Positive Discipline as A New Paradigm Alternative in Classroom Management: An Epistemological Study

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Abstract

The success of learning is determined by safe and comfortable classroom conditions for students. This condition is created if the teacher can manage the class by creating a positive and mutually respectful relationship between students and teachers. Positive discipline is an approach that focuses on positive reinforcement and reflection rather than punishment to manage student behavior. The aim of this research is to explore how teachers manage the classroom optimally by using a positive discipline approach in the classroom. Using an epistemological framework, this article aims to understand how positive discipline contributes to learning and can be applied in the context of classroom management. This research is a type of qualitative research. Data was collected through classroom observations, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and analysis of related documents. The research results show that the application of positive discipline can increase student involvement in the learning process, reduce conflict, and improve the quality of teacher-student interactions. In addition, this research found that changing the classroom management paradigm towards positive discipline requires systemic support and a deep understanding of its basic principles. This study contributes to the development of positive discipline theory as well as offers practical recommendations for educators.

Keywords: Positive discipline, classroom management, epistemology

1. Introduction

Classroom management is the teacher's efforts or actions to create optimal conditions so that the learning process can run effectively (Hidayat et al., 2020). For many years, traditional approaches to classroom management often emphasized control, punishment, and authority-based discipline. This approach aims to maintain order and increase student compliance, but in practice, this method often causes negative effects such as feelings of fear, stress, and decreased student motivation to learn. Therefore, an urgent need arises to look for more humane, educational and sustainable alternatives in classroom management.

One approach that is gaining increasing attention is positive discipline. Positive discipline is a learning method that supports student success, provides the information needed for learning, and helps the development process (Durrant, 2010). Positive discipline focuses on building respectful relationships between teachers and students, supports students' moral and social development, and emphasizes the development of skills for

constructive problem solving. This approach also prioritizes students' active participation in the learning process and fosters personal responsibility without the need to use physical or emotional punishment.

In the Philosophy of Science, Epistemology is a branch of philosophy that studies and seeks to determine the nature and scope of knowledge, including its foundations and justification for existing knowledge statements (Rusdiana, 2018). Epistemologically, positive discipline is based on the understanding that classroom management is not just an effort to control student behavior, but is an opportunity to shape character and life skills (Balqize & Rifqi, 2023). In this context, the positive discipline paradigm paves the way for creating a more inclusive and productive learning environment, capable of facilitating holistic learning. Thus, positive discipline offers an interesting and relevant alternative as a new paradigm in classroom management.

Previous research related to this research is research conducted by Maryati Salmiah, Abdul Aziz Rusman, and Zainal Abidin with the title Basic Concepts of Class Management in Management Psychology Review explaining that the objectives of class management are: 1) creating conducive classroom situations and conditions, 2) eliminating obstacles in teaching and learning interactions, 3) providing and organizing learning facilities, 4) coaching and guiding according to individual characteristics. There are 3 components in classroom management, namely: physical conditions, socio-emotional conditions, and organizational conditions. Actions that need to be taken in managing the classroom are preventive action, corrective action and curative action (Salmiah et al., 2022).

This research aims to examine in depth the epistemology of positive discipline, as well as examine how this approach can be applied effectively in the context of modern classroom management. With a deeper understanding of the philosophical basis of positive discipline, it is hoped that this research can contribute to the development of more progressive and sustainable classroom management practices.

2. Research Methods

This research is a type of qualitative research which aims to explore the application of positive discipline as a new paradigm in classroom management. Qualitative research was chosen because it allows researchers to understand in depth the subjects' experiences and perspectives regarding positive discipline. The data in this research was collected through three main methods: classroom observations, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and analysis of documents related to classroom management policies. This triangulation approach is used to ensure the validity and reliability of the data obtained (Sugiyono, 2018).

SDN 2 Karanglewas Lor was chosen as the research location because it is a relevant environment for implementing and evaluating positive discipline approaches. Grade 5 is an important phase in students' development, where they begin to develop more complex social and emotional skills. Researchers want to explore how the application of positive discipline in the classroom can have a significant impact on student behavior and classroom dynamics.

Class observations are carried out to directly observe the implementation of positive discipline by teachers, interactions between teachers and students, and their impact on the atmosphere and dynamics of the class. During the observation, the researcher used an observation sheet which recorded the teacher's behavior in managing the class, students' responses to management methods, as well as forms of positive intervention used to overcome discipline problems. In-depth interviews were conducted with teachers who implement positive discipline to gain an understanding of their motivations, challenges and perceived outcomes. Interviews with students were also conducted to determine their perceptions regarding the disciplinary approach used in their classes.

