



RESEARCH PAPER

Disruptive Behavior of the Students in the Classroom at Elementary Level: Causes and Remedies

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of the study was to find out the causes of disruptive behavior among the elementary school students and to suggest remedies about it. The target population of the study consisted of 520 elementary-level students of 7th grade and all the Elementary School Teachers teaching at 34 elementary schools situated in Tehsil D.G. Khan. 328 students along with 29 teachers were selected by using cluster random sampling technique as a sample for this study. A Questionnaire on Disruptive Behaviour Scale (QDBS) was developed to collect data from the sampled respondents. A semi structured interview was also conducted with elementary school teachers in order to generalize the results of the study. The results of the study exhibited numerous causes of the disruptive behaviour like; inexperienced teachers, teachers' less command over the subject matter, low teaching quality, poor and uncaring parenting, students' emotional and mental problems. In the light of the conclusions, it is suggested to arrange collaborative training sessions for the teachers and the parents to reduce the disruptive behaviour of the students in the classroom.

KEYWORDS Classroom, Disruptive Behaviour, Elementary Level, Students

Introduction

Unlike Education refers to the process of supporting learning or the acquisition of information, skills, values, morals, beliefs, habits, and personal growth. Educational techniques include teaching, training, storytelling, discourse and concentrated study. With education, everyone can learn to read and write. To grow and flourish in life, everyone requires a good education. Education's main purpose is to influence people's behaviour for the better preparation of life in future.

Disruptive behaviour is considered one of the most crucial problems in education (Farrell, 2011). Moreover, students' disruptive behaviour nowadays has been the crucial matter of interest to people within the fields of psychology and education (Arbuckle & Little, 2004). Students' disruptive behaviour has become a familiar topic in teachers' community and both the new as well as experienced teachers perceive students' disruptive behaviour as a subject of concern (Silva & Neves, 2007).

Teachers often find students' disruptive behaviour in their classroom. Most disruptive behaviours to deal with are insignificant enough (Leflot, van Lier, Onghena, & Colpin, 2010). Consequently, teachers are in fear if they are unable to manage students' disruptive behaviour, which may occur suddenly in the classroom (Silva & Neves, 2007).

The teachers seem desperate before the children with disruptive behaviour and often say that it is really difficult to educate and to handle the students with disruptive behaviour. While handling such students, the teachers feel de-skilling, stressful, and unrewarding. It is of course understood necessary to support teachers and others involved in educating such students. (Farrell, 2011).

Different management and discipline handling techniques are used by the teachers in order to control and avoid the disruptive behaviour on behalf of the students in the class rooms. The students with disruptive behaviour usually show their disruptive behaviour such as refusing to work, insulting others, backchat and other attention-seeking tactics in the class room. The teachers who are teaching such classes have to spend a lot of time and energy to control and cope with students' disruptive behaviour (Chaplain, 2003).

A lot of researches and studies have already been conducted on students' disruptive behaviour. However, particular studies on its forms, sources and students' expectations to cope with that behaviour in certain subject matter should be encouraged. Rahimi and Karkami (2015) encouraged extensive research to determine the sources of students' disruptive behaviour and devised principles to educate teachers on how to manage their classes effectively. Disruptive conduct refers to a set of inappropriate behaviours in pupils that prevent learning and interpersonal relations (McDaniel & Flower, (2015). These behaviours of the students are usually characterised by the students' emotional nature. Disruptive behavior involve a certain amount of disobedience, confront and lack of respect means disrespect towards other fellows (Hulac & Benson, (2010).

Dixon (2010) illustrated that how students might show their disruptive behaviour in the classroom by jumping, shouting out and behaving with ill manners as if they were in their own world. According to Lambert, Cartledge, Heward, and Lo (2006), students' disruptive behaviour includes the following: do not pay heed and getting attention towards the lecture, throwing articles and chalking on the class mates during the lecture, having conversation with others during teacher-directed instruction, aggravating and irritating others like making faces at others, laughing at or touching others, making noises or sounds with voice, tapping objects, pounding on desk, voicing disapproval with instruction, throwing or twirling objects), attending to other stimuli like looking at or playing with other objects in desk or misusing instructional tools, writing notes to friends or spitting, drawing pictures, sucking on fingers, or leaving assigned seat without permission including tipping back in chair on two legs.

