

Behavioural Problems of Elementary Pupils as Perceived by the Teachers during Math Class

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study was to determine the Behavioural Problems of Elementary Pupils as Perceived by Teachers During Math Class. It specifically aimed to determine the pupils profile in terms of age, grade level and sibling position; determine the factors that cause the behavioural problem during math class; and establish relationship between pupil's profile and their behaviour during math class. Descriptive method of research was used in this study. The researchers also found out that among the listed behaviours, absenteeism is the main behavioural problem encountered by the teachers. Gaining a mean of 3.41 interpreted as often observed, followed by dishonesty and naughtiness with a mean of 2.54 also interpreted as often observed. Majority of the respondents are 8 years old with a percentage of 21.21 mainly from grade 1 and out of 99 pupils 37 of them are middle child. Therefore, majority of the teachers perceived that absenteeism, dishonesty and naughtiness are the most common behavioural problems observed among elementary pupils. Waking up late; parents told them not to attend class because they need to take care of their younger siblings; working in the rice paddies; poverty; illness like headache and diarrhea to be specific; and distance of the school from the child's home, were identified as the main causes of behavioural problems among pupils based on the conducted interview with them. This study gives other researchers the opportunity to formulate a proposed program which can address the behavioural problems observed among pupils.

Keywords: Elementary Pupils Behavioural Problems, Teacher's Perception on Behavioural Problems, Factors that Cause Behavioural Problems.

I. INTRODUCTION

Behavioural problems don't have the precise statement that describes what it means. They are the way person acts or behaves that deny or disagree with what is being said, to specific age, social desire, beliefs and norms.

According to Achenbach et al. behavioural problems can be classified into "Internalizing", giving a subjective character and "Externalizing", giving an excessive attention to external.

Behavioural problems influence emotional and intellectual response of a child to external reality. Proper behaviour is the sign of good mental health whereas the problem in mental condition leads to distinct behaviour. Mental health of the child has primary impinge on cognitive, social and learning progression.

Learner's behaviour is adjudged partly by heredity and in some degree by environment, and it can be qualified through knowledge or education. The environment gave importance on the development of genetic propensities that needs to be train and learn.

By the process of learning, behaviour vary as a consequence of practices or experiences.

In this exploration, we try to determine the respondents' profile in terms of ages, grade levels, and sibling positions. We also examine how our learners behave in classroom situations, specifically during math lesson. We also try to determine the most common behavioural problems of the learners that continue to occur, as well as the factors that affect such behaviour where in most observable behaviour results from a combination factor.

The respondents are our actual pupils who are now six to thirteen years old and above and registered elementary grades one to six. Throughout the school year, it will be our privilege to share and enjoy with our learners the fascinating process of growth and development to the full.

The connection demonstrated since early childhood be ascertained and become the foundation of many of our learners most important life experiences that will be continually learning by conforming to their behaviour and by compassionating how different children can be and that each child is a unique individual unlike his brother or sister, classmates and friends across the street.

The way our learners' behaviour grows and develop contingents on many factors. While every child is very unusual, there is a range of observable patterns of behavioural problems that are common to all children. However, as the processes of learning continue, the child develops control over his own behaviour and self-assuredness in him, based on love and understanding between the teacher and the learner. We, as teachers, must teach our child to be responsible for his own actions, developing his inner control so that he can live with other people, limit his behaviour and respect authority for his own safety and the safety of others.

But we can only do these, after we determined some behavioural problems of the child. Through this research, we hope to fulfil successfully in teaching our pupils, learn better when directions are positive than when they are negative.

To enable them to take this responsibility, we must have to explicate the explanations for any necessary boundaries on his behaviour. He will respect the reason for things and will cooperate more readily if he knows how and why.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to determine the behavioural problems of elementary Pupils as perceived by teachers during math class. Specifically, it seeks to determine the pupils profile in terms of age, grade level and sibling position; determine the factors that cause the behavioural problem during math class; and establish relationship between pupil's profile and their behaviour during math class.

METHODS

The study employed the descriptive survey method of research since it determines the behavioural problem of elementary pupils as perceived by the teachers during Math class. According to Shuttleworth, Martyn (2008), descriptive research design involves describing and observing the behaviour of the subjects without influencing them. This is usually used by psychologists, anthropologists and social scientists to discover natural behaviour of the samples.

