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DISCIPLINE IN THE LOWER SECONDARY
CLASSES IN SEVERAL GOVERNMENT
SCHOOLS IN BEIRUT

An Independent Study

Presented to the Faculty of the Beirut College for Women

in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the
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By

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Biographical Sketch

The writer was born in Nabatiyeh, South Lebanon. She had her elementary and her secondary education in Amman, Jordan, where she lived for ten years.

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PART I

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to find out the problems of discipline as they are existing in government schools and to learn what teachers in these schools feel about their causes and the most effective ways of handling them.

The writer, as a concerned Lebanese citizen and as an employee in the Ministry of Education, has thought that most of the behavior problems in schools are due to the inadequate methods used by teachers to discipline students. With the hope of helping the teachers and herself as a prospective teacher in order to know how to face these problems effectively in the future, the writer has made this study.

The procedures in this study are observations and interviews with principals in government schools for girls in Beirut plus the use of questionnaires distributed to teachers of the lower secondary classes. As a background for the study, library research was done to compare government teachers' conceptions and practices of discipline with those of modern educators.

The study is limited by the small number of questionnaires answered. Out of 75 questionnaires distributed to teachers, only 25 gave answers. The writer also felt that some of the teachers were not frank in their answers, because of the contradiction between what the writer has observed and what the teachers have written. The

writer was also handicapped by the fact that the material had to be presented in English though the field research was conducted in Arabic.

In spite of these limitations, the study as a whole gives some information about behavior problems of government school students in Beirut and may have some significance, since it is the first study of its kind done on government girls' schools.

CHAPTER I

Aims of Discipline

The conception of discipline as an educative tool has undergone many changes. These changes range from the older conception of discipline which required complete obedience to the teacher and to her rules and regulations to the modern view which stresses the importance of developing self-control and free will in the student through cooperation between home and school.⁽¹⁾ Yet both conceptions of discipline have in mind order, although they differ in the means to attain it.

The modern conception of discipline stresses the importance of reorientation of the individual and of redirecting his energy into constructive channels, such as good relationship with others, useful work, or some kind of creative activity.⁽²⁾ It also seeks the causes of undesirable behavior and takes into consideration all factors that give rise to it.

This modern concept involved correct guidance and good understanding on the part of the teacher, whose task is to help each individual to find his most acceptable self and to develop within himself a sense of adaptability to face the future.⁽³⁾ Since one

(1) Lester Crow, High School Education, p. 468

(2) Nelson Bossing, Progressive Methods of Teaching in Secondary Schools, p. 152

(3) Ruth Strang, The Role of the Teacher in Personnel Work, pp. 28-29

of the ultimate aims of education in the modern school should be to develop within students self-control,⁽¹⁾ it follows that the teacher's task is to motivate students, to direct their activities and to help them develop their abilities in order to achieve a better life for themselves and for others.⁽²⁾

A class room which is characterized by "pin-drop quiet" is no longer necessarily considered a good class. Students should be allowed a certain amount of free action as long as they are respecting others' rights and using their time effectively. Every group needs some rules, but rules should be discussed and understood by the students.⁽³⁾ They can also decide on some of them. A teacher who rules her class with an iron hand and who believes that unpleasant tasks are necessary for developing self-control and that pleasurable activities are a waste of time does not belong in such a school.⁽⁴⁾

Different theories of discipline have been introduced through the ages. Some of these theories have been discarded by now, or are on their way to obsolescence; others are still in use.

The first theory is the vindictive theory, which depends on

(1) Harrison, The Elementary Teacher in Action, p. 139

(2) Elsbree, Elementary School Administration and Supervision,
p. 353

(3) Harrison, op. cit., p. 145

(4) Elsbree, op. cit., p. 351

vengeance as a dominant concept. Some teachers still say: "I will show them whom to obey" or "I will teach them a hard lesson". This theory is of no value since there are no social or educative effects.⁽¹⁾

The second theory is the retributive theory. This is based on the law of Hammurabi and the Mosaic Code of religious origin, which says: "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". "He will visit the sins of the father upon the children unto the third generation". It states that if any one does wrong he has to suffer severely for it.⁽²⁾ In school the punishment by teachers was beating with a cane or a ruler, slapping with the hand or boxing on the ears. This theory contradicts the modern concept of discipline, where the stress is not put on punishment, but on the understanding behind misbehavior.⁽³⁾

The third theory is the deterrent theory which states; that through fear of pain the violator will not repeat his action. Also, other people seeing the punishment will not dare to commit the same offense. In public schools examples are: making a student stand in a corner in front of other students or isolating the trouble maker from his friends.

(1) Bossing, op. cit., p. 140

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid., p. 141

The fourth theory is the remedial theory, which is the most practical one. Its interest lies in changing of students' attitudes towards school regulations, so that these regulations may be willingly followed. According to this theory, each individual is responsible for his own misbehavior, and the function of the teacher is to save the individual and to restore him to a socially acceptable situation.⁽¹⁾ "Reasoning and understanding may correct all disciplinary difficulties that arise."⁽¹⁾ The use of punishment is reduced to a minimum and is replaced by more effective methods of guidance and control.⁽²⁾ Teachers take into consideration individual differences, background, social and environmental conditions. Those who are guided by this theory aim to help each individual to acquire knowledge and power for the well being of himself and his society.⁽³⁾

The writer believes that discipline can best be achieved in an atmosphere wherein students feel that the teacher respects their personalities and their opinions as individuals, treats them with consideration to their individual differences, helps them to discover within themselves a sense of responsibility and gives them a hand of sincere cooperation so that they may become in the future

(1) Ibid., p. 145

(2) Ibid., p. 146

(3) Schorling, Student Teaching, pp. 29 - 51

good citizens who work for the betterment of their country and nation.

CHAPTER II

Causes of Misbehavior

There are many factors that affect students' behavior. The writer has chosen to deal with factors in the student, in the school, in the teacher herself, and in the home.