Teachers, mostly are often unaware with the causes of students' disruptive behaviour. Teachers usually perceive or estimate the aspects causing students' disruptive behaviour like poor home environment, the poor attitude, low IQ or limited learning ability, low socio-economic status, lack of parental support, physical problems and emotional problems. (Muzaffar & Javaid, 2018). Such kinds of perceptions on behalf of the teachers indicate that they have very limited or no control over their students' behaviour. However, it becomes very essential for the teachers as well as parents to know the sources before taking the necessary steps in order to cope with the students' disruptive behaviour (Fauziati, 2015).

The influence of students' disruptive behaviour in the class room is considered very dangerous as per the different research studies. Perle (2016) states in his study that

a single student's disruptive behaviour can influence his own and other students' learning altogether in the class room. According to Fauziati (2015), in the findings of his study, he argues that a single student with such behavior can cause other students to become anxious, mischievous and insecure in the classroom. Students' disruptive behaviour can spread like Malaria and may affect badly throughout the learning environment as well as influence other students. However, it becomes a colossal challenge for the class room teachers because they find it difficult to cope with students' such disruptive behaviour. Most but majority of the teachersd may not be sure how to manage the situation.

Karaj and Rapti (2013) highlighted that the students' disruptive behaviour is considered one of the most important sources of teachers' stress. According to Parsonson (2012), the stress level of the teachers as well as the gentle students may increase by this kind of behaviour by the indisciplined students. Such kind of activities disrupt the delivery flow of the lesson and in his way the learning objectives are not achieved properly. It also shifts the focus of attention from the academic tasks to the distractions influenced by disruptive behaviours.

According to the world of education and in Education, this disruptive behaviour is spreading rapidly across the globe as well as in Pakistan. The reports revealed that in the last few decades, such types of treatment as exceeding classroom rules, obstruction of work, challenging teachers' power against another classmate, and aggression have been the most common (Choudhry, Muzaffar, & Javaid, 2016). According to experts, there are two kinds of violence within the disruptive conduct students usually show in the class room. The first one is verbal violence, which includes shouting, voicing, insulting, screaming, swearing and names calling. All of these disruptive activities are demonstrated solely for the goal of satire, disgrace, pestering or making a classmate or instructor feel awful. Then the second one is physical violence, which includes things like tampering, rough handling, hitting, kicking, beating and so on, all with the objectives of harassing, attacking, or targeting someone in order to agitate the victim student .

According to various socio scientists, It is very important to find the numerous reasons for this kind of defective behaviour of children in schools in order to ensure and maintain the learning environment. Putting the same notion in mind, the present study may be useful for the teachers to find the causes of disturbing behaviour, which is often challenging in the classroom, to employ different techniques, and to provide the foundation for a more constructive method of responding to disruptive actions. The findings of this research work may help parents understand how disruptive activity affects children and will lead them to provide proper direction and monitoring. This study will also provide opportunity for the parents to make a close collaboration with the school personnel if they desire for the better personality of their young ones (Ahmed, Javaid, Muzaffar, Fatima, & Hussain, 2015).

Through this study, the researcher may be able to focus on the main issues and analyse them. In such a setting, laws and tactics to decrease disruptive behaviour and its impact on classroom management are urgently needed. The strike brought the issue to the attention of policymakers and lawmakers. There are various types of disruptive behaviour, each with its own set of factors that have a detrimental impact on classroom management. The purpose of this study is to look into pupils' disruptive behaviour in the classroom at the elementary level.

Hypothesis

Ho1. There is no significant difference between the opinion of rural and urban Elementary level students regarding causes of disruptive behaviour.

Material and Methods

A mixed method approach was used to design the study which included both qualitative and quantitative data. The population of study comprised all the 7th grade elementary-level students and teachers in government Girls elementary schools situated in District D. G. Khan. There were 34 female elementary schools in District D. G. Khan, as per the list provided by D.E.O. Elementary District D. G. Khan. Cluster random sampling technique was used in this study. Eight schools were selected randomly as a sample from the total of thirty-four schools. There were 328 students and 29 teachers in the eight selected schools (four schools from urban area and five from rural areas). There were 196 students from urban areas and 132 students from rural areas. Twenty-nine elementary school teachers were selected as a sample from eight elementary schools. A scale on the causes of disruptive behaviour was developed and administered to elementary-level teachers and female students enrolled in the 7th grade. There were 23 statements in the questionnaire.

