Methods of Dealing with Problematic Behaviours Faced by Pre-School Teachers

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Abstract: This study was conducted with the purpose of determining the problematic behaviours faced by the pre-school teachers and the methods of dealing with these problematic behaviours. The working group of this study of which type is descriptive is composed of 50 pre-school teachers in total who are serving in the pre-schools in the districts of Etimesgut and Yenimahalle in Ankara province. Questionnaire was used in order to determine the practices of the teachers. As a result of the study, it was concluded that teachers conduct correct practices as well as faulty or insufficient practices to the students who have conduct disorder. The data obtained from the study was discussed under the light of the literature and suggestions were offered.

Key words: Problematic behaviour · Dealing strategies · Pre-school period · Teaching environment · Class management

INTRODUCTION

Problematic behaviour can be described as behaviours which are preventing the teaching of teacher, learning of the student himself/herself and other students and disturbing the learning environment directly or indirectly and causing complications [1]. The reasons of the unfavourable behaviours of students may be caused by the factors both within the class and out of the class. The external factors (out of the class) may be the characteristics of the environment out of the class, lack of harmony among the individuals in the school and unequal learning opportunities. As for the internal factors (within the class), the reasons may be the classical and repeating methods used instead of the methods activating students, social and academic level of experience of the teacher, personality, manner, emotional status of