In considering factors in the student, it is found that physiological ones are among the most common. The sick student becomes restless and irritable and may behave badly in the class room. The student who has some kind of physiological deficiency such as defective hearing or vision, a speech defect or diseased tonsils may become a disciplinary problem.⁽¹⁾ Defective vision may lead to stubbornness, in order to conceal embarrassment and the feeling of inferiority. Abnormal glandular activity may lead to ~~a~~phlegmatic sluggish personality or to a highly sensitive and irritable individuality.⁽²⁾ A person who has any kind of physical handicap feels his inability to compete with his friends, senses that he is different. This feeling may develop within him a sense of inferiority which will result in maladjustment or misbehavior.⁽³⁾ The teacher has to know all these in order not to misinterpret behavior.

Personal factors also have a great effect on students' behavior.

(1) Crow, op. cit., p. 476

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid.

Some students adopt negative attitudes because these are the only ways by which they can satisfy their needs for love, affection and security. For example, they may become extremely individualistic when they rebel against authority and show no respect for their teacher or challenge her either to attract her attention or to show off.⁽¹⁾ They may become self-conscious and refuse to take part in any class activity or participate when called upon.⁽²⁾ Low mentality is another factor which affects students' behavior. When the student is unable to learn much through the experience of others or to differentiate between good and bad, he may become self-conscious, or on the other hand an aggressive person in order to hide his inability.⁽³⁾

Social factors also affect students' behavior. These factors can be acquired through social contact with people. One of these is desire for sensationalism or to "show off" which leads students to disobedience and rebellion against school rules in order to gain recognition from their friends.⁽⁴⁾ The desire to be accepted by the group or not to be different from them motivates student action powerfully. For example, if a majority act in a certain way these individuals are likely to do likewise, though the action may violate their better

(1) Ibid., p. 477

(2) Ibid.

(3) Bossing, op. cit., p. 160

(4) Ibid., pp. 160 - 161

knowledge and principles.⁽¹⁾ The desire to resist any kind of limitation of personal liberty is common in adolescence.⁽²⁾ This is a natural element in the growing up process. Adolescents resent being treated as children in this transition period when they are neither adults nor children.

Among factors in school which may affect behavior are the physical conditions of the school and the class room. ^{O. N.} Unattractive class room or building will not inspire the students to respect its furniture. Students may be tempted to use their knives or their pens in "decorating" desks and walls. On the other hand, a beautiful building encourages students to maintain its beauty and cleanliness⁽³⁾. An unhygienic room; e.g. one that is badly lighted and poorly ventilated may make students feel depressed and irritable. For example many principals in government elementary schools complained of the unhygienic toilet facilities where students are used to pushing and disorder in order to have a turn. They complained also of unhealthy class rooms, where they are obliged to squeeze students into a small space. Students under such conditions tend to react negatively either by being inattentive and depressed, or by rebellion against teacher and rules.

Class room methods also affect behavior. Whether the teacher is using modern methods, where students can participate in finding the right conclusion or whether, she is using the indirect method of lecture

(1) Crow, op. cit., p. 478

(2) Bossing, op. cit., p. 162

(3) Ibid., p. 163

and recitation where students are more passive and sometimes even bored and indifferent to what the teacher is saying, the teacher should make students aware of the objectives of the course they are studying.⁽¹⁾ A monotonous class room procedure may create resentment and indifference on the students' part.

Also, a heavy schedule of courses with no room for extra-curricular activities may lead students to disorder and misbehavior. Moreover the needs and interests of student must be met through challenging and creative courses such as hand work, creative writing, painting and analytical studies of literature and arts. Through courses like these, students may get involved and interested in their work, so that no time will be left for misbehavior.

Perhaps the most important causal factor is the teacher. She needs to understand the "why" behind students' behavior; otherwise, the treatment will be ineffective. The role of guidance lies in the teacher's hand whose task is to help each individual to choose the right experience he needs and to guide him through his own efforts to discover and to develop his own best potentialities.⁽²⁾ In achieving this the teacher will cultivate within her students a strong sense of self-control. Schorling says that good teachers should have the following characteristics in common:

1. Wide and varied knowledge of different topics related to her subject.

(1) Williamson, Counseling and Discipline, pp. 33 - 34

(2) Strang, op. cit., p. 29

In order to answer any related question.⁽¹⁾ A teacher who does not master her subject matter will sooner or later lose students' respect.

2. Sincere devotion to her job. Teaching is a sacred vocation whose aim is to create a better society. Every activity the teacher undertakes needs to be carefully planned. Lack of planning will cause the teacher to be caught by her students and she may lose her self-confidence.
3. Strong and independent personality which inspires confidence. A calm, dignified voice and cheerful outlook on life, and interest in students as individual will strengthen the teacher-student relationship.⁽²⁾ On the other hand a teacher who has a rough, irritating voice or who is not dressed well may not gain students' respect.
4. Sound philosophy of life and mature emotional attitude. The good teacher must have the ability to solve her own emotional problems to free herself from any emotional difficulties.⁽³⁾ The teacher who is nervous and emotionally immature will not be able to help students to control themselves. She may also lose students' respect and cooperation. Such a teacher may be inconsistent in treating the children. One time she may punish them severely and at other

(1) Schorling, op. cit., p. 5

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid., p. 21

times leave them to behave as they want. Students will not learn how to discipline themselves with such inconsistency.

In conclusion, the teacher who is not appropriately and neatly dressed, who lacks self-confidence, who has no friendly considerate attitude towards her students, who is not well informed and who uses favoritism and lacks a well defined philosophy in life, this teacher will not be respected or loved by students. Therefore misbehavior may be the result.

Finally, factors at home may be contributing causes of misbehavior. First there is the emotional atmosphere of the home. Children who came from broken homes or from poor families are liable to have more problems than children who came from happy homes.⁽¹⁾ Such students are likely to cheat, to lie and to have an inferiority complex. These students are in need of love and security. They starve for affection and for a sense of belongingness. When teachers show signs of encouragement and affection the students may be encouraged to try to rebuild their personality again. A child who lacks the love and affection of his parent may seek shelter in something which may be good or bad. His aim is to make people around him aware of his presence and also to satisfy his natural zest for recognition. The child who has been over-protected complains of different kinds of problems. Such

(1) Interview with some government principals.

a child lacks self-confidence, because he is used to having others decide for him, serve him and do everything for him. Later if he joins a group he will rely completely on them. His presence will be a burden to the group and later he may be rejected. There are, of course, other aspects such as number of children in the family which affect child personality and behavior. For example, if there are many children at home where enough attention and care may not be given to all, a sensitive child may compensate for this either in escaping from the world by day-dreaming and withdrawal from participation in any class activity or going to the other extreme of being aggressive and disobedient, quarrelling with others and creating troubles to get attention.⁽¹⁾

The socio-economic factors also may be causative factors. These include family background, reputation, occupation of the father and the socio-economic condition of the family. The result of the questionnaires distributed to government teachers showed that students who came from poor families or those who came from a socially undesirable environment tend to cheat, lie, and misbehave. Yet there are exceptions. The writer realizes that poverty is not necessarily the cause for cheating or lying.

