



# RABSEL: the CERD Educational Journal

ISSN 2957-8019(Online) | ISSN 2077-4966(Print) | 23(1) | 1-13



Journal homepage: [Journal.pce.edu.bt](http://Journal.pce.edu.bt)

---

## Outcomes of Positive Discipline on Student Behavior

Chimi Tshewang

Bidung Lower Secondary School, Trashigang

---

<http://doi.org/10.17102/rabsel23.1.10> | Accepted January 2022 | Published August 2022

---

### **Abstract**

*This paper presents the findings of a mixed methods study on the outcomes of positive discipline on student behavior. The research participants were 310 students who were selected based on a stratified random sampling and three teacher key informants selected based on purposive sampling from the lower, middle, and higher secondary schools. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and content analysis. Findings of the study revealed that positive discipline practices are perceived to be a substantial tool to build students' behavior. The study is significant in providing information to students, teachers, educational leaders, and parents to boost positive discipline practices at schools and homes.*

**Key Words:** Positive discipline, outcomes, student behaviors, student, secondary schools

Corresponding: [chimi\\_tshewang@education.gov.bt](mailto:chimi_tshewang@education.gov.bt)

## **Rationale of the study**

Growing indiscipline problems had posed a great challenge to the schools in Bhutan. So, the Ministry of Education revisited school discipline practices and produced the highly moderated version of school discipline policy which stated a series of preventive and corrective measures. Schools were expected to curb indiscipline issues professionally and consistently by using this moderated version (30<sup>th</sup> EPGI, p.17-23,2012).

Although positive discipline had been adopted as a discipline strategy in the schools from 2012, the prevalence of indiscipline was frequently reported in the Bhutanese schools. Many teachers in Bhutan voiced their concerns on rising indiscipline in the schools due to the ban of corporal punishment and lack of awareness of disciplining strategies (Norbu, 2021). This led to the rise of skepticism among the general public about the implementation of positive discipline strategy in the schools.

Therefore, the researcher intended to study the outcomes of positive discipline strategy, and to create awareness among stakeholders about the importance of positive discipline and liaise with the schools in implementing positive discipline strategy in the Bhutanese schools.

## **Literature review**

Many significant approaches have been used to teach desirable behaviors or raise children with right values, thoughts and life skills in western schools of America. Positive discipline approach is one of them. It teaches parents and teachers how to raise their children with many positive alternatives based on solutions rather than punishment. It is an alternative to corporal punishment.

Peer pressure influence behaviors and have both positive and negative impacts influencing in escalating or decreasing behaviors. Fallon and Butterfield (2011) said that “peer influence played a major role in influencing ethical decision making and behavior; the more the individuals observed peers engaging in unethical behavior, the more likely they were to engage in the same or similar activities”.

Positive school climate is important for improvement of school environment and promote healthy development, socio-emotional learning, and academic success (Cohen & Geier, 2010). Teachers have many significant roles and responsibilities in schools including teaching, maintaining relationship and good discipline. The direct impact of teachers' actions and behaviors towards students are observed by children in which they can learn from their teachers since children will imitate what they have acquired from their teachers. Teacher's undesired attitude may cause student's undesired behaviors and affect the learning process negatively (Cumming, 2000). Therefore, teachers have to be very careful

in producing and maintaining positive behaviors, and eliminating disruptive as well as pro-social classroom behaviors.

Children perceive and learn all forms of behaviors at home. Home is the immediate learning environment for them. Mowder and Shamah (2009) had explained that parents play key roles in children's development; they are critical in meeting their children's needs since children are neither capable of identifying their own needs nor, when necessary, accessing professional services. Children learn from observing parents' modeling of particular behaviors, which they then apply in the future. Parents have to be a good role model in teaching positive behaviors with relevant values and ethics to their children. Over reactive and harsh disciplinary practices (Vecchio & Leary, 2006) may externalize children into aggression and negative behaviors.

Studies of implementation of positive discipline practices have shown that positive discipline strategy produce significant results. As per Brigman & Campbell (2003), the student informants were likely to have less or no disciplinary problems when they are psychologically stable and free from stresses and social problems. Positive discipline helps to improve critical thinking, attitudes and perform better. It improved parenting practices and built a sense of connection at home and at school, and increased academic success and decreased socially risky behaviors (Resnick, et al. 2003). Undesirable or bullying behaviors were likely to reduce when students felt supported by other students and teachers, and when they felt more connected to their school (Flaspohler, et al., 2009). Millie and Salley (2005), found that positive discipline worked well with the students who needed it most through proper interventions. In the interview conducted by them, one of the students reported that he thinks his behavior has changed this year. "I am getting better grades, staying out of trouble, staying out of the office, not arguing with teachers, doing my work."

