



## **Influence Of Reward And Punishment In Enhancing Discipline Among Primary School Pupils In Yobe State**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the influence of reward and punishment among primary school Pupils in Potiskum Educational Zone of Yobe state. Four objectives and four research questions guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of this study constituted all primary five pupils and their teachers within public primary schools in Potiskum Educational Zone. The sample of this study was drawn from the target students' population of 2,289 of the sampled primary schools of Potiskum Local Government Area with 322 student respondents. The instruments used for data collection in this study include observation and Questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed by the researcher and a reliability index of 0.74 was determined through test re-test method. The data was analyzed through descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages. The findings indicated that, rewards had a positive impact on children's compliance with school rules; all types of punishment had an impact on the children's behavior; withdrawing privileges had the greatest impact on behavior; and material and non-material rewards had an overall impact on children's class attendance. The study concluded that, rewards had a positive impact on children's compliance with school rules, all types of punishment had an impact on the children's behaviour. Withdrawing privileges had the greatest impact on behaviour, material and non-material rewards had an overall impact on children's class attendance and the use of punishment on primary school pupils in terms of removing privileges from children as a means of reducing deviant behaviour affected their respect for school property. Thus, the study recommended among other things that, any time a child makes a mistake, it should be corrected as soon as possible so that they can grow into responsible adults.

**Keywords:** Discipline, Influence of Reward and Punishment, Primary School Pupils.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Punishments serve as a method of modifying behavior in children or adults at home, school and any other setting. Educators from different parts of the world collaborated to consider the effects of positive and negative reinforcement on discipline and motivation during adolescent development (Agyekum, 2021). Reward and punishment are the potent modulators of human and animal

behavior. So, one of the means through which a teacher can maintain class discipline in a secondary school is through reward and punishment (Alabi & Saidu, 2019).

The use of punishment in schools is to instill discipline and is meted out on students who violate agreed-upon rules and regulations in schools (Agyekum, 2021). It is administered to bring about a desirable change in behavior and therefore improve school discipline, if commensurate with the offense committed. Ching (2012) observed that punishment is a weapon that can be risky for the teachers and it is distasteful to the student. Simba et al., (2016) stated that the use of punishment in school can lead to undesirable side effects such as anxiety, anger and negative feelings towards the teachers. This lack of discipline which interferes with the teaching and learning process manifested itself in various ways including bullying, lateness, vandalism, alcohol consumption and substance abuse, truancy and inability or unwillingness to do classwork at home. Schools disciplines are among the strategies designed to instill good conduct in students, this implies self-control, good behavior and obedience to school authority (Costică, 2014).

Schools have different types of reward and punishment policies in place, but almost all of them have one common goal which is to motivate students to learn and ensure their discipline (Simba et al., 2016). Educators nowadays are aware that giving punishment is counterproductive. Punishment tends to generate anger, defiance, and a desire for revenge. Moreover, it also gives example to the use of authority rather than reason and encouragement, thus this would tend to rupture the important relationship between adult and child (Baranek cited in Alabi & Saidu, 2019).

According to Ching (2012) in his article, he stated that the effective system of reward and penalty should encourage appropriate outcomes and regular participation, which are fundamental to children discipline. However added that, reward can be understood as one of the strategies that can increase students' discipline to achieve success generally, a proper reward also provides students with positive encouragement and thus, will show interest and increase students' discipline in everyday classroom duties and responsibilities ((Sidin, 2021).

In the meantime, punishments in education are the response against a lack of discipline, so teaching and encouraging discipline are the first step to prevent punishment. Punishment is closely related to strengthening because it defines both its effects. Both reward and punishment are essentially used for educational purposes. They are deliberately chosen by teachers to make discipline process effective. It further aims to improve students' discipline achievement. A well-selected reward and punishment contribute to students' discipline effectiveness (Sidin, 2021).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Indiscipline among primary school Pupils ranges from truancy, negligence in class, loitering, absenteeism, noise making, and examination mal-practice and so on had been observed by the researcher. And this is not far-fetched from the possible factors responsible for social vices which could hinder academic, religious, political and social life of primary school pupils thus, truncate pupils' growth and development within the school system.