These, then, are some of the causes which affect students' behavior in class room. Unless the teacher understands the "why" behind each

(1) Interview with some principals in government schools.

behavior she will not be able to handle these problems effectively.

In the following chapter, the writer will discuss some methods of handling behavior problems and the effect of these methods.

CHAPTER III

Ways of Handling Behavior Problems

It is known that too much control or too little authority over students may spoil the pupil or make him dependent on his parents and teachers. Some parents make a mistake by giving too much authority to their children before they are old enough to hold the responsibility. Many teachers get into trouble by trying to hasten the process of growth or to skip some of its stages. This is wrong, because there is no short cut-in growth. Every stage has to take its regular time.⁽¹⁾ Some students are looked upon as behavior problems because of their social habits and their wrong attitudes which they have acquired through too little or too much control.⁽²⁾

The modern concept of discipline is to see any discipline problem as a mal-adjustment which needs treatment rather than punishment. "There is no problem child, but only children with problems."⁽³⁾ It is the role of the teacher to distinguish between misbehavior and children's normal activity, such as moving in their chairs or looking around. She has also to try to understand the "why" behind all behavior and to approach every problem situation with understanding and an open mind.⁽⁴⁾ The teacher who is fair, considerate, consistent in her

(1) Crow, op. cit., pp. 122-126

(2) Raymond Harrison, op. cit., p. 144

(3) Elsbree, op. cit., p. 357

(4) Harrison, op. cit., p. 139

work and attitude and sincerely interested in helping students will surely guide them to a better situation in life through developing self-control.⁽¹⁾

There are two ways of handling behavior problems, the indirect and the direct methods. In the following paragraphs, these will be discussed.

The indirect method has a better approach than the direct method. However, there are times when the latter method is necessary; for example, when there is no time to waste, as in a case of danger when students have to obey the law quickly.

There are several ways of applying indirect methods; for example, simple control, by a smile or look or by calling a name. This may be effective when used at the proper time to check the starting of trouble. Its effectiveness depends on the rapport the teacher has established in the class. One of the principals in government schools told me that such a simple kind of control had proved to be a success with her pupils. A friendly smile may guarantee the teacher's friendship as well as her disapproval of students' action. The gentle calling of a pupil's name will bring the wandering attention back to what the teacher is saying. Besides, the student will sense that the teacher is conscious of his action. If a smile fails, a firm but short command will be of use in bringing the trouble-maker to order. It is

(1) Ohlsen, Guidance, p. 71

desirable to use positive terms; e.g. "Nadia, go on with your work" instead of "stop talking" or "don't move"⁽¹⁾. If the child gets restless, the teacher can send her on an errand to bring chalk or to erase the chalk-board etc...Such variation may change her attitude. As has been said before, a good teacher varies her methods so as to meet individual differences. A disobedient child under one set of conditions can be an obedient and cooperative child when involved in some interesting work which meets his needs, suits his ability and challenges his pride.⁽²⁾

Ignoring is another measure of indirect control. Knowing when to ignore is really an art. However, the teacher should never ignore uncooperative behavior or allow a pupil's misbehavior to go unnoticed; otherwise, the whole class may follow his bad example.⁽³⁾ She has to distinguish between ignoring the action and ~~the~~ ignoring the individual. His behavior should be disapproved but the offender can be ignored until after class.⁽⁴⁾ However, the student has to understand that his conduct was undesirable.⁽⁵⁾ Later, at the end of the period the offender will feel that he did not exist for the teacher and was not a member in the class. This may urge him to regret his misbehavior

(1) Cutts, Teaching the Disorderly pupils, p. 19

(2) Elsbree, op. cit., p. 357

(3) Cutts, op. cit., p. 27

(4) Crow, op. cit., p. 485

(5) Ibid.

and try his best to be a member again.⁽¹⁾ Ignoring the offender should not last for a long time; otherwise the student will develop a negative attitude towards class and teacher. Yet ignoring is considered a proper technique in situations where students want to show off or attract attention.

Incentives and rewards are other kinds of indirect control. Their aim, as all other means of indirect control, is to achieve a better character in students' behavior. The incentives may vary according to the stage of maturity. For children, silver and gold stars, are sometimes used to serve this purpose.⁽²⁾ For older pupils conduct marks or grading system and praise of good conduct are used. Incentives have this sense of desire for recognition and personal gain.⁽³⁾ They may work, but the motivation is artificial. They may develop within the students a sense of expecting praise or a prize for each instance of good behavior,⁽⁴⁾ rather than a desire to do the right thing for its sake. They may have values when they are not the ultimate aims of the students.

Praise is an effective tool in education if it is well used; e.g., to encourage good behavior. However, the over-use of praise

(1) Ibid., p. 486

(2) Elsbrøe, op. cit., p. 348

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ibid.

will spoil the student and it may lose its effect and meaning.

Direct methods of control may be used if the indirect fails to achieve its purpose.

Punishment is the ^{cipal} principal direct method. As an educative tool, it is considered a negative control because it does not satisfy the child's needs and interests.⁽¹⁾ Yet sometimes it is necessary and desirable, especially when the student knows that certain behavior will always be followed by punishment, even a light one.⁽²⁾ In order to be effective, punishment should be prompt, consistent and painful, and it should be associated with a specific cause. The result must be clear and sharp.⁽³⁾ But before inflicting any punishment the teacher should know that only the stable child can stand it. A cruel or prolonged punishment will damage even the stable child's personality, especially if he does not receive enough attention at home. Such a child feels that he is not wanted or on the other hand, that he is the center of teacher's attention. In this case, the punishment may lead to more disorder and trouble.