### **Methodology**

The study was carried out by employing quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative method was used to study the outcomes of positive discipline from the student participants. Qualitative method was used to confirm the findings from the teachers.

## Participants

For this study, a total of 310 students from grade 7-12 were selected by a simple random sampling (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). There are 3 teachers as a key informants were selected by purposive sampling (Table 1):

Table 1. Details of Participants

Sl.No	School Type	No. of participants	student	No. of teacher participants
1	Rangjung Higher Secondary School	206		1
2	Trashigang Secodary School	Middle 72		1
3	Rangjung Lower Secondary School	32		1
<b>Total</b>		<b>310</b>		<b>3</b>

Instrument for quantitative study

The statements in the questionnaire were framed by the researcher based on the review of literatures and related studies. The constructed questionnaires covered four domains with numberof items (see Table 2):

Table 2. Number of questionnaire items in four domains

Factors/Areas	Sub Factors/Areas	No. of items
<b>Student Factors</b>	1. Peer Pressure	1-5
	2. Student Success	6-10
<b>School Factors</b>	1. School Climate	11-15
	2. Teachers Behaviors	16-21
<b>Family Factors</b>	1. Family Background	22-27
	2. Parental Behaviors	28-33
<b>Outcomes of Positive Discipline</b>		1-28

Each item had five point Likert scales (Likert, 1932) score from highest (5) to lowest (1).

The interpretation of mean scores of levels of student factors, school factors, family factors and outcomes of positive discipline on student behaviors was determined by using the evaluation criteria of Best (1981) as follows: *Highest(4-5)*, *Moderate(3-2)* and *Lowest (1-0)*.

Table 3: Level of school factors on student behaviors

Sl.No.	Mean Scores	Level of School Factors
1	4.21-5.00	Highest
2	3.41-4.20	High
3	2.61-3.60	Moderate
4	1.81-2.60	Low
5	1.00-1.80	Lowest

#### Guidelines for Qualitative study

In qualitative study, in-depth interview was conducted. Guideline interview questions were prepared based on the quantitative study from students, concepts, theories and related researches, and asked about the outcomes of positive discipline implementation.

#### Statistics and Data Analysis

The data had been electronically processed and analyzed by using excel sheet. Descriptive statistics were used to present the general information acquired from the questionnaires to calculate the student's frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

#### Findings from quantitative study

The general information of the student respondents consisted of their gender and age. The data were interpreted in frequencies (N) and percentages (%) by descriptive statistics in the table 4.

Table 4: Frequency and percentage of the student information of the sample

Sl.No	Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
1	11 – 14 years old	70	22.6
2	14 – 18 years old	202	65.5
3	19 – 22 years old	38	12.3

Student factors, school factors and family factors were the variables used to measure the outcomes of positive discipline on student behaviors. Mean, standard deviation and the overall level of these variables was presented in the table below.

Table 5: Mean, standard deviation and overall level of student, school and family factors on student behaviors

Factors	Mean	S.D	Level
Student Factors	4.23	0.44	Highest
School Factors	3.89	0.56	High
Family Factors	4.27	0.41	Highest

**Note:** 1.00-1.80= lowest, 1.81-2.60 = low, 2.61-3.40 = moderate, 3.41- 4.20 = high, 4.21-5.00 = highest

According to the data analysis, the overall level of all factors were highest and high with the mean value of 4.27 (family factors), 4.23(student factors) and 3.89 (school factors) respectively.

### 1. Student Factors

Student’s perception towards the peer pressure and student success of student factors was measured by 10-item questions Peer pressure was measured by five- item questionnaires. The level of peer pressure was high with an average mean score of 3.89. “I like when my parents, teachers and friends show good behaviors” was at the highest level with a mean score of 4.87. “My friends encourage me to stay clean and sober (free from drugs & alcohol)” and “I mostly listen to my well- mannered friends’ advice” were also at the highest level with a mean score of 4.42 and 4.34 respectively, while “I get better guidance and support from my peers” was at the high level with a mean score of 3.98.

