



Behaviour disorders types, causes and sloving strategies among the students

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Abstract

Behaviour disorders arise from conditions within the child or from external influences, effects of which are often not noticed or understood by others. Behaviour disorders range from extreme withdrawal to intense hostile aggression. In a classroom, students exhibit a range of behaviors. Teachers are required to deal with all kinds of Behaviour disorders in a classroom. In this unit, we shall try to understand more about the difficulties experienced by students which often result in different behavior problems. It is important for teachers and parents to develop an understanding of the factors that result in problem behavior. In this Article we explain the behavior disorder types and their causes. We have also discussed strategies for dealing with behavioral disorders.

Keywords: Behaviour disorders, Types of Behaviour disorders, Causes of Behaviour disorders, Strategies for dealing with behavioral disorders

Introduction

Behaviour disorders arise from external influences whose effects are not often noticed or understood by others. Often, emotional and psychological factors in apparently normal children are not readily seen or understood but are often labeled as depression, hostility, with drawal or daydreaming to combat the stress. They may be battered and abused sexually, emotionally or physically. Most of these children are often in regular classrooms trying to cope with their problems themselves without being understood.

Teachers and parents are faced with the difficulty of dealing with the Behaviour disorders of their children. Behaviour disorders of children often interfere with the learning process and are incompatible with their educational program. It is important for teachers to understand the factors which could be responsible for the observable behavior problems of their students. Lack of understanding of the reasons behind the behaviour of the students may make the teacher react in a way which might aggravate the situation.

Students with problem behavior in the classroom pose challenges for teachers. Behaviour disorders may range from extreme withdrawal to intense hostile aggression. These students, if not identified and helped during their school days would continue to have difficulties dealing with society and their problems may become progressively more serious later in life.

Problems of children

Some behavioral characteristics of children are extreme shyness, fearfulness, aggression, attention seeking, hyperactive, excessively dependent, daydreaming, lying and cheating, stealing etc. Many of these problems of children are handled by the teachers/parents by using rewards such as adult praise, treats and trinkets. However, their

Understanding of social situations that lead to such Behaviour disorders is severely limited, and they may have difficulty in comprehending how their behaviour affects children or why children behave as they do.

Problems of adolescents

The period of adolescence is often marked by intense striving for independence and by rebellion directed at adult authority. Problems with parental and school supervision, drugs and alcohol misuse, truancy, theft and sexual experimentation are common at this age. Therefore, it is not surprising that adolescents with such problems are generally reported to be suspicious of adults (including the therapist), rebellious, defiant and resistant to treatment attempts. Such unwilling adolescents may blame others for their own problems and lack motivation to change their own behaviour. Group treatment methods are often used with adolescents in order to create a less threatening and more inviting atmosphere and to attempt to enlist peers support for behaviour change. Teenagers who are primarily fearful, withdrawn, depressed or mentally confused are often given individual therapy.

Types of behaviour disorder

Some of the commonly observed Behaviour disorders in children are described below

- 1. Classroom Disturbance:** The extent to which the child teases and torments classmates, interferes with other's work and is quickly drawn into noise making.
- 2. Impatience:** The extent to which the child starts work too quickly, is sloppy in work, is unwilling to review work and rush through work. Physically more active and restless.
- 3. Disrespect-Defiance:** The extent to which the child speaks disrespectfully to teachers, resists doing what is

asked of, belittles the work being done, and breaks classroom rules.

4. **Achievement Anxiety:** The extent to which the child gets upset about tests and scores and is sensitive to criticism or correction.
5. **External Reliance:** The extent to which the child looks to others for direction, requires precise direction and has difficulty making one's own decisions.
6. **Inattentive Withdrawn:** The extent to which the child loses attention, seems to be oblivious to what transpires in the classroom and seems difficult to reach, or is preoccupied.
7. **Irrelevant-Responsiveness:** The extent to which the child tells exaggerated stories, gives irrelevant answers, interrupts when the teacher is speaking and makes irrelevant comments during class discussion.
8. **Need for closeness to teacher:** The extent to which the child seeks out the teacher before or after class, offers to do things for the teacher, is friendly towards the teacher and likes to be physically close to the teacher.
9. **Anxiety-Depression:** The child seems to be tense with face drawn and rigid, cries easily at the smallest pretext, does not talk to anyone, doesn't take interest in things. The child gets upset about test and test scores, sensitive to criticism or correction.
10. **Quiet and Withdrawn:** The child is withdrawn and quiet in the class, doesn't have friends and is mostly isolated. Tends to be very self-centred, preoccupied with own thoughts and, problems and disinterested in or unenthusiastic about anything else.
11. **Aggression and Violence:** A hostile or angry behaviour directed to harm or injure a person or property.
12. **Attention Deficit:** The child has difficulty in attending to tasks and instructions for any length of time. Easily distracted, fidgets excessively, has difficulty in sitting still.
13. **Truancy:** The child who is frequently absent in school for vague reasons or minor ailments. 14) **Physical Injury:** Recurrent and multiple injuries are observed for which no adequate reason is given, delay medication, spots like strap marks, bites and burns.