Survey was conducted using questionnaire checklist-instrument to gather data from the respondents. It also used focused interview with 99 pupils to find out the causes of their behavioural problems. Gathered data were treated using appropriate statistical tools such as frequency count, weighted mean and t-test to determine the significant difference between pupils' profiles and their behaviour during Math class.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the findings about the respondents' profile in terms of their age, grade level, and sibling position. The results are shown in frequencies and percentage.

The respondents have been classified into eight (8) groups of age: 12 years old and above; 11 years old; 10 years old; 9 years old; 8 years old; 7 years old; 6 years old; and 5 years old and below. Majority of the respondents were 8 years old having a frequency of 21 and a percentage of 21.21% out of 99 total participants. It is followed by the respondents who are 7 years old with a frequency of 17 or 17.17%. 10 years old respondents fall rank 3 for having a frequency of 16 or 16.16%. It is followed by respondents who are 11 years old with a 14 frequency and 14.14% percentage. Second to the least respondents were 9 years old pupils having a frequency of 11 or 11.11%. On the other hand, only 10 or 10.10% pupils who both fall under the range of 12 years old and above and 5 years old and below. There were more 8 years old pupils in this study because majority of the population came from Grades 1, 5 and 2, in ascending order. Other 8 years old pupils from Grade 1 are probably repeaters that is why there were only 17 7 year-old pupils in the said level and yet we have 19 grade 2 pupils.

There were no participants from 5 years old and below since usually this age is still on the kindergarten level. It was included in the instrument because there are circumstances that a child is accelerated to the next grade level.

Table 1. Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Profile					
Profile Variables				f	%
Age					
	12 years old and above			10	10.10
	11 years old			14	14.14
	10 years old			16	16.16
	9 years old			11	11.11
	8 years old			21	21.21
	7 years old			17	17.17
	6 years old			10	10.10
	5 years old and below			0	0.00
Grade Level					
	Grade 1			24	24.24
	Grade 2			19	19.19
	Grade 3			9	9.09
	Grade 4			12	12.12
	Grade 5			22	22.22
	Grade 6			13	13.13
Sibling Position					
	Eldest Child			28	28.28
	Middle Child			37	37.37
	Youngest Child			28	28.28
	Only Child			6	6.06

As indicated from the table above, there were 9 pupils from Grade three, 12 from Grade four, 13 from Grade six, 19 from Grade two, 22 from Grade five and 24 from Grade one level which has the most number of respondents.

Researches prove that boys are more likely to suffer from behavioural disorders than girls. Boys have more rebellious characteristics against, and more likely to initiate conflict with authority than girls, they tend not to obey with a hierarchal structure (McIntyre, Tom & Tong, Virginia, 1998).

Study of David Tyler, 2017 showed that one in five children from primary level exhibits emotional and behavioural problems such as not wanting to go to school, sadness and anxiety, hyperactivity, restless, overactive, easily distracted, temper tantrums, acting out and fighting.

Researchers mentioned that boys having behavioural problems are three times more likely to be rated by their teachers as having poor English or Mathematical skills, compared to children without behavioural problems.

Behavioural problems among boys have been proven to affect their academic performance. Research of Mundia, Lawrence, (2017) presents that during the Wide Range Achievement Test and the Woodcock-Johnson and Psycho-Educational Battery conducted in Brunei, majority of the students who passed, are females on both tests.

There are several causes that have been proven on why boys are likely to develop behavioural problems than girls. It could be both biological and environmental causes. Freeman, Daniel and Freeman, Jason (2017) mentioned that male antisocial behaviour depends on their gene and environmental interactions. Those children who have traumatic experiences like abused or maltreated are more likely to exhibit behavioural problems. This clearly shows that boys have worse temperament than girls. Psychology use the temperament word to define child's personality and most parents agree that it seems to be innate. These evidences presented shown that boys and girls have different temperament.

Based on the 189 meta-analysis studies conducted at the University of Wisconsin-Madison which involves children ages 3 months to 13 years, there is small difference but there are significant exceptions. Surgency among boys is relatively high. Surgency includes behaviour such as being active, sociable, impulsive,

and with a liking for difficult or rough play. Girls, on the other hand, have an effortful control attitude which involves behaviour like being persistent, adept at concentrating in accomplishing task and can control their impulse. From this result, we can relate high energy and having low emotional control at the same time to behavioural problems. Else-Quest findings presented that boys are physically aggressive than girls. A teacher can also observe the same thing with their pupils. For example, boys starting at the age of 1 get what they want through force or physical strength.