Student success was also measured by five- item questions. The level of student success was high with an average mean score of 4.12. “I feel happy and proud when my teachers and parents appreciate my achievements” was at the highest level with a mean score of 4.64. “My success encourages me to behave and perform better than before” was also at the highest level with a mean score of 4.53, however, “I can be a good role model for other students” was at the high level with a mean score of 3.64. The overall level of student factors towards the peer pressure and student success was at the highest level with a total mean score of 4.23.

## 2. School Factors

Student’s perception towards the school climate and teacher’s behaviors of school factors was measured by 11-item questions.

School climate was measured by five- item questions. The level of school climate was high with an average mean score of 3.70. “My school has a firm and consistent school discipline policy” was at the highest level with a mean score of 4.42. “I can see better relationship, respect and trust among teachers and students” and “I observe students and teachers maintain a good discipline” were at the high level with a mean score of 4.08 and 4.03 respectively. “My school is free from corporal punishment” was at the moderate level with a mean score of 2.91.

Teacher’s behaviors were measured by six- item questionnaires. The level of teacher’s behaviors was high with an average mean score of 4.05. “The teachers at my school make it clear how I should behave” was at the highest level with a mean score of 4.48. “My teachers show concern to my problems and needs” and “My teachers care and treat me with respect” was at the high level with a mean score of 4.17 and 4.14 respectively. “My teachers inform my parents about my progress” was at the high level with a mean score of 3.45. The overall level of school factors towards the school climate and teacher’s behaviors was at the high level with a total mean score of 3.89.

## 3. Family Factors

Family factors is also one of the key components which create direct impact on positive disciplining. The family background and parental behaviors of family factors were measured by 12 survey questionnaire. Family background was measured by six- item questionnaires. The level of family background was high with an average mean score of 3.89. “My parents’ love and care are very important for me” was at the highest level with a mean score of 4.92. “I will be happy if my parents are not divorced” and “Guidance of my parents helps me to perform well in my studies” were at the high level with a mean score of 4.64 and 4.39 respectively. “My parents are educated” was at the moderate level with a mean score of 2.66.

Parental behaviors were measured by six- item questions. The level of parental behaviors was highest with an average mean score of 4.46. “They always praise and encourage me to do the best in school” was at the highest level with a mean score of 4.73. “They always behave well with me” and “They explain to me about the consequences if I don’t obey the rules” was at the highest level with a mean score of 4.59 and 4.49 respectively. “My parents listen to my problems and works at school” was at the highest level with a mean score of 4.21.

The overall level of family factors towards the family background and parental behaviors was at the highest level with a total mean score of 4.27.

### **Findings from qualitative study**

Findings from qualitative study show that both minor and major misbehavior are encountered by teachers and pose a challenge in the day-to-day teaching and learning process. The schools had a well-planned student discipline policy and carried out consistently to help students know what was expected of them, teach desirable behaviors, maintain disciplinary problems, prevent students from the feelings that they are unfairly punished and support their emotional development. Students were also involved in the process of developing school or classroom rules and regulations. Expectations and consequences were commonly discussed and agreed. Positive discipline practices included constant guidance and proper counseling, peer counseling, child-teacher conference, child-principal conference, parental notification and guidance, detention, suspension and expulsion in case of a severe violation of rules and regulations.

Student perception towards the outcomes of positive discipline on student behaviors were measured by 28-item questions. Of the 28 item-questions, item 28 “I can be a better student” was at the highest level with a mean score of 4.59 closely followed by item 22 “I know the difference between good and bad behaviors” was at the highest level with a mean score of 4.57. “I cooperate with my friends and teachers at school” and “I don’t take part in fighting, theft, use of drugs, smoking, alcohol, etc.” were also at the highest level with the same mean score of 4.44. However, “I don’t panic when there is a danger. I calmly and confidently face it” was at the moderate level with a mean score of 3.38. The overall perception level of the outcomes of positive discipline on student’s behaviors was high with a total mean score of 4.13.

The descriptive statistics of the outcomes of positive discipline on student behaviors variable was measured by 28-item questions. The finding from the data analysis indicated that the overall level of the outcomes of positive discipline on student behaviors was high with the mean score of 4.13.