The same questionnaire was also administered to the Elementary teachers in order to gain their opinion regarding the causes of disruptive behaviour among the students. The obtained score from the two groups (students and teachers) was feeded in the SPSS and the positive correlation was obtained. This correlation authenticated the similarity of the opinions of the students and teachers regarding the causes of disruptive behavior. The content validity of the instrument was ensured after considering the opinions of the experts from numerous Universities. The reliability of the instrument was 0.87 after pilot testing, which was found good. The intensity of the disruptive behaviour scale on the basis of Mean score was ordered in the following Table in order to generalize the results of the study properly.

Table 1
Levels of Disruptive Behaviour Scale (LDBS)

Category	Mean
1.00-1.80	Very low level of Disruptive behavior
1.81-2.60	Low level of Disruptive behavior
2.61-3.20	Medium level of Disruptive behavior
3.21-4.20	High level of Disruptive behavior
4.21-5.00	Very High level of Disruptive behavior

These levels were fixed on the basis of the Mean Score obtained against each statement in the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 23 statements was developed after a thorough review of the related literature and after consulting other related questionnaires on the subject.

Table 2
Analysis of the Questionnaire Regarding Causes of DB (From Students)

Sr.#	Statements	Mean
1	I think disruptive behaviour occurs when students lack respect for other students and for teachers.	4.31

2	Students may show aggressive behaviour when there is a hurdle to their needs.	3.31
3	Students' lack of interest in topics taught by teachers may cause disruption in the class.	3.10
4	When teachers do not treat all the students equally, then students may show disruptive behaviour.	4.32
5	The students show disruptive behaviour in the class whose parents do not sacrifice their time for the moral development of their children.	4.42
6	Lack of classroom discipline is one of the causes of disruptive behaviour among students in the classroom.	3.32
7	The uncomfortable physical and psychological environment of the classroom may compel the students to show disruptive behaviour.	3.20
8	Students show disruptive behaviour when teachers do not entertain the legal demands of students.	3.21
9	Students show disruptive behaviour when they are tired and over burdened.	3.04
10	Sometimes students behave badly when they do not understand what is being taught in the class.	4.24
11	Another reason for disruptive behaviour among students during lectures is the stressful environment in the classroom.	3.32
12	Students who are not getting enough sleep may show disruptive behaviour in the classroom.	3.71
13	Parents indifferent attitude means less attention towards their children may be a cause of their children's disruptive behaviour.	4.23
14	Students show disruptive behaviour if the physical and psychological environment of the class room is not comfortable.	4.31
15	When students do not like their school, they may show disruptive behaviour in the classroom.	3.72
16	Students being bullied are also a cause of disruptive behaviour in the classroom.	3.71
17	Novice and inexperienced teachers sometimes may become a cause of disruptive behaviour among the students.	4.61
18	Favoritism towards some students on behalf of the teachers may invite disruptive behaviour in the remaining students.	3.72
19	Provision of transitional time period between one class and another may develop disruptive behaviour in the classroom.	4.54
20	Sometimes students show disruptive behaviour when their learning expectations are not filled properly.	3.76
21	Students show more disruptive behaviour when the class size is large.	4.29
22	Sometimes students behave badly when there is no break between different subject classes.	3.31
23	Teachers' negative attitude towards students may be another cause of disruptive behaviour among students.	4.52
Combine Mean		3.83

The mean combined value of the disruptive behaviour scale (DBS) was 3.83, showing a High level of disruptive behaviour by 7th grade female students. On 10 statements (1, 4, 5, 10,13, 14, 17, 19, 21,23), the level of disruptive behavior was found very high.

Table 3
Analysis of Questionnaire Regarding Causes of DB (From Teachers)

Sr.#	Statements	Mean
1	I think disruptive behaviour occurs when students lack respect for other students and for teachers.	4.31
2	Students may show aggressive behaviour when there is a hurdle to their needs.	3.31
3	Students' lack of interest in topics taught by teachers may cause disruption in the class.	3.10
4	When teachers do not treat all the students equally, then students may show disruptive behaviour.	4.32
5	The students show disruptive behaviour in the class whose parents do not sacrifice their time for school work.	4.42
6	Lack of classroom discipline is one of the causes of disruptive behaviour among students in the classroom.	3.32
7	The uncomfortable physical and psychological environment of the classroom may compel the students to show disruptive behaviour.	3.20
8	Students show disruptive behaviour when teachers do not entertain the legal demands of students.	3.21
9	Students show disruptive behaviour when they are tired and over burdened.	3.04
10	Sometimes students behave badly when they do not understand what is being taught in the class.	4.24
11	Another reason for disruptive behaviour among students during lectures is the stressful environment in the classroom.	3.32
12	Students who are not getting enough sleep may show disruptive behaviour in the classroom.	3.71
13	Parents indifferent attitude means less attention towards their children may be a cause of their children's disruptive behaviour.	4.23
14	Students show disruptive behaviour if their seats are not comfortable.	4.31
15	When students do not like their school, they may show disruptive behaviour in the classroom.	3.72
16	Students being bullied are also a cause of disruptive behaviour in the classroom.	3.71
17	Novice and inexperienced teachers sometimes may become a cause of disruptive behaviour among the students.	4.61
18	Favoritism towards some students on behalf of the teachers may invite disruptive behaviour in the remaining students.	3.72
19	Provision of transitional time period between one class and another may develop disruptive behaviour in the classroom.	4.54
20	Sometimes students show disruptive behaviour when they have unsatisfied expectations of the lesson.	3.76