Table 1 also presented the sibling position which categorized into four namely: eldest, middle, youngest, and only child. There were only 6 or 6.06% only child; eldest and youngest child have the same frequency and percentage which is 28 or 28%; and middle child dominated the population which has a frequency of 37 or 37.37%. Middle child in this study defines as the sibling position wherein the child is neither the first nor the last child. If the child has more than 4 siblings and he/she is neither the first or last child, he/she is then considered as middle child.

Table 2. Teacher's Perception of Behavioural Problems of Pupils

Indicators			WM	VI	Rank
1	Absenteeism		3.41	Often	1.00
2	Dishonesty		2.54	Often	2.50
3	Disrespect		1.52	Sometimes	10.00
4	Gambling		1.60	Sometimes	9.00
5	Laziness		2.41	Sometimes	4.50
6	Naughtiness		2.54	Often	2.50
7	Troublemaking		1.74	Sometimes	8.00
8	Stealing		1.19	Never	13.00
9	Tardiness		2.41	Sometimes	4.50
10	Physical Abusiveness		1.15	Never	14.00
11	Destroying Other's Property		1.36	Never	12.00
12	Inattention		2.36	Sometimes	6.00
13	Clowning		1.10	Never	15.00
14	Lying		1.48	Never	11.00
15	Defiance		2.25	Sometimes	7.00
Composite Mean			1.94	Sometimes	
	Scale:	3.50 - 4.00	= Always	2.50 - 3.49	= Often
		1.50 - 2.49	= Sometimes	1.00 - 1.49	= Never

Absenteeism and dropping out are widespread and prevalent behaviours of students nowadays and these escalate greater number of problem in the department of education. There are numerous identified causes of absenteeism and dropout such as personal or family problem, home or environmental issues, teacher factor, school factor, and community factor.

Absences can deteriorate someone's educational goals especially if pupils are habitually involved in doing the said problem. Due to the benefits they're enjoying during the time they were absent, they became less interested to attend school. This trend is usually happening in public schools because basically, most pupils came from less fortunate families. Children immersed themselves in providing the needs of the family by working for other people despite of the presence of R.A. 9231 which prohibits children from working in any public or private establishments below the age of 15. Based on the 2008 data from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), out of 100 Grade 1 pupils, only 66 finished Grade 6. Only 58 of the 66 continue to enrol in secondary education but only 43 graduated from this level. Out of 43 high school who graduated, only 23 pursue a college degree but only 14 successfully graduated from tertiary level, (Muzones & De Jesus, 2009).

These problems need to be addressed and provide serious attention in order to make preventive measures since this is becoming an epidemic issue. At a very young age, parents and teachers should inculcate the value of education in order for them to understand why they have to go to school. Parents, most especially, are the ones who should encourage and support their child's education because each one of them has a better future ahead of them. Failure to do this, more issues will flourish as time goes by. Worst case scenario is, the child could be a high school dropout or could be involved in illegal drug use. Ford & Sutphen, (1996), mentioned that students who are always absent will generally have lower chance of academic success. And because of this, Epstein & Sheldon, 2002, brought up that those pupils have fewer opportunities to understand the materials that could help them succeed.

On the table shown above, absenteeism rank 1st being the most observed behavioural problem as perceived by the teachers inside the classroom which has a weighted mean of 3.41 and interpreted as often. Absenteeism is rampant and prevalent in public schools for many significant years. Absences means, missed participation and opportunities. Pupils who habitually taking absences are prone to truancy or grade level retention which resulted to low educational attainment or worst they could be involved in illegal drug use. Antworth, Roger Herbert, (2008).

Some children choose not to attend school because they are afraid of being bullied or discriminated. Some researchers have identified that absenteeism is associated to racial cultures and tends to occur at some grade levels more than others, (Florida Department of Education (FDOE), 2006). This is actually one of the many reasons why pupils are often absent. According to the Murcia, (2015), there are number of reasons regarding child's absenteeism, these are child's strong personality or attitude, health, teacher-related factors, and home-related factors. Other researches shown that socio-economic can be an indicator (FDOE, 2004a). There are also studies that some types of disciplinary programs used in the institution may indicate the level of absenteeism and truancy.

There were number of rules and programs being tried by school teachers and administrators yet students' absenteeism rate are still high.

It is the reality in a school system wherein pupils don't usually show up in the class. In New York City there are approximately 150,000 out of 1 million students from public school who are absent during school days, (Walls, 2003).

Based on the result, dishonesty and naughtiness landed rank 2 among the listed behavioural problems perceived by the teachers in public schools. Both have a weighted mean score of 2.54 and interpreted as often observed.