As stated by teacher 1 “I feel positive discipline is one of the important technique



which helps to change student behaviors". Many factors like family background, parental behaviors and support, school environment, home environment, teacher behaviors and mass media played important roles in escalating or decreasing children's behaviors. The finding indicated that these factors mostly played excellent roles in teaching desirable behaviors to students. Students directly accepted and copied the behaviors of their teachers and parents. So, teachers and parents had become role models for students by way of their own behaviors and attitudes.

Finally, the schools suggested for the same and consistent positive discipline practices throughout the country. The schools reported that the ministry of education must render prompt and adequate supports to schools when schools experience bureaucratic problems in the process of implementing the school discipline policy from the external forces. The external forces included interference from authorities and public, lack of support and accountability to take disciplinary actions to students and limitations in the policy framework.

## **Discussion**

Three main factors which influence positive discipline of students' behaviors are being discussed below:

1. Student Factors
  - a. *Peer Pressure*

Peer pressure was effective for the students to learn good behaviors from different factors (parents, teachers & friends). Students like when their peers show good behaviors and feel encouraged when they are with well-mannered peers. According to Godwin and Miller (2012) supported the findings that the peer involvement was effective for positive behavior and confirmed that students become more likely to seek guidance from peer groups.

- b. *Students Success*

Students feel happy when their achievement was appreciated by their teachers and parents. Student's success not only encourages them to improve their academic and co-curricular performances but also help them feel proud, build self-confident and self-esteem. It motivates students to behave well and take active part in school activities. Students who perceive that they succeed well in school show a lesser disciplinary issues. To some extent, high achiever students also try to influence other students to behave and study well by being a good role model after experiencing success in the school.

2. School Factors
  - a. *School Climate*

School climate provides an opportunity to have shared beliefs, values and attitudes that shape interactions between students, teachers and administrators (Mitchell, et al, 2010). It plays very important role in improving child's behavior and academic performance. A firm and consistent school discipline will help to develop positive school climate. Both teachers and students can maintain better relationship, respect and develop trust amongst themselves.

*b. Teacher's Behavior*

Teacher's behaviors have positive effects on student's personality and behavior development. Teachers are the second-highest determining factor in the development of an individual student's behavior and learning. They believe in whatever their teachers say or do and teacher's behaviors are directly accepted and copied by students. They take on role models of their teachers. Teachers displayed numerous positive behaviors for their students.

3. Family Factors

*a. Family Background*

Parent's status and income, marital status, educational level and size of family are the family background variables affecting positive discipline or behaviors of children. Adequate parental love and care, supervision, guidance and substantially meeting the needs will help children to behave and perform well in their studies. A child will be happy if his parent is not divorced or separated. If the family is full of friction, conflict between parents, broken homes, divorced or separated, lack of support, and other undesirable behaviors will make a child anxious and may misbehave in life. A case study (McKinney, et al, 2005) indicated that a sixth grade child from a single mother whose mother worked the evening shift at a local fast-food restaurant received little adult supervision. A child was described by his teacher as disruptive, aggressive, and very street smart, and he lacked concentration, his performance was below grade level and had many indiscipline records. This are all driven by the family factors which lack constant guidance from parents and lack constructive feedback from parents.

*b. Parental Behavior*

Parental behaviors include the positive behaviors of parents. They have positive significant effects on the development of attitudes and behaviors of children. The behavior and approach of parents are directly accepted and copied by children. It is crucial for parent to behave well with their children, carefully listen to their problems and achievement at school, encourage and support to do the best in school, explain the consequences if they do not obey rules and appreciate their performances. The positive attitudes and behaviors of parents have a great influence in teaching positive behaviors to children.

### **Outcomes of positive discipline from student's behaviors**

Outcomes of positive discipline on student behaviors mean positive behaviors displayed by students in their performance. The major findings of this study revealed that various stakeholders like parents, students, teachers and the communities should work collaboratively for efficient functioning of school discipline policy. They could help and guide friends with a positive reinforcement. The cooperation among students and teachers were good. Each other's opinions and suggestions were respected and could communicate well by using good language or words with teachers and peers. Students could learn the difference between good and bad behaviors, look for what is positive and take a firm decision carefully and accordingly. They were fully aware of the consequences for their actions and did not exhibit anti-social behaviors