However since reward and punishment are principally administered and promoted by people who deemed it effectiveness in streamlining students behaviour, the effective system of reward and penalty was also considered in this study to encourage appropriate outcomes and regular participation, which are fundamental to children discipline in school. Consequently, reward can be understood as one of the strategies that can increase students' discipline to achieve success generally, a proper reward also provides students with positive encouragement and is capable of correcting the earlier stated problems of truancy, lack of attendance in classroom, exam malpractice. It is in line with the above that the researcher deem it possible to examine the influence of reward and punishment among primary school Pupils in Potiskum Educational Zone of Yobe state.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this research were:

1. To find out the effect of Rewards on Respect for School Rules among primary school Pupils in Potiskum Educational Zone of Yobe state.

2. To find out the effect of the Use of Punishment on Deviant Behaviour among primary school Pupils in Potiskum Educational Zone of Yobe state.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions would guide the study:

1. What is the effect of Rewards on Respect for School Rules among primary school Pupils in Potiskum Educational Zone of Yobe state?
2. What is the effect of the Use of Punishment on Deviant Behaviour among primary school Pupils in Potiskum Educational Zone of Yobe state?

**METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The research is survey in nature since it seeks to collect data on the influence of reward and punishment in enhancing discipline among primary school pupils. Descriptive designs are used as research designs that enable the investigator to describe the occurrence of variance or the relationship between or among variable (Abdulkadir, 2019). Descriptive design or research also involve assessing attitude or opinion of individuals, organization or events and it allows a researcher to look into a group of people or items under study by collecting and analyzing data from only few people items considered to be representative of the entire group (Nworgu 2006).

The population of this study constituted all primary five pupils and their teachers within public primary schools in Potiskum Educational Zone. The sample of this study was drawn from the target students' population of 2,289 of the sampled primary schools of Potiskum Local Government Area. Deliberate selection of five (6) public primary schools was made by the researcher, the sample size of students was proportionately determined across all the five (6) selected schools. With the aid of Research Advisor (2006) table for determining sample size a sample of 322 student respondents was determined. In selecting students to represent the sample, the researcher used simple random sampling technique. The justification behind the use of simple random sampling technique was because it gives every pupil equal opportunity of been selected for the study.

Purposive, proportionate and stratified random sampling techniques was used to select samples for the study. The purposive sampling technique was used because the study focused on Potiskum Educational zone while the stratified sampling technique was used to select school on the basis of Morning school only, evening school only and the combination of morning and evening schools. Consequently, simple random sampling technique will be used to select both teacher the representative of the sample from each school. The population and samples of the selected schools for the study was presented in table 1.

**Table 1: Sample Size**

	<b>Name of School</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>
1	Damboa Primary School	552	78
2	Dorawa Primary School	389	55
3	Arikime Primary School	652	91
4	Mamudo Primary School	305	43
5	Maje Primary School	228	32
6	Badejo Primary School	163	23
		<b>2,289</b>	<b>322</b>

The instruments used for data collection in this study include:

- i. Observation
- ii. Questionnaire
- i. Observation

Direct observation was employed in this study due to its capacity to give first-hand information concerning observed behavior to the researcher. Observation coupled with a data sheet on the transactions between the teacher and the children was recorded according to each session of

observation. The researcher observed how the selected children responded to teacher instructions i.e., compliant, non-compliant or indifferent and then were recorded so as to determine whether the pupils' behavior constituted a discipline case. The observation checklist, which was prepared in advance showed how the teacher reacted to children's behavior, whether he/she offered attention or indifferent, so as to establish the methods he/she used to instil discipline on the primary school pupils and if the teacher's indifference is a cause of indiscipline among primary school pupils.

ii. **Questionnaire**

A structured questionnaire titled "Reward and Punishment for enhancing Discipline Questionnaire" was prepared in advance and issued to teachers before commencement of the study. The questionnaire was a close-ended questionnaire. This questionnaire was meant to gather information concerning the behaviour of the pupils in primary school and how the teachers deals with discipline cases. The questionnaire specifically elucidated how teachers employed rewards and punishment as well as their views on its effectiveness as disciplinary methods.