Dishonesty has becoming a worldwide issue inside the classroom especially during periodical tests. Some students even use different techniques just to cheat and make their parents believe that they got high scores on it.

According to Koss, Jamie L., (2011) dishonesty among students is becoming a worldwide issue. It has been a problem existing from elementary to doctorate level programs. Pressure from parents, friends and teachers is one of the identified reasons for dishonesty. He also added that, fast technology advancement, ethnocentrism, and classroom environment contribute to the growing concern inside the classroom. Students use different strategies to successfully pass assignments, quizzes, exams and even entrance exams. Some of the said strategies are: crib sheets; use of codes or signs among their peers; write terms or formulas on their legs, hands or arms. There are some researchers who proposed measures to provide intervention and prevention against dishonesty among students.

There are numbers of reasons why pupils cheat. It is either for their personal gain or to prove their peers that they can sneak out from their teacher. Some students want to act like they are the "cool kid" in the school and so, cheating is one of their ways in order to gain more friends and validation from them. Some kids, also cheat because their parents put too much pressure and set too high expectations among them which lead to this kind of behaviour. It is actually a serious matter since it could have severe consequences on the child's future.

Koss, Jamie L., (2011), mentioned that when teachers are giving assignments or projects, usually, it is the parents who do and answer the said tasks because they are aiming for their child's high grades which is, without them knowing, is detrimental to the child's learning and educational successes. Parents do this because they want their child to be ahead of others and this bring bragging rights for their family without realizing that

they actually teach their child to be lazy and dependent to them. Competition among parents is also a factor for this bad behaviour. Parents believe that it is normal to cheat just to get to the top. Parents presence and support to their child's education improves performance level and educational achievements but not to the extent that they will cheat just to prove that.

There are more opportunities if you enrol in an institution which provides quality education especially those prominent institutions who only admit the best of the best students. Students who can make their way to the top have already an edge their way into those schools. Due to this, students tend to cheat in order to enter in the said institution. This is what egocentrism is doing to our children. We always think that are cultures and beliefs are superior to others making the society more pressured that most of the time, lead to cheating.

School should also provide conducive learning environment for its learners since it is one of the factors why dishonesty takes place. Classroom planning and structuring are crucial steps in influencing child's behaviour for the rest of the school year. There are given consequences and punishments to those who are dishonest but not totally implemented because some teachers don't usually focus on this matter. In the survey conducted by (Bushweller, 1999) there are students who admitted that they are cheating but 95% of them were never reprimanded because they were never caught. Teachers have the ultimate authority to punish those who are academically dishonest based on the guidelines on this matter.

Naughtiness has also a weighted mean of 2.54 and interpreted as often being the rank 2 as well. It is hard to control since being naughty is natural among kids. Steer, (2014) mentioned that all children are naughty and it is part of every child's milestones. Sometimes, children are being naughty because they want to see their caregiver's reaction to see if what he/she did is allowed or not. Kids are explorative and it is their one way of finding things out about life.

Based on the conducted interview, most of the responses of the participants about absenteeism are almost the same. Some pupils decided not to attend school because they wake up late. They think that they won't bother attending school since they are already late. One of the basic problems that need to be addressed here is either the sleeping habits or the timetable of classes. Classes here in the Philippines start early. In elementary public schools, 7:30A.M. calls for flag up and classes end at 3:10P.M. for Grades 1 and 2 and 4P.M. for Grades 3 to 6. Meaning, children are staying in school for approximately 8-9 hours.

According to the article written from Psychology Today website, (2018), Science proved that when kids reach puberty, their clocks shift and they tend to sleep late at night, as late as 11P.M.. Moreover, pupils who lack sleep are more likely to have mental health issues like eating disorders and depression which lead to risky behaviours such as drinking alcohol, taking illegal drugs and smoking cigarettes. Corollary to this, they tend to have a very low performance level at school. Two different literature reviews have mentioned that when schools start later in the morning, kids are healthier and happier. From the six conducted meta-analysis, found that schools with later start times are more student-friendly. Students are less likely to suffer from depression, engage in smoking cigarette and drinking alcohol and they arrive at school on time and reported that sleeping during class hours were seldom observed.

From the separate 38 meta-analysis conducted, these studies found that pupils get more sleep at night when schools delay start times. Thus, students' attendance and performance level improved. There are already schools who adopted delaying start times and they are seeing improvements on their students' number of present during school days. U.S, having the best educational system in the world (Milic, Sinisa, 2018), on the average, start time is around 7:30A.M-8A.M. and ends around 2:30P.M.-3P.M. and that's approximately 7 hours of stay in school.