In addition, document analysis was carried out on school policies, classroom management guidelines, and teaching materials related to positive discipline. This document was analyzed to see how positive discipline principles were integrated into the classroom management framework and how the policy was implemented. The results of observations, interviews and document analysis were then analyzed thematically to find relevant patterns and produce conclusions about the effectiveness and potential of positive discipline as a new paradigm in classroom management.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Application of Positive Discipline in Class Management

Positive discipline is an approach to discipline and even build a child's character without punishment. Although without punishment, the positive discipline approach is not an approach that allows or gives unlimited freedom to children, because in the positive discipline approach there is freedom but there are also restrictions (Souisa et al., 2022, p. 18). Positive discipline is an approach that focuses on developing students' social and emotional skills, aims to strengthen positive relationships between students and educators, and effectively reduces inappropriate behavior desired (Asbar et al., 2024). Positive discipline aims to teach

students about responsibility and the consequences of their actions through a supportive, not punitive, approach. This method is based on the principles of positive psychology and education which emphasizes the importance of empathetic communication, understanding and mutual respect in the learning process. In this context, positive discipline not only aims to regulate student behavior, but also builds self-confidence and intrinsic motivation in them. Here are some steps implemented by teachers:

3.1.1. Clear and Participatory Class Rules

Involve students in formulating class rules. Together make an agreement about the importance of respecting teachers and friends, maintaining cleanliness, and completing assignments on time. By involving them, students feel responsible for the rules they have made.

3.1.2. Positive Reinforcement

Give awards or praise when students demonstrate good behavior. This award can be in the form of verbal praise, stickers, or class award points that can be exchanged for small things like extra play time. Focus on positive behavior, "Thank you for raising your hand before speaking."

3.1.3. Educational Consequences

When there is a rule violation, focus on educational consequences rather than punishment. If a student is late in submitting an assignment, provide an opportunity to improve the assignment with additional guidance, rather than immediately giving a low grade.

3.1.4. Social Emotional Development

Teach social and emotional skills, such as how to handle conflict, work together, and manage emotions. This is done through simulations or real case discussions. This helps students understand the impact of their behavior on others.

3.1.5. Modeling and Exemplifying

Teachers should be consistent in modeling good discipline behavior, such as being on time, speaking politely, and keeping promises. Students tend to imitate the behavior they see from their teachers.

3.1.6. Restorative Practices

If a conflict or discipline problem occurs, encourage students to think of solutions that restore the situation. Students who break the rules must repair the damage they have caused, both physically and emotionally.

3.1.7. Reinforcing Individual and Collective Responsibility

Create a system where students are held accountable not only for their own behavior but also for the success of the team or group. This can be implemented in group projects or shared assignments, where they learn the discipline of contributing to the group.

Teachers who implement positive discipline create a classroom atmosphere that is more supportive and friendly for all students. The positive discipline approach used by teachers not only focuses on enforcing rules, but also on developing empathetic communication and active participation of students. Teachers provide opportunities for students to be directly involved in the learning process, while also rewarding students for their good behavior. For example, if a student breaks a rule, instead of immediately giving punishment, the teacher invites the student to discuss the consequences of that action. The goal is to make students understand the impact of their behavior, both on themselves and others. This way, students are more emotionally and intellectually engaged, so they better understand why the rules are important and why they should be followed.

This approach also helps foster a sense of responsibility in students because they are invited to think critically about their actions. In addition, it also increases students' awareness of expected behavior in the classroom, reduces the likelihood of repeat violations, and creates a more harmonious and productive learning atmosphere.

The results of interviews with teachers indicated that the application of positive discipline brought significant changes in the relationship between teachers and students. Teachers report that by using this approach, they feel closer and connected to students. This improved engagement creates a more supportive atmosphere in the classroom, where students feel comfortable participating in discussions and learning activities. These changes show that positive discipline focuses not only on managing behavior, but also on building healthy relationships between teachers and students.

In addition to better relationships, teachers also noted increased student engagement in the learning process. Students who previously lacked active now shows greater interest and participation. This occurs along with a reduction in behavioral problems that often interfere with learning. By creating a positive and inclusive environment, teachers can facilitate more effective and interactive learning. In addition, teachers realize that implementing positive discipline helps them to better understand students' emotional and social needs, which contributes to improving overall classroom dynamics.

From the students' perspective, the interview results showed that they felt more heard and appreciated. Students appreciate the way teachers provide constructive feedback, which not only highlights mistakes but also provides support for improvement. This feeling of appreciation makes students more motivated to behave well, because they do it out of a sense of responsibility, not because of fear of punishment. Thus, positive discipline not only improves student behavior but also encourages them to actively contribute to a positive learning environment.