The validity of the instrument was carried out by the researcher. The instrument was given to experts in the Department of Educational Foundations, Yobe state University to peruse. Their independent judgment adjudge the face and content validity of the instrument.

To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, the researcher conduct a pilot. The pilot test was carried out on samples who are not part of the study. Thus, the instrument was administered twenty (20) pupils outside the study area. Descriptive statistics was used for data analysis. Frequency counts and percentages was employed to describe responses from the participants.

**RESULTS**

**Research Question One:** *What is the effect of Rewards on Respect for School Rules among primary school Pupils in Potiskum Educational Zone of Yobe state?*

The study also sought to find out the influence of the use of rewards by both teachers and parents on respect for the school rules by the primary school pupils. The results of the observations are outlined below:

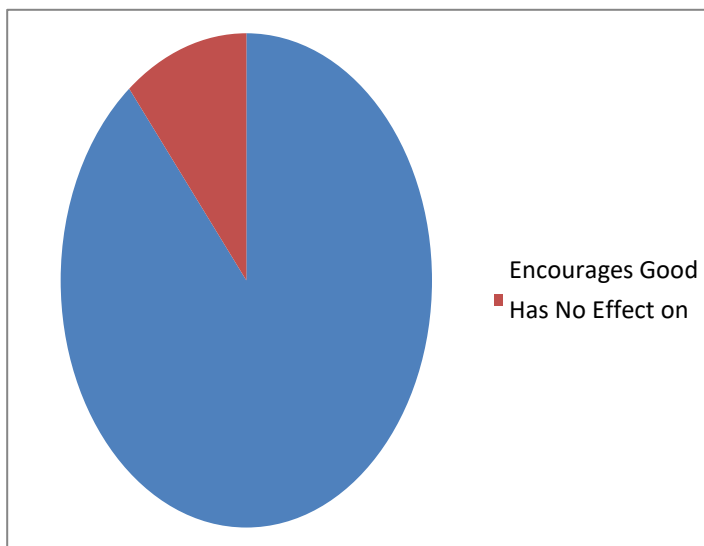


Figure 1 above shows that 67 percent of respondents agreed that using rewards had a positive impact on children's compliance with school rules. This was true whether the rewards were monetary or non-monetary

**Research Question Two:** *What is the effect of the Use of Punishment on Deviant Behaviour among primary school Pupils in Potiskum Educational Zone of Yobe state?*

Another thing the study sought to find out was the influence of the use of punishment on correcting deviant behavior. During the observations, it emerged that the use of punishment affected the behavior of children to some extent. This however was dependent on the type of punishment used as illustrated in table 2.

**Table 2: Effect of the Use of Punishment on Deviant Behavior**

Type of Punishment	No. of Children Affected (Reduction in Deviant Beh.)	No. of Children Not Affected (No Effect on Deviant Beh.)
Withdrawal of Privileges	71	15
Time-out	56	24
Warning	50	30
Other e.g. Collecting Litter	58	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>69</b>

It is clear from table 2 that all types of punishment had an impact on the children's behaviour. Withdrawing privileges had the greatest impact on behaviour, with 71 of all the children observed exhibiting a significant reduction in misbehaviour.

**Summary of Findings**

1. Rewards had a positive impact on children's compliance with school rules.
2. All types of punishment had an impact on the children's behaviour. Withdrawing privileges had the greatest impact on behaviour

**DISCUSSION**

Research question one found that 92 percent of those polled agreed that both material and nonmaterial rewards had an overall impact on children's behaviour. This could be attributed with the claim that whenever a child is rewarded for good behaviour, the others learn from him/her and want to emulate him/her in order to be rewarded as well.