Before inflicting any kind of punishment, the teacher must take into consideration the following principles:

1. Discipline of the individual should not interfere with the educational program. Punishment should never be imposed during or

(1) Cutts, op. cit., p. 28

(2) Ibid., p. 27

(3) Harrison, op. cit., p. 144

- between classes, where other activities or classes might be disturbed, but only when the offender is not engaged in any other activity or lesson.⁽¹⁾ Students resent missing other activities; e.g., holding a student for extra time after the dismissal bell, when the others are going to the playground.
2. Every teacher should be able to impress the students by her ability to handle disciplinary problems in her own way without the help of the principal. Many teachers consider sending a pupil to the principal a sign of the teacher's inability and weakness to handle the problem.⁽²⁾ Besides, the offender will gain prestige in the eyes of his friends, since his deed cannot be handled by the teacher alone.⁽³⁾
3. Correction must fit the situation. Here the retributive^{ve} theory can be applied, with a variety of method to meet every particular situation, because a method used with one student may not affect another, because of individual differences.⁽⁴⁾ For example, a student who damages^{on} other's property has to repair or to pay for it.
4. A class should not be punished for the individual. This will create resentment at the unfair punishment for another's misconduct.

(1) Bossing, op. cit., p. 167

(2) Elsbree, op. cit., p. 358

(3) Bossing, op. cit., p. 166

(4) Ibid., p. 171

The teacher has to find out the guilty pupil first, if she cannot spot him easily and if the class shows no sign of cooperation in finding him. Only then she has the right to hold the whole class as responsible for misbehavior, after making clear to them that their attempt to hide the guilty will make them his partners.⁽¹⁾

5. Correction should be understood by the pupils. This is a necessary step in building better conduct. The offender should understand why he was punished and the teacher should help him to distinguish between desirable and undesirable behavior. "It is desirable to talk over with students all phases of the transgression so that the seriousness of the offense may be understood."⁽²⁾

6. Correction should be impersonal. "This hurts me as much as it hurts you, but the situation demands that it be done", is the attitude that should characterize all correction. The teacher should make the offender realize that his behavior was against the school regulation. These private conferences with ^{the} teacher help the student to gain insight into his action so ^{that} he may not repeat it.⁽³⁾ At the end of the conference the teacher has to make clear to him that his record is clean and she has forgiven him.⁽⁴⁾

(1) Ibid., pp. 166 - 167

(2) Ibid., p. 169

(3) Crow, op. cit., p. 486

(4) Cutts, op. cit., p. 29

7. Correction should be certain. The teacher should be sure of her accusation. Nothing is more harmful than being punished or accused for another's crime. This may develop a negative attitude towards teacher and class, and finally school. Also punishment should be quick and immediate.⁽¹⁾ Students laugh at any correction which is remote from the action. To learn, the correction must be close. The aim of punishment is to prevent further misbehavior, and this cannot be maintained except through certain and quick measures of control.
8. Correction should be painful. The offender should suffer severely but not too severely. There are two ways of inflicting pain; mental and physical. The first is more effective and frequently used. The teacher should be very careful in applying it because any arbitrary or cruel punishment may damage the personality of the/emotional child.
9. Punishment should be corrective and therapeutic rather than punitive. The teacher should be careful not to shame the offender severely before his friends. Such action hurts the child's feeling and creates resentment towards teachers in general. If a child spoils another property, he has to repair it physically, or to pay for its replacement.⁽²⁾

(1) Bossing, op. cit., p. 170

(2) Elsbree, op. cit., p. 360

The various kinds of punishment will now be discussed.

Apology means regret for the action. Unless the apology comes out of a real conviction that what has been done was wrong, the value of it will be less. A student should never be forced to apologize, but to be helped and motivated to act as he ought to. A valid apology is one which is followed by immediate change of behavior.⁽¹⁾

Scolding is considered by some educators as a negative tool in handling behavior problems. "Students hate and criticize teachers who scold, nag and play favorites in class."⁽²⁾ Sooner or later scolding, if over-used, will lose its effect and students will become used to it.⁽³⁾

Threats will not be effective unless they are followed by immediate penalty.⁽⁴⁾

Explanation is a positive method. If the student misbehaves because of ignorance or carelessness, the teacher has to explain to him why what he did was wrong, and why she will punish him.⁽⁵⁾

Grade demerits is considered an artificial means because it is

(1) Crow, op. cit., p. 484

(2) Cutts, op. cit., p. 9

(3) Ibid. p. 29

(4) Ibid

(5) Ibid

not related to the offense. "To link distastefulness to a learning situation is pedagogically indefensible". Grades should be gained through intellectual achievement, not through good conduct.⁽¹⁾

Deprivation of privileges, if fairly administered, seems to be the most effective of all penalties. If the privileges are dependent on the continuous good conduct of the student, any violation of the school regulation will make him subject to lose them.⁽²⁾ The fairness of this method lies in the fact that punishment always fit the crime e.g. the pupil who submits another's article as his own, should understand the dishonesty of his deed. He should also be deprived from submitting another one in the school magazine even if this one is really his own work.⁽³⁾ In this case, the teacher should make it clear to the violator that because of his conduct deprivation was inflicted.⁽⁴⁾ However, the teacher should be careful not to deprive a student of any thing that may interfere with his needs, such as recess period. These are not privileges, but necessities.⁽⁵⁾ Cutts says that "the danger in using them lies in the case of a chronic offender, in that the privilege denied him may be one that has been helping him learn

(1) Bossing, op. cit., p. 177

(2) Cutts, op. cit., p. 32

(3) Crow, op. cit., p. 485

(4) Harrison, op. cit., p. 143

(5) Ibid.

responsibility".⁽¹⁾

Detention or keeping in students after classes or during lunch period will interfere with students' needs for rest and nourishment. To make a pupil sit for a time after school, doing nothing will be a destructive method rather than a constructive one.⁽²⁾ Giving him extra work to do, such as memorizing poetry or solving mathematical problems, will make the students associate these courses with punishment and he may hate them.⁽³⁾

Detention, in order to be valuable, must be limited to cases of tardiness, where students are kept in, and given definite work to make up for the time they have lost by being late to classes.⁽⁴⁾

