and reactionary measures—goes against human rights, according to Teachers Unite, a movement of public school teachers working for social justice.

03-IJTETV4I225_p29-36.indd 33 10-07-2024 18:15:10

On the other hand, positive discipline approaches provide a positive school environment while teaching children dispute resolution and behavior skills. Finally, positive discipline can assist in the shaping of a child by employing encouragement rather than meaningless and even unpleasant consequences such as punishment. (Aken, n.d.)

In a Philippine high school, this study by Banzon- Librojo et al. (2017) looked at how students' experiences of harsh teacher discipline are related to their experiences of bullying victimization. 401 first-through fourth-year high school students from an urban public school in the Philippines participated in the survey. Structural equation modeling was used to investigate a model hypothesized to have direct links between harsh punishment and bullying victimization, as well as an indirect link via students' perceptions of teacher support. The data fit the model well, showing that severe teacher reprimand was linked to an increase in bullying victims and a negative perception of teacher support among kids. No- significant indirect effects were observed. The results highlight the significance of teachers modeling and defining norms for students, as school punishment policies may impact students' behavior and relationships.

According to a different study, receiving praise had a positive effect, while physical punishment in school hurt children's chances of receiving higher cognitive scores. Furthermore, the absolute impact of corporal punishment and praise varies dramatically across caste groups, with both factors having a more significant marginal effect on children from disadvantaged castes than those from advantaged upper castes. (Kumar et al., 2022)

This qualitative study, driven by the interpretive paradigm by Sibanda & Mathwasa (2020), looked at how secondary schools in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province, Zimbabwe, use the modelling good behavior technique to instill positive discipline among students. The elimination of corporal punishment, exclusion due to delinquent behavior, and the implementation of constructive, inclusive discipline measures to maintain school order thrilled the researchers. Four school heads, twenty disciplinary committee members, four school counsellors, two education officials, four School Development Committee chairpersons, and forty prefects engaged in a case study design. Data were analysed thematically using focus group interviews, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Accordingto the findings, secondary schools used the modeling positive behavior technique to instill positive discipline in students. The orientation for new staff members focuses on conducting and modelling positive behavior whenever teachers, students, and parents meet throughout various activities in the school environment. The survey also discovered that prefects could lead assembly sessions as role models. Despite a few instances of wrongdoing, the study indicated that modeling positive behaviour methods achieved positive school consequences. The study suggests that more research should be done into ways schools could preserve positive discipline, particularly in remote schools.

School corporal punishment is a reality for millions of children around the world, and much more work has to be done to educate teachers about alternatives to corporal punishment so that it is no longer used in schools. Legislative change, activism, and education are all necessary to ensure that corporal punishment in schools is permanently outlawed. (Dubanoski et al., 2017).

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