21	Students show more disruptive behaviour when the class size is large.	4.29
22	Sometimes students behave badly when there is no break between different subject classes.	3.31
23	Teachers' negative attitude towards students may be another cause of disruptive behaviour among students.	4.53
Combine Mean		3.84

The mean combined value of the disruptive behaviour scale (DBS) was 3.84, showing a high level of disruptive behaviour.

The correlation coefficient value between disruptive behaviour scale filled by students and and disruptive behaviour scale filled by the teachers about the causes of disruptive behaviour was as follows:

Table 4
Correlation Coefficient Value

Variable	DBS(Filled out by students)	DBS (Filled out by teachers)	Correlation Coefficient
M _{comb}	3.83	3.84	.98

The correlation coefficient between the opinion score of elementary school teachers and female students enrolled in 7th grade was computed.98, indicating a positive relationship regarding the causes of disruptive behaviour.

A semi-structured interview was conducted with elementary school teachers in order to find out the causes of disruptive behaviour. Each question was answered under the emerging themes by the sampled elementary school teachers (n = 29), and the qualitative data was quantified in the form of a simple percentage (descriptive statistics). The following questions were asked from the elementary school teachers, and the collected data was analysed against each question along with the emerging themes, which are given as follows:

Table 4
Causes of Disruptive Behaviour

Emerging Themes	Elementary School Teachers	Percentage
Large class size	3	10%
Mistreatment with students	3	10%
Poor quality teaching	3	10%
Lack of interest in topics	2	7%
Ignore legal demands	3	10%
Lack of discipline	1	4%
Uncaring parents	3	10%
Repeating the same class	2	7%
Lack of motivation	1	4%
Transitional time between two classes	6	21%
Classroom poor conditions	2	7%

One open-ended question was included at the end of the questionnaire that was filled by the Teachers only. The Question was "Give some suggestions to control or minimize the disruptive behaviour among the students in the class", and it was filled or suggested by the 29 teachers. Most of the teachers gave the similar suggestions while some of them added valuable and distinct suggestions both of which are given as under:

- Training should be given to teachers to control the disruptive behaviour.
- Teachers should use different teaching methods that engage students in their studies.
- Teachers should treat students equally.
- Educational institutions should provide a comfortable physical and psychological environment.
- Teachers should keep students busy in the classroom; they should not be given spare time.
- Teachers should go for teaching with proper preparation.
- Classroom size should be according to the prescribed rules.
- Teachers should be role models for students, so they should show a positive attitude in front of them.
- There should be a break after the delivery of consecutive two lectures.
- Teachers should reduce the chances of transitional time between one class and another.
- Teachers should develop a disciplined environment in the classroom.
- Teachers should use self-management strategies to maintain a reduction in disruptive behaviour.
- Teachers should encourage students to behave appropriately.
- Teachers should not mistreat students.
- Teachers should show justice and no discrimination in the classroom.
- Teachers should fulfil the legal demands of students.
- Teachers should provide quality teaching.
- Teachers should conduct parent-teacher meetings to motivate uncaring parents.

Table 5
Testing Null Hypothesis

	Urban	Rural
Mean	50.02	48.17
Standard deviation	8.70	8.08
Sample	196	132
Z-test	1.28	

CV= 1.28. CV < TV (1.96), so null hypothesis was accepted showing that "There is no significant difference between the opinion of rural and urban Elementary level students regarding the causes of disruptive behaviour".