Sending to the principal. Although the principal is responsible for the ultimate discipline of the school, the teacher should not send to the principal's office every offender, before she tries all her different approaches to solve the problem.⁽⁵⁾ As it was said, a visit to the office is considered by most students as a sign of ^{the} teacher's inability to handle the situation. Besides, it impresses the students with the importance of their acts which cannot be solved by ^{the} teacher alone.⁽⁶⁾

(1) Cutts, op. cit., p. 33

(2) Ibid., p. 30

(3) Raymond Harrison, op. cit., p. 143

(4) Crow, op. cit., p. 485

(5) Ibid., p. 487

(6) Bossing, op. cit., p. 166

Cutts says that if sending to the principal is inevitable, the teacher has to make sure that the violator knows why he was sent, and to make him aware that a record of the case will be kept so he will not repeat the same offense in the future.⁽¹⁾

Changing students seats is another kind of punishment. Friends like to sit near each other in the class room to talk things over. They always have something to tell. The teacher should always be alert to spot such action and to separate friends if they keep on talking. First, make the students understand that you are aware of each movement in the class,⁽²⁾ by moving around, and by directing a look toward the one who is going to start talking. If he does not stop, then ask him to change his place. Never make the trouble maker sit in the back seats, because he will create more trouble by being away from the teacher's eyes.

Isolation is a temporary corrective measure. Students will not be socialized by being isolated.⁽³⁾ To isolate a pupil from his fellows and put him in a seat apart from everyone, makes him a cynosure. Moreover, he may be tempted to show off or to feel guilty and shamed. This may suppress the undesirable behavior, but develop resentment to the teacher.

Rectification and Reparation are other means of punishment.

(1) Cutts, op. cit., p. 31

(2) Crim and Michalis, Student Teacher in Secondary School, p. 281

(3) Harrison, op. cit., p.142

They mean making a student do rightly what he has done wrongly⁽¹⁾; e.g., asking a student who has jumped the stairs, to go back and walk them down. They also mean to ask the one who has damaged something either by accident or on purpose to repair it. This kind of punishment will teach him a lesson in responsibility.

Conference with the student proves to be very effective in dealing with behavior problems, since it enables the teacher and the pupil to understand each other better. Through these conferences a good teacher can better understand the situation and the causes that lie behind.⁽²⁾ Older pupils appreciate such conferences and regard them as the fairest means of discipline.⁽³⁾ In such conferences the teacher has to show the offender that her job is to help him to learn and behave properly so that in the future he can face life with a positive, firm attitude.

We have discussed in the previous three chapters the aims of the discipline and its theories through the ages, then we discussed in chapter two causes of discipline problems, while in this chapter we talked about the different methods of handling these problems. In the following chapter, we are going to talk about the most effective ways in prevention^{of} behavior problems.

(1) Cutts, op. cit., p.33

(2) Crow, op. cit., p. 486

(3) Cutts, op. cit., p. 19

CHAPTER IV

Prevention

"Prevention is a combination of knowing the tricks of the trade and giving constant thought to how you can best serve each pupil in your class room".⁽¹⁾

There are many ways of preventing behavior problems. Some of them are related to the teacher, her appearance, her voice, her confidence, her ability to handle students, her method in class, and her interest and enthusiasm. Others are connected with cooperation between teacher and parents.

To begin with, the teacher herself is the most important factor in discipline. A teacher who has confidence in herself, who has a pleasant voice, good posture, high vitality and a warm friendly personality, who is not afraid to laugh with students at any thing that is really humorous and who treats pupils with respect and masters her subject matter, this teacher will not have so many behavior problems. Students will do their best to please her.⁽²⁾

Self-confidence is an important aspect of a teacher's personality. A wide range of knowledge will help her to gain respect and confidence. High school teachers have to know their subject matter

(1) Ibid., p. 15

(2) Crow, op. cit., p. 480

very well, in order to be able to answer any related question. Yet it is not shameful to admit ignorance occasionally. But this should not be repeated several times. If the teacher feels that it is necessary to know the answer, she has to give it to the class next time or ask the class to report on it. (1)

The physical well being, good appearance, and clear distinct voice of the teacher are important in keeping order in class room. A teacher who is alert and dynamic, who moves around in the room, keeping all students in view all the time, will be able quickly to pick any trouble maker by getting near the danger spot. (2) She can also sense when the student is going to misbehave, so ^{that} she can stop him. Moreover, the student will realize that the teacher is aware of his intention so that he will not dare to create any disturbance. (3)

A teacher who is enthusiastic is likely to have a lively class who are ready to participate and grasp the teacher's ideas with the same enthusiasm. (4)

A good teacher must pay the same amount of attention to every student, unless some of the students because of some difficulties, emotional or physical, need more attention. (5) Favoritism in the class room brings resentment among students.

(1) Ibid., p. 481

(2) Grim Michalis, op. cit. p. 274

(3) Cutts, op. cit. pp. 17-18

(4) Grim, op. cit. p. 273

(5) Ibid., p. 274

The teacher can gain students' respect, love, and cooperation through understanding their needs and interests. She has to find out about the type of home they come from, their mental ability, their educational achievement, their physical condition. She must know all these in order to have a better picture of their potentialities and abilities, so that she can adjust her teaching and her method of controlling the class to serve the needs and interest of all students.⁽¹⁾ To understand students the teacher can observe them in the classroom, or outside in the court. She can give each one a chance to talk about herself and her plans for the future. She can ask them about their families and friends. All these help the teacher to be on good terms with her students.

To deal with adolescents is an art and to deal with a chronic offender is a very difficult task. One of the teachers in the public schools here wrote about a girl who was known for her difficult personality. The new class teacher wanted to apply her new method. So she started her lesson with a friendly smile as a simple example of exchanging feeling, then a few words of conversation with that girl followed. During play time the teacher went to the playground to watch the students playing. They came to her and started talking about their lessons. Gradually that girl was encouraged to talk and discuss her troubles with the teacher, who tried to understand her problems and helped her to find a better solution. "Now this

(1) Schorling, op. cit., p. 34

girl is one of the most responsible students in my class", said the teacher.