Causes of behaviour disorders

The cause of a child's behaviour problem is, in all probability a peculiar combination of some of the contributing factors which we shall discuss, plus, perhaps some others which we are not as yet aware of which have been overlooked.

Personal and social needs

A child's need for attention, recognition, approval and belonging are just as real and compelling as the need for food and drink. A child deprived of attention might resort to

any activity which gets him/her attention. A child or adolescent often does not know how to get social satisfaction properly. For example, the bully, the liar, the show off, the joker, the habitual interrupter - is probably trying to satisfy social needs. Besides social needs, the need for self-respect, the need to feel that one is free and independent and important as an individual might be expressed by not obeying, not co-operating, playing truant, talking when he/she should be listening, or pushing when he/she should be waiting for his/her turn. Children who are notably above or below average in mental ability often deviate from norms in order to satisfy their social and personal needs because they are not otherwise being met.

Effects of maturation

Regardless of what an individual's chronological or even mental age may be, s/ he may be no more mature in self-control or human relations than an average individual some years his/her junior. Behaviour disorders such as temper tantrums, negativism, boisterousness, and attention seeking are indicative of immaturity. Other contributing factors are the individual's physical development. A short child for example, may adopt defiant, aggressive mannerism in order to demonstrate to himself/herself as well as to others that s/he is a force to be reckoned with despite his/her shortness of stature. The fat child may try to live up to the reputation he/she has acquired as the class clown. The big child in the group may act as ring leader whenever any mischief is contemplated, for he/she too has a reputation to uphold. His/her peers expect a certain amount of unruly behaviour from him/her and she cannot afford to let them down.

The teacher and classroom conditions

Some Behaviour disorders may be attributed to the teacher. It is improbable that any teacher consciously invites misconduct, but many do so inadvertently. Teachers who are sarcastic or who humiliate their students and those who are downright unfair to them earn the animosity of the students, and they become intent on seeking means for revenge.

The vacillating teacher with no set policy also contributes to students' misbehaviour, since they try out to see what and how much they can do before the teacher demonstrates displeasure.

The teacher who is easy going, who tries to be a 'pal' to the students, is another who practically extends the class an invitation to do as they jolly well please.

The teacher's methodology as well as personality can contribute to the incidence of behaviour disorder. If the work of the class is boring, if the interest and attention of the students cannot be held, if there is little for them to do but sit and listen or read, if the lessons are not well planned and if the ordinary matters of class routine are not well organized, if every student is not given some worthwhile task to perform, if the teacher allows discussions to get out of hand and degenerate into a number of private conversations, the teacher is helping to set up the kind of environment in which discipline problems are likely to breed and flourish.

Another aspect to be considered is the physical dimension of the classroom itself, particularly the size of the room, the number of students and the seating arrangements. The greater the number of students in the class, the less opportunity there is for anyone to obtain the attention s/he

wants and needs. Second, the more crowded the room, the greater is the opportunity and temptation for a student to misbehave, if for no other reason than that there is less likelihood for his/her being singled out and watched. The crowdedness of a room might also, of course, have a bearing on the student's physical discomfort by necessitating restrictions on bodily movement which are not conducive to normal classroom behaviors.

Social and cultural conditions

Among the socio-cultural factors which have been found to contribute to the misbehaviour of children and youth are certain television shows, movies, comics and magazines in which they encounter violence, horror, sadism, disregard for principles of decency and morality. The behavior problem of adolescents is often explained in terms of the unfavourable world conditions in which they live. Discrimination, persecution and inequality of opportunities on the basis of race, cast, religion or nationality, may also contribute to problem behavior in young people.

Home conditions

Various kinds of unsatisfactory home conditions are also the factors contributing to student's misbehaviour. Children who live in broken homes due to the death of a parent, divorce, or separation or by the prolonged absence of one or both parents for business or social reasons probably lack the firm but loving parental guidance they need for satisfactory adjustment in school life. Feeling rejected they might attempt to compensate by resorting to different forms of unacceptable behaviour. When parents and other adults in the home environment demonstrate by their words or deeds of having escaped punishment for traffic violation; when they are impudent and rude to one another; when they fail to respect each other's rights and dignity; or when they speak ill of others, children learn to disregard social or moral conventions.