Positive discipline focuses on needs than problems. It helped students to consider their mistakes as learning opportunities, improve concentration and their academic performance. It helped in reducing or eliminating negative behaviors such as absenteeism, tardiness, graffiti, mischief, tattoos, violation of rules and regulations, disrespectful behavior, etc.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study was intended to show positive discipline on students in their performance with self-discipline and self-realization after the implementation of positive discipline approach. Positive discipline literally defines it as a program designed to teach young people to become responsible, respectful and resourceful members of their communities. Despite it was driven by lots of pros and cons, Ministry of Education provides moral supports to the teachers and parents in guiding and parenting their children in molding the positive discipline. This paper concluded that positive discipline practices had more merits, moreover, it motivates learners by substituting the corporal punishment. Positive discipline approach was an effective student discipline management tool. So, the various stakeholders like parents, students, teachers and the communities should work collaboratively for efficient functioning of school discipline policy. The schools are suggested to strengthen the implementation of positive discipline firmly and consistently. Therefore, schools are advised to look for solutions for these problems by using a positive discipline approach more professionally. Corporal punishment was practiced to some extent in some schools. Since the use of corporal punishment was banned, the schools are discouraged to use it. It is also important for schools to make recommendations about the challenges of positive discipline to the Ministry of Education for further support. Though parenting education is practiced in the secondary schools, the schools need to expand such program to larger population of parents and guardians effectively. School discipline policy should be implemented in the same way across the country and the Ministry of Education to ensure the proper implementation of the policy by all the schools. In this respect, it is

essential for the Ministry of Education to support schools in resolving the disciplinary problems promptly and optimistically as well as to provide adequate positive discipline trainings and workshops to schools.

## References

- Barry L. . McCurdy, M. C. (Summer 2003). Positive Behaviour Support in Urban Schools: Can We Prevent the Escalation of Antisocial Behaviour? *Journal of Positive Behaviour Interventions*, 158-170.
- Brigman, G. & Campbell, C. (2003). Helping students improve academic achievement and School success behavior. [Journal Articles; Reports-Research]. 91-98:American School Counselor Association. 1101 King Street Suite 625, Alexandria, VA 22314.
- Durrant, J. E. (2007). *Positive Discipline: What it is and how to do it. Bangkok, Thailand: Save the Children Sweden Southeast Asia and the Pacific.*
- Kayikei, K. (2009). The effect of classroom management skills of elementary school teachers on undesirable discipline behaviour of students. *Procedia Social and Behavioural Sciences 1*.
- Klinginsmith, E. (2007). *The Relative Impact of Principal Managerial, Instructional and Transformational Leadership on Student Achievement in Missouri Middle Level Schools.* Columbia: Campus Institutional Review Board.
- Lawson, L. H. (2011). Social Workers' Leadership for Positive School Climate via Data-informed Planning and Decision Making. *A Journal of the National Association of Social Workers, 33(2), 106-118.*
- Lloyd, D. A. (2009). *Peers Influencing Peers: Substance Abuse Patterns Among Students in Recovery Schools.* The University of Minnesota:Deborah Ann Lloyd, 2009.
- M. J. O' Fallon, K. D. Butterfield. (2012). The Influence of Unethical Peer Behaviour on Observers Unethical Behaviour: *Journal of Business Ethics, 109(2), 117-131.*A Social Cognitive Perspective. Spring Science+Business Media B.V.
- McGrath, P. C. (2011). The Effects of Student Discipline on School Climate in a School Using Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports. University of Wisconsin--Superior.
- Meier, P. M. (2010). Disruptive behaviour in the Foundation Phase of Schooling. *South African Journal Education , 30, 41-57.*

- Miller, R. M. (2008). *The Influence of Teachers' Caring Behaviors on High School Students' Behavior and Grades*. Seton Hall University: ©Richard M. Miller,2008
- Mowder, Barbara A. ;Shamah, Renee. (2010). *Parent Behaviour Importance Questionnaire-Revised: Scale Development and Psychometric Characteristics*. Retrieved from [www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/recordDetail?accno=EJ924066](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/recordDetail?accno=EJ924066) on 30.12.2012
- Norbu, T. (2021). Effective School Discipline Practicies of some Primary Schools in Pema Gatshel Dzonghag. *Journal of Humanities and Education Development*, 1-7.
- Ross, G. E. (August 2012). *The Effects of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support on Student Discipline Referrals and Attendance*. Western Kentucky University.
- Serakwane, J. M. (2007). Establishing Discipline in the Contemporary Classroom. Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria.
- Tenzin, S. (2006). Corporal Punishment in Bhutanese Schools. *RABSEL the CERD Education Journal*, 8, 1-18.