Good teaching is the best means of preventing poor student-teacher relationship. When a teacher meets students through a good instructional programs, she prevents many behavior problems.⁽¹⁾

A teacher who begins her work with a discussion that is related to the experience of the students or by some other means which challenge their interest, will hold the attention and cooperation of the class, more than with a monotonous procedure.⁽²⁾ Yet it is possible for a teacher to use effective methods and still not have good relations with students. In other words, human understanding must be added.

In order to stimulate their interest, she can use chalk board, charts, maps and other types of audio-visual aids. Also she can connect the work of today with a recent school happening or a current event or a new broadcast.⁽³⁾

A lesson that is planned with consideration of students' interests, needs, and ability will help in absorbing students' attention, so that no time nor energy will be left for misbehavior.⁽⁴⁾

Cutts says to have good control over the students you have

(1) Harrison, op. cit. p. 135

(2) Crow, op. cit. p. 480

(3) Grim, op. cit. p. 272

(4) Raymond Harrison, op.cit. 146

to keep them busy and interested. Easy work or too hard work will not keep their interest for a long time, and this may cause disorder.⁽¹⁾

In giving the assignment the length of the lesson must be considered. Each teacher should calculate the time it takes him to do the assignment and multiply it by three. At any rate it should not exceed 45 minutes for the average student. This depends also on age and other assignments. Such a device will prevent the teacher from giving long assignments,⁽²⁾ which create resentment on the students' part.

To motivate students the teacher has to make them aware of their success or progress. A word of praise is considered a good element. Rewarding good behavior makes the students feel that the teacher is interested in the improved behavior rather than in criticizing the pupil.⁽³⁾ This may encourage the students to keep on improving their behavior.

Another element in preventing misbehavior is avoiding routine of any sort. A good teacher has to vary her method in order to stimulate students' interest and maintain their attention all the time. For example, if the teacher is using the recitation method, she should not let the students guess what orders she is going to follow. Otherwise, students may take advantage of this to be inattentive. To direct

(1) Cutts, op. cit. p. 15

(2) Crow, op. cit., p. 480

(3) Ibid, p. 486

a sudden question to the inattentive pupil may bring him back to class order.⁽¹⁾ A good teacher will encourage all students to participate in the discussion by stimulating their interest.⁽²⁾

Another effective method of preventing disorder is to involve students in planning school activities. Every one should be encouraged to take an active part in school performance, because when a person feels that he is belonging to a group or when he participates in planning the purposes and activities of the school, he will do his best to conform and to live up to the expectation of the group. Moreover, any violation of these rules or purposes will create resentment on his part,⁽³⁾ toward the offender. There will be no need to use force or threats to hold students to respect others' rules.⁽⁴⁾ Also cooperative pupil-teacher planning can be of great help in developing interest and preventing behavior problems. As we have said, student participation in setting the rules of the class room helps in developing understanding and respect for rules established.⁽⁵⁾

Many teachers say, "We really learn only when we participate". Thus the teacher should be a democratic leader of her class; for

(1) Cutts, op. cit., p. 18

(2) Rivlin, Teaching Adolescents in Secondary School, pp. 331-332

(3) Elsbree, op. cit., p. 360

(4) Ibid.

(5) Harrison, op. cit., p. 146

example, if she sees that the majority of the class disagree with her decision or action, she should spend a little time discussing the problem openly with them. A simple question like, "What can I do to help you more?" will make students realize that she is really concerned with their problems and she is interested in helping them. (1)

Cooperation between teachers and parents may have a great effect in helping to solve behavior problems. Many pupils become behavior problems because of home conditions. (2) So cooperation between parents and teachers may be extremely helpful. This can be either through a conference or through a visit at home. The teacher should make it clear to the parents that her aim is to help the child by understanding his needs, interests, and abilities and the causes which affect his behavior. She can win their confidence by giving suggestion or information which will help in understanding the child. She has to make clear to the parent her method of dealing with their child.

Both teachers and parents should agree on how each one of them can work with the child in order to help him effectively. Sometimes it is necessary to make arrangement for further conferences, (3) especially where parents are hostile toward the child.

(1) Ibid.

(2) Ibid., p. 144

(3) Ibid., p. 145

Teacher-student conferences should be encouraged. Through such conferences both teacher and student may grow to understand each other better. The teacher can talk freely with the students; encouraging students to discuss their problems will help the teacher to gain an insight into the difficulties they are facing, and thus enable her to be more helpful. (1)

Another method in preventing behavior problems, is to take care of the physical atmosphere of the class room. The teacher has to note quickly when the class is becoming restless, or sleepy. She has to ask herself these questions: What is wrong with the class? Do they need a change? What about temperature, light, ventilation etc...? The teacher has to check all these to be sure that conditions are favorable. (2)

In concluding and summarizing what has been said about prevention, the following principles should be emphasized:

1. Respect the personality of the pupil. Treat them as individuals, with the same degree of fairness, impartiality and consideration for individual differences. (2)
2. Take into consideration the standard of the group as the foundation of your disciplinary measures. In order to have an effective disciplinary procedure, you have to be sure that

(1) Crow, op. cit., p. 334

(2) Cutts, op. cit., p. 17

(3) Schorling, op. cit., p. 91

this procedure does not oppose the standard of the group; e.g. a teacher cannot eliminate cheating from her class unless she turns the class opinion against cheating.⁽¹⁾

3. Use a variety of teaching procedures. Try to learn effective devices. These devices should be a supplementary means in explaining the lesson. Use the chalk board, maps, charts, all the audio visual aids. Give the children a chance to present the lesson. This will hold their attention to the subject at hand and leave no time for disorder.⁽²⁾
4. Move about in the class room, get close to the danger spot of inattention or disturbance, to check it.⁽³⁾ Look at the student directly in the eyes. This will make him aware of your observation and your interest. Learn to "ride your eyes" keeping all pupils in view all the time.⁽⁴⁾ This will make you the master of the class.
5. Use a chart to learn the name of the students quickly. This will help you in maintaining class order. Each one likes to be called by his name. So to learn students' names quickly and to be able to call any one by his name, will make students feel that you are interested in them.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Ibid

(2) Ibid, p. 92

(3) Ibid, p. 93

(4) Grim, op. cit, 274

(5) Schorling, op. cit., p. 94

7. Study students' seating. Separate those who tend to create disorder in class.⁽¹⁾
8. Avoid criticism or getting angry before the group. Use a private conference to handle behavior problems. Do not scold or complain in front of the class.⁽²⁾
9. Make students feel that you are interested in them as individuals. A visit to the home or a call asking about the sick student will have a good effect on both students and parents. Try also to attend students' activities and performances.⁽³⁾
10. Be business-like; keep students busy and interested by providing a great variety of teaching procedure. Start your lesson promptly and close the work on time. Step to the door to prevent crowding and pushing in passage ways. Keep a record of absences and tardiness. Hold all classmembers responsible for all activities that take place during ^{the} class period.⁽⁴⁾

After discussing several means of preventing behavior problems, the writer now presents the second part of the study based on the research work of schools.