Most of the pupils in the Philippines attending in public schools are from less fortunate families. As a result, instead of going to school, they are seen working in the rice paddies/fields or farms to help their parents make it for the day. Survival is more important to them due to their situation and so, some parents asked their children not attend school. Dapadap, Manit, (2019), stated that because of destitution, lots of families are suffering to meet their basic needs. In aftereffect, children are being forced by their parents to help their families. But due to the existence of Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), absenteeism rate turned down but only for few significant years. This program basically helped solve absenteeism among pupils but this also created another problem. Some teachers are being more considerate to children and parents who are benefiting from this program and this leads to giving mercy even if they don't deserve it anymore. Reyes, et.al, (2015), disclosed that absenteeism is still present due to lack of personal interest and high cost of education based on their economic status. Therefore, 4Ps is not the best program that can help exterminate absenteeism among

pupils. This program still needs to undergo assessment of its effectiveness with regards to child's school attendance.

Rate of absenteeism also differs from where the child lives. Balfanz, (2017), stated that children can be habitually absent four times than others especially if they live in places with high rates of penury. Destitution is one of the key factors that need to be addressed first since this leads to deprivation of basic needs to children especially their right to education.

But poverty is not the only main factor for child's absenteeism. Balfanz, (2012), presented that sickness, family duties, bullying, harassment, embarrassment, neglect of parents or lack of educational support from parents are few of the many factors for absenteeism.

Other pupils stated that they are usually absent because of headache, diarrhea, they had to take care of their younger siblings and the distance of the school from their home.

Headache is one of the stated reasons of interviewed children for their absences. Straube, (2013), mentioned that, headache is already common among kids. 66% to 71% of 12-15 year olds experience headache once in every 3 months and 33% to 40% experience headache once a week. Studies from Scandinavia showed a high rate of children in age group from 8 years old and above suffering from headache. This could be detrimental to the learning of the child since various studies have identified risk factors like bullying of their schoolmates, poor physical activity, unfair treatment in school and lack of leisure time.

Diarrhea is also a common illness among kids. According to Web MD, children experience more diarrhea than adults. Diarrhea is a process of the body in getting rid of the germs. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, fever, dehydration and cramps. Infection like rotavirus, parasite like giardia and bacteria like salmonella are few of the many common reasons of diarrhea among children. This should be taken immediate actions in order dehydration since this illness is hard to control. Because of this, children with diarrhea will automatically be absent in schools. This not only affects his/her daily activities but as well as his/her performance in school since he/she will be missing topics discussed.

There are number of studies which focus on the distance of the child's home from school and his or her academic performance. There are students who spend hours of walking just to get to school. Mhiliwa, Joseph Anthom, (2015), stated that low performance level is connected to child's location from school. Several studies associated students' academic performance with the walking distance which the children had to go through just to arrive early in schools. He elaborated that learners who are in this situation spend most of their time traveling instead of leaning. Thus, affect their opportunity to learn more. The study of Moyo, (2013) stated that due to walking over long distance to and from school, students are more likely to suffer from drowsiness during learning because of fatigue and hunger as compared to children who live adjacent to the school. Onderi, Kiplangat, showed that walking long distance with an empty stomach negatively affects students' performance level.

Siblings taking care of their younger siblings are quite common among families who are living in remote areas.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Majority of the teachers in selected public elementary schools in Sorsogon Division with 6 total participants perceived that absenteeism is the most observed behavioural problems among elementary pupils. 99 Pupils from this study are mostly 8 years old, majority are from the 1st Grade and mostly are middle child. Absenteeism, dishonesty and naughtiness are the most common behavioural problems observed among elementary pupils. Waking up late; parents told them not to attend class because they need to take care of their younger siblings; working in the rice paddies; poverty; illness like headache and diarrhea to be specific; and distance of the school from the child's home, were identified as the main causes of behavioural problems among pupils based on the conducted interview with them. Future researchers could formulate a program from the result of this study to address the behavioural problems observed among pupils.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Nowadays, how children behave is completely different during the old times. Consequently, educators may continue to find interventions that can solve these behavioural problems among elementary pupils. Parents may also validate their child's interest, needs and emotions. Corollary to this, children are more likely to be sensitive and aware of other people's feelings. Parents may support their children by letting them participate in

any school activities to help them develop and build their self-esteem and be responsible for their own learning. By doing so, they may acquire decision making skills; may overcome hurdles; and build strong interpersonal relationship with other people. The result of this study may be utilized and evaluated subsequently.

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