3.2. Epistemological Study: New Paradigm in Classroom Management

According to Charles Schaefer, discipline is an action that includes teaching, guidance, or encouragement provided by adults with the aim of helping children learn to live as social creatures and achieve optimal growth and development (Gunawan, 2014). Traditional discipline approaches often emphasize control and punishment as the primary means of managing student behavior. This method can cause negative relationships between teachers and students and reduce student motivation to learn. Positive discipline offers an alternative by shifting the focus from punishment to developing mutually supportive relationships.

From an epistemological point of view, positive discipline is in line with constructivism theory, which emphasizes that students are active participants in the learning process (Suparno, 2001). This approach encourages students to understand concepts and rules in a deeper and more meaningful way, rather than simply following instructions. According to Vygotsky, social interaction and cultural context greatly influence the learning process, so that the application of positive discipline that encourages collaboration and communication can enrich students' learning experiences (Saputro & Pakpahan, 2021).

Epistemologically, positive discipline offers a paradigm shift in classroom management from the traditional authoritative model to a more dialogical and participatory approach. Positive discipline is rooted in the theories of constructivism and humanism, where students are seen as active and autonomous individuals in the learning process. This approach is different from the traditional paradigm which emphasizes control and punishment, where students are often treated as objects that must obey rules. In positive discipline, teachers act as facilitators who help students to understand the reasons behind the rules and develop the social skills necessary to make responsible decisions.

The results of the document analysis show that school policies that support positive discipline have a strong focus on developing student character. This policy is designed to create a respectful school environment, where relationships between students and teachers are built on cooperation and mutual understanding. By emphasizing values such as respect for each other, this policy aims to create a positive culture within schools, where students feel safe and comfortable learning.

In addition, this policy is in line with learning principles that prioritize the development of students' emotional and social intelligence. By paying attention to emotional and social aspects, schools strive to equip students not only with academic knowledge, but also with the skills necessary to interact effectively with others. This includes the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions, empathize with others, and collaborate in groups. This approach contributes to more holistic learning and prepares students to face real-world challenges.

Thus, positive discipline not only functions to improve student behavior in the classroom, but also contributes to the formation of broader moral and ethical values. Policies that support positive discipline help create individuals who not only excel academically, but also have integrity and strong character. This confirms that effective education includes character and ethical development as an integral part of students' learning experiences, so that they can become responsible and ethical members of society.

3.3. Implications and Challenges of Implementing Positive Discipline

Although positive discipline shows many benefits, interviews with teachers also reveal some challenges in its implementation. Some teachers find it difficult to apply this approach to students who have serious behavior problems or whose classroom environments are less supportive. Teachers also need special training to master the communication skills required in a positive discipline approach, such as conflict mediation and problem solving. In addition, school cultures accustomed to traditional discipline approaches need time to adapt to this new paradigm.

This research highlights the importance of consistently applying positive discipline in classroom management, which has proven to be an effective alternative for dealing with challenges in education. When teachers apply positive discipline consistently, they are able to create a supportive and positive atmosphere, which allows students to feel more secure and valued. This approach focuses on strengthening good behavior and empathetic communication, so that students are more involved in the learning process and more open to participating in discussions.

Furthermore, teachers who successfully implemented positive discipline reported significant improvements in the quality of interactions between teachers and students. By implementing this approach, teachers can reduce tension and conflict in the classroom, which often hinders the learning process. A more conducive classroom atmosphere allows students to learn better, increases their engagement in learning, and creates stronger relationships between teachers and students. These positive interactions impact student motivation and make them feel more valued.

Finally, positive discipline not only resolves discipline problems that arise in the classroom, but also creates an environment that supports students' holistic academic and social development. When students feel valued and heard, they tend to demonstrate more positive behavior. This positive environment contributes to the formation of students' character, as well as helping them develop important social skills in everyday life. Thus, positive discipline serves as a comprehensive strategy to create a better learning atmosphere, supporting students' growth in various aspects of their lives.

4. Conclusion

Positive discipline has been proven to offer a new, more constructive paradigm in classroom management compared to traditional discipline approaches. Based on research results, positive discipline creates a more inclusive learning environment and supports the development of healthy relationships between teachers and students. This approach encourages student involvement in understanding the rules, gives them responsibility for their own behavior, and emphasizes dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution. Epistemologically, positive discipline is rooted in

constructivism, which views students as active participants in the learning process and their social-emotional development.

The application of positive discipline also has a positive impact on the classroom atmosphere, improves student behavior, and builds respect and cooperation between students and teachers. Although implementing positive discipline requires training and adaptation time, this research shows that this paradigm is more relevant in creating a holistic educational experience and supporting student character formation. Thus, positive discipline is a promising alternative to be widely applied in classroom management at various levels of education, as long as it is supported by adequate policies and training for teachers.

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