(1) Ibid.

(2) Ibid., p. 95

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ibid.

PART II

Tabulation of Questionnaires and Observations

The inserted questionnaire has been distributed to 10 out of 18 lower secondary government girls schools in Beirut.

The writer will deal with the results of the questionnaire first.

Questions dealing with students' statistics

The number of students in the school ranges from 150-450. The age distribution of students in each class ranges from 8 - 18 with the average at 14. The socio-economic status of the class in general is rated as poor.

Questions dealing with physical facilities of the school

The number of toilets is very small in comparison with the large number of students. The ratio of students to toilets ranges from 26 - 100 students per one toilet. The teachers agreed on the unhygienic and unhealthy condition of these toilets.

There are no school libraries, but there are books which range in number from 200 - 800, that are considered as a library. However, in three schools, where the number of books is above 500, a special room is reserved as a library. The books are kept in this room, but no student is allowed to use them without the principal's permission. Otherwise, books are kept in the principal's office. Most of these

books have no cultural or educational value. They are mainly Arabic short stories, novels, poems and some magazines. These books are available only during vacations and week-ends. Teachers considered that the purpose of these books was recreational only and should not interfere with lessons.

All government schools have play-grounds. Eight out of 10 schools who participated in answering this question have rather large playgrounds which can hold more than 300 students.

"What kinds of extra-curricular activities do the students have"?

School trips are the only extra-curricular activity that students in public schools have. In 2 schools, students tried to issue a school paper, but they had to discontinue it, because they lacked money, experience, and student participation. Trips are now forbidden by the Ministry of Education except during the long vacations. A special permission from the Ministry must be given in advance.

"What is your idea of good discipline"?

Out of 25, 10 teachers believe that discipline should stress the importance of developing self-control. One of the teachers said:

"I believe in self-discipline which is built on good relations between teacher and student, where students feel that they are responsible for their class and school".

Another one said:

"I believe that the best kind of discipline is the one that stresses the importance of developing self-control within students through understanding, kindness, justice and cooperation between teacher and students."

Yet 3 or 4 of these teachers believe that the preventive means of discipline are not completely effective. Punishment should be inflicted on violators from time to time. One of them said:

"Punishment should be used severely if kindness fails to achieve its purpose."

Fifteen or the majority of teachers believe in an authoritarian discipline which is based on fear of the teacher. One teacher said:

"I believe that the best kind of discipline is the one which is based on fear of the teacher and which is characterized by 'pin-drop quiet', where the teacher rules her class with an iron hand."

Another one said:

"I believe in the proverb which says; 'Spare the rod and spoil the child'. The Ministry of Education prevents the

use of corporal punishment. Otherwise, I would like to use it."

Did the class misbehave as a whole? When?

Three teachers out of 25 stated that the class misbehaved as a whole. One of them said:

"Once the class misbehaved as a whole when the teacher scolded the students severely. The girls felt insulted and revolted against her."

"List four types of class room misbehavior that annoy you the most."

Among the most annoying types of misbehavior are; pushing and shouting rated first with 16, while cheating and lying come next with 12, rudeness and disobedience rated third with 11, inattentiveness and indifference rated fourth with 10, laziness and passivity rated fifth with 4, gossiping, borrowing, and talkativeness each rated last with 2.

"What do you think are the most common causes for misbehavior?"

The personality of the student and his background rated first with 20 answers out of 25. Teachers said that poverty, ignorance and lack of good social training at home make the student liable to cheat, lie and misbehave. Personality of the teacher came next with 15 out

of 25. Lack of teaching skill rated third with 12 responses and lack of her ability to understand and handle pupils rated fourth with 10. The physical atmosphere of the class room was mentioned least often with only 6.

How can you prevent such misbehavior?

Fifteen of 25 of the government teachers use punishment as a disciplinary device. The most common kinds of punishment in order of frequency are:

1. Keeping students after classes
2. Sending to the principal
3. Isolating the trouble maker
4. Scolding and mocking the violator

A few teachers, 6 out of 25, believe in the preventive means of discipline. One teacher said:

"The best way to handle behavior problems is to understand the causes behind them. A good teacher can stimulate students' attention by providing an interesting lesson which meets students' needs and ability."

Another teacher said:

"To prevent misbehavior the teacher has to keep her students busy and interested in the work at hand. She

also has to be alert, quick, and enthusiastic."

Four teachers out of 25 believe in the effect of a personal conference with the offender. One of them said:

"Talking to the offender after classes, makes him feel that the teacher is his friend. Her interest is to help him to achieve a better personality by understanding his problems and needs."

These are the results of the questionnaires. The writer will now discuss the result of her interviews with the principals of the lower secondary government girls schools in Beirut and her observation of these schools.

In answering the first question which is related to the general physical facilities of the schools, observation and interviews with principals indicated that most of the general physical facilities of government schools are good. The buildings are adequate. They consist of two floors with large rooms. The playgrounds are large enough to hold more than 300 students, 8 out of 10 schools have special equipment for games such as basket and volley ball. The sanitary facilities are in poor condition. Principals say that they cannot keep them clean all the time because of the large number of students in comparison with the small number of toilets. Principals say that schools which have

the worst physical condition are poor in discipline. Students are subject to misbehavior and disorder.

The general appearance of the class room is not attractive. There are no pictures, no maps nor demonstrative charts. The furniture is made in such a way that it cannot be moved easily. Uncomfortable chairs are used. Students tend to spend most of their time in these unattractive rooms. Because the rooms which are occupied by the lower secondary classes are small, ventilation is inadequate, and because the windows are small the lighting is insufficient.