As a result, all of the children wanted to outdo each other in order to be rewarded. On the other hand, 8% of those polled disagreed with the majority. They believed that using rewards had no effect on primary school students' compliance with school rules. They claimed that rewarding a child for a single good deed would not change his overall attitude toward school rules if he was disobedient. They believed that more action was required to change the child's attitude toward school rules than simply rewarding them once. The US Department of Agriculture (1988) disagrees, stating that the ultimate goal of rewarding children is to help them internalise positive behaviour so that they will not require a reward in the future.

The result further indicates that 67 percent of respondents agreed that using rewards had a positive impact on children's compliance with school rules. This was true whether the rewards were monetary or non-monetary. They claimed that whenever a child was praised for good behaviour, the others took notice and wanted to emulate him or her in order to be praised as well. However, 33% of those polled had a different viewpoint. They believed that using rewards had no effect on primary school students' overall behaviour. They claimed that rewarding a child for doing well was a sin in and of itself because it encouraged children to do good in order to be rewarded. According to them, a child can only behave well if there is a corresponding reward, and if there isn't, then discipline is out of the question.

The result also shows that the majority of the children observed (50%) completely failed to follow the teacher's instructions, while 17% of the learners were hesitant to follow the teacher's instructions. However, only 33% of the students followed the teacher's instructions.

Aside from the 33% who followed the instructions, the other behaviours can be characterized as indiscipline, or a lack of respect for the teachers. This is consistent with (Watson, 2005)'s assertion that learners have frequently depicted activities and behaviour that are not in accordance with school rules or even responding appropriately to teachers' instructions. The 17 percent who were hesitant, on the other hand, could have done so due to a lack of understanding of the directives or simply indiscipline. The responses of these students were checked against the teacher's 'do' and 'don't' directives. It is clear from table 5 that all types of punishment had an impact on the children's behaviour. Withdrawing privileges had the greatest impact on behaviour, with 25 of all the children observed exhibiting a significant reduction in misbehaviour. Five of the children who were given the punishment of losing privileges, on the other hand, did not show any improvement in their behaviour. These were the same children who were observed to be the most problematic in the class, indicating that this type of punishment was meaningless to them and could not possibly serve its intended purpose.

The type of punishment that resulted in the greatest number of children who were unaffected by punishment was verbal warning. When put through punishment, ten out of the total number of cases observed showed resistance to behaviour change. Surprisingly, almost all of the children who were subjected to one type of punishment were unaffected by the other types of punishment. This indicated that some of these children's indiscipline was deepseated, requiring increased efforts from all sides to address.

All of the aforementioned forms of punishment imply the imposition of something negative on a primary school child in response to inappropriate behaviour. These various forms of punishment have also been mentioned (Njeru, 2012). The result of the study also shows that the majority of respondents agreed that removing privileges from children as a means of reducing deviant behaviour worked very well, with 10 of the 12 teachers. The majority of respondents supported the use of time-out and other forms of punishment such as litter collection, with the exception of the use of warning, which has sparked debate among teachers about whether it affects discipline or not. Half of the teachers agreed that it has an impact on discipline, while the other half disagreed, claiming that empty threats that are not followed up with action are ineffective.

All of the respondents who disagreed that the use of various forms of punishment has an impact on discipline explained that when children are subjected to punishment repeatedly, they develop a resistance to it, and thus its use becomes ineffective after a while. As a result, they proposed alternative approaches to dealing with misbehaviour, such as counselling. It is clear from finding of the study that the use of rewards on primary school students has an impact on class attendance in primary schools. This was demonstrated by the fact that 80% of teachers agreed that whenever they used rewards on primary school students, they did not miss class for a long time afterward because they expected the teacher to repeat the same action. The remaining 20% of respondents disagreed, believing that class absenteeism was caused by a variety of factors other than the children having a reward to look forward to. They believe that tying class attendance to rewards is incorrect because children should be taught why they go to school rather than just for the sake of receiving rewards.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study concluded that, rewards had a positive impact on children's compliance with school rules and all types of punishment had an impact on the children's behaviour.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Following the study's findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Every time a child makes a mistake, it should be corrected as soon as possible so that they can grow into responsible adults.

2. Teachers should use friendly methods to deal with indiscipline among primary school children.

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