Occasional lapses

In some instances, none of the factors that have been mentioned above might be applicable. The explanation of the misbehaviour might be the simple fact that students were unaware of a certain regulation or that they had forgotten it, or that they did not think it would be enforced, or that they were carried away in the excitement of a moment and did something that they know they shouldn't have done and wouldn't if they had only stopped to deliberate before acting. Like Truancy, Withdrawn, Stealing, and Anxiety and Fear. These conditions are largely correctable, but the earlier the corrective measures are taken the better. If not corrected it easily becomes habitual and remediation would take a longer time. The psychologist can help the student find out the psychological condition causing the problem, and teaching her better habits of breathing and relaxation.

Strategies for dealing the behavioural disorders

Strategies for dealing with behavioral disorders is helpful for parents and teachers who wish to relate more effectively with children and to assist them to grow in the healthiest way, both physically and mentally. Major terms used in this context are:

Reinforcement: Reinforcement is a consequence following a behavior that is designed to increase the occurrence of the behavior in the future. A child will do his work neatly if

each time he does so his mother/teacher lets him know how much she appreciates his efforts.

Punishment: Punishment is a consequence following a behaviour that is designed to decrease the occurrence of the behavior in the future. Example: If a child is told to sit in a chair each time he hits his sister.

Extinction: Extinction is not - responding to a behaviour in order to decrease the occurrence of that behaviour. Example: A child engaging in tantrums who is not given attention by his mother (ignored) will stop having a tantrum.

Shaping: Shaping is the reinforcement of closer and closer approximations to the desired behaviour.

Example: In helping a mother to make her excessively dependent child more independent, the procedure must be started with small initial attempts and each attempt rewarded. Each (attempt) step takes time, depending on the child's readiness, so patience is important. As the child progresses from step to step, the reinforcement for the previous step should be eliminated.

Consistency: Consistency is following through with a selected approach. Example: Each time a child gets out of bed after being put to bed, the parents need to immediately return the child to bed.

Observation: Observation is watching a behaviour for a specific period of time in order to determine the frequency of the behaviour's occurrence. Example: A child who is hyperactive and distracting to her peers; the teacher records the number of times the child having a temper tantrum.

Recording: Recording is the systematic record keeping of the number of times a behaviour occurs. *Consequence:* Consequence is the event that follows the occurrence of a behaviour. Example: A child finished his homework and is allowed to watch the T.V. programme of his interest as a reward (consequence).

Baseline: Baseline is the frequency of occurrence of a behaviour prior to intervention. Example: An observer records the frequency of whining (inappropriate) behaviour before attempts are made to change that behaviour.

Manipulation: Manipulation is the intervention technique in order to change a behaviour. Example: A child throws his books. In order to decrease the occurrence of this behaviour the child is placed in a chair each time he throws the book (timeout).

Role of teachers for reducing behaviours disorders

The teacher should be concerned with the total development of the students and not just the academic achievement. The teacher is in a position to make significant contributions towards the formation of healthy personalities and have opportunities and responsibilities in this regard. The teacher with a training in human behaviour and has opportunity to observe children in a classroom is in a better position to identify students with problem behaviours. Most Behaviour disorders of students are mild to moderate problems that can be treated effectively in the regular classroom and at home.

However, severe behavior problems of students should be handled by a psychologist.

A teacher dealing with these students must be effective and creative, able to adapt curriculum materials and activities to the individual needs of the students. The teacher can help a student who has an inadequate self-image by creating psychologically safe environment in which the student can express her/himself freely without fear of rejection. By showing unconditional positive regard for the students, teachers can encourage individual students to explore her/his own positive and negative feelings freely. If we create school and home environment in which students receive continuous love and regard, most Behaviour disorders would be eliminated. People value the good will and positive regard of others and will try to obtain it.

Conclusion

To deal effectively with behaviour disorders a teacher must understand the factors and situations that lead to behaviour disorder. Some of these factors are attempts to satisfy personal or social needs, the teacher and classroom conditions, home, social and cultural environment. Teachers and parents should use positive rather than punitive methods for correcting behaviour disorder. Under certain conditions punishment can be effective. In deciding which type of corrective measures to employ, the teacher and parent should take into account its effects on the child's mental health and long term. Children who have Behaviour disorders require the help of teachers and parents to understand and deal with them so that they can modify the behavior and are able to cope better with their academics and improve their personal life. Teachers and parents should try to identify if the cause of the Behaviour disorders is within the child or in the environment.

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