Conclusion

According to the criteria established by the researcher in Table 1 about the Level of Disruptive Behaviour Scale (DBS)" in the questionnaire filled out by 7th grade elementary school students about the causes of disruptive behaviour, it was determined that the Mean combine on this questionnaire was 3.83, showing a high level of disruptive behavior by 7th grade female students at elementary level. In the questionnaire filled out

by sampled elementary school teachers, it was determined that the Mean combine on this was found 3.84, showing a high level of disruptive behaviour by the students perceived or observed by the teachers.

Z-test statistics were used to compare the differences between the opinions of rural and urban elementary 7th grade students regarding causes of disruptive behaviour at a 0.05 level of confidence, the calculated Z-test value ($Z = 1.28$) was discovered to be less than the table value (1.96), so the null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, it was determined that there is no significant difference between the opinion of rural and urban elementary level students regarding causes of disruptive behaviour".

The following main causes of disruptive behavior among the elementary level students were recorded from the collected data. The literature exposes a number of causes of disruptive behavior. Improper arrangement in the class room and the uncomfortable physical environment of the classroom may cause disruptive behaviour in the students. The results of the study are in line with the results of the study conducted by Proshansky in 2005 on a similar study in which he states that "disruptive behaviour" occurs when the classroom is not arranged properly.

According to the result of this study, parents indifferent attitude towards their children showed a very high level of disruptive behaviour among the students. It means that the parents should pay proper attention towards their children behaviour and should keep close contact with the school teachers. Overcrowded classes are also responsible for the disruptive behaviour of the students and the results of the study showed a high level of disruptive behavior among the students. This result of the study was authenticated by the Schneider (1998), Seidman (2005), and Dzubak (2007), those concluded that larger class sizes are a major cause of disruptive behavior.

This study also concluded that the emotionally disturbed students also show a high level of disruptive behavior in the class. The results of the study conducted by Kuhlenschmidt in 1999 declare that students' emotional problems are the leading cause of disruptive behaviour. Clayton (2000) narrates that the emotionally disturbed students show disruptive behaviour if they are mistreated.

Showing favouritism and inequality among the students on behalf of the teacher is an other high level cause of disruptive behaviour that was concluded in this study. These results are in line with the results of the studies conducted by the Axup & Gersch in 2008, Shumate & Wills in 2010 which narrate that injustice by teachers is a key cause of disruptive behaviour among students. Students' willingness and unwillingness affect much of their behaviour in the classroom, affecting their performance and achievement. Students will show positive behaviour when they are willing to learn. On the other hand, they will show disruptive behaviour when they are not willing to learn.

Students' disruptive behaviour may also happen because their basic needs are not met. It can also be caused by their unmet or unsatisfied expectations of the lesson. The results of the study show that the novice and inexperienced teachers usually do not keep in their mind the willingness and expectations of the students while teaching in the class room; so there is a colossal chance of disruptive behaviour in this perspective. Murphy (2007) states that students' disruptive behaviour must be addressed to achieve an effective learning environment and to help teachers be effective.

Murphy (2010) also focused on the treatment of students' disruptive behaviour on behalf of the teachers in order to make the process of teaching and learning effective. This dream may be attained reality only by understanding the individualities of each group of students and devising fruitful strategies to cope with students' disruptive behaviour. In this way, the administration may enable novice and inexperienced teachers to be more effective.

The disruptive behaviour may be controlled when the faculty, administration and the parents will collaborate and sacrifice joint efforts in this connection. The institution only will not be able to get fruitful results without the cooperation of society and parents. This can be accomplished by preventing disruptive behaviour without affecting the student's academic progress. To achieve this, cooperation and collaboration between the faculty member and the academic administration about the student's behaviour may be essential. While teachers endeavour to find new methods to interact with their students via technology, to pay close attention to what we are teaching our students is considered essential for the redressal of disruptive behaviour.

Recommendations

The study recommends that:

- The administration pay much attention on the implementation of time table in its true letter and spirit.
- The teachers should be trained enough as "competent" individuals who can meet students' expectations.
- Educational institutions should make laws and use tactics to decrease the causes of disruptive behavior.
- A continuous training mechanism should be introduced with the teachers to tolerate and control the disruptive behavior of the students.
- Teachers should use self-management strategies to maintain reductions in disruptive behavior.
- A ranking system should be introduced for behavior, marking bad, good, better, and excellent behavior for students, which reduces the students' disruptive behavior. This ranking regarding behavior should be given a place and weightage in the assessment mechanism.
- Teaching methods should be made more motivational in order to attract students towards studies and encourage them to behave appropriately.

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