The only free activity which the students have within the school are some games such as basket or volley ball. Hand work and knitting are included in the scholastic program. The writer's observations indicated that there were no extra-curricular activities. She also observed that the procedure used by the teacher in the class room is the old method of recitation. Students learn most of their lessons by heart and repeat in a parrot-like way what they have studied. There is no use of any kind of audio-visual aids.

Interviews with principals indicated that the teacher-student relationship is based on fear rather than on understanding. They also stated that some teachers are indifferent and not interested in children. Sometimes they even use impolite words or call students bad names. Some used sarcasm and shouting to stop misbehavior. Others are insensitive to special problems of students. One of these principals said that one of her teachers mocked the students' poverty,

made fun of their problems, and pointed out their handicaps in a very cruel manner and in front of the whole class.

Interviews with principals also indicated that the parent-teacher cooperations in public school is rather weak. Home visits are forbidden by the Ministry of Education, but in an emergency case the principal sends for the parents in order to discuss with them the problem of their child and to see what can be done about it. Principals said that some parents show good will in cooperating with the principal to bring out the best in their child; e.g., the case of the father whose child was known as the most aggressive and disorderly child in school, but whom investigation showed to need security, affection and more attention of her parents. The matter was discussed with the parents who showed willingness to understand the problem and to change their attitude towards the child to give her more attention. "This is a rare case", said the principal. The majority of the parents always put the blame on the teacher and accuse her of being unfair and cruel with their child.

Cooperation among teachers is only realized through monthly conferences where students' problems are discussed. Certain solutions may be suggested and suitable ones may be agreed on. The writer has no further information about this subject, aside from what was given by the principal.

Conclusion

In concluding, the writer admits that this study does not give a very complete picture of what is actually happening in government girls' schools, due to two factors:

1. The number of observations in each school (approximately 15) was inadequate, due to limitations of time.
2. The reaction of students and teachers might have been affected by the presence of an outside observer, especially one known to come from the Ministry of Education.

Yet in spite of these limitations, the study gives some information about ways of handling behavior problems in public schools and the teacher's general conception of discipline in these schools. It also shows the types of misbehavior which existed. It states that some principals are aware of the general poor condition of their schools, of the inappropriate methods of teaching, and of handling students, which are used by teachers, and of the effect of these factors on students' behavior. Principals admitted that they are limited in the means and authority to handle these problems. However, responses from the questionnaire showed that several teachers believe in constructive methods of discipline, whether they know how to apply them or not. These responses, if they are sincere, indicate that the situation can be improved.

The library research shows what can be done to achieve a better

situation in these schools. Through the discussion of theories, causes and ways of handling behavior problems in general, it is hoped that the reader will have an idea about the most effective ways of preventing behavior problems and what good discipline is.

Finally, the writer wants to recommend that the following needs be met:

1. Larger classrooms to provide enough space for teacher and students to move around.
2. In the class rooms:
 - a) individual desks and seats not fixed, with devices to be noiseless.
 - b) pictures, charts and other types of audio-visual aids to add to the attractiveness of the surroundings and thus create interest and encourage students to be more orderly.
3. Better physical and sanitary conditions including proper ventilation, good lighting and enough toilets.
4. Better trained and qualified teachers, and in-service training for those who are not trained. The recruitment of the right type of teachers.
5. Provision for better teacher-parent cooperation, with these aims in view:
 - a) that the parent may understand the normal desires of the students for independence and sharing in family

and school responsibilities,

- b) that parents may realize that they have a responsibility to understand what goes on in school,
- c) that teachers may understand how students are treated at home.

- 6. Re-examination of the educational objectives of schools and their present curriculum in terms of meeting individual abilities and needs.
- 7. Principals' understanding of the meaning and values of guidance services for all schools, especially for secondary schools.

The writer recognizes that these recommendations are for the future, but she believes that unless there is a desire on the part of those who are responsible to improve the situation by trying to meet these needs, the right kind of discipline in government schools will not be achieved.

هذا الاستجواب هو جزء من دراسة عن الطرق المستعملة في معالجة النظام في المدارس التكميلية الرسمية في لبنان فاذا لم يكن لديك مانع من الاجابة عن الاسئلة المذكورة ادناه . تكوني باجاباتك قد اسديت الي مساعدة فعلية في اتمام هذا البحث .

لا داعي لذكر اسمك .

اذكري عدد الطالبات في المدرسة _____
اذكري اعمار الطالبات في الصف : يتراوح بين _____ و _____
الحالة الاجتماعية والمادية للصف كمجموعة : _____ جيدة _____ متوسطة _____ دون الوسط
الحالة الصحية في المدرسة : _____ جيدة _____ متوسطة _____ دون الوسط
اذكري عدد الحمامات : _____ درجة نظافتها _____
هل يوجد مكتبة _____ نعم _____ عدد الكتب _____
كيفية استعمال هذه الكتب ونوعها _____

ما هي انواع النشاطات المدرسية التي تمارسها الطالبات :

ما هو النظام المثالي في الصف في نظرك ، ولماذا اشرحي

هل حدث مرة ان ثار الصف كمجموعة — نعم — لا . متى كان ذلك ؟

اذكري اربعة انواع من سوء السلوك تشير سخطك اكثر من غيرها

— ١

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ما هي الاسباب الحقيقية وراء هذا التصرف في نظرك ؟

كيف تمنعين حدوث مثل هذه التصرفات اذكري الطرق المستعملة ؟

This questionnaire is a part of an independent study on "Discipline in the Lower Secondary Classes in Several Government Schools in Beirut". You will assist the study if you answer the following questions.

Number of students in the school: _____

Age distribution of the class from _____ to _____

Socio-economic status of the class in general: good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

Number of toilets _____ How clean: _____

Is there a library? Yes _____ No _____

How are the books used? _____

Is there a play ground? Yes _____ No _____ Size _____ mm.

What kind of extra curricular activities do the students have? _____

Did the class misbehave as a whole? Yes _____ No _____ When? _____

What is your idea of good discipline?

List four types of class room misbehavior that annoy you the most:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

What do you think are the most common causes for misbehavior?

How can you prevent such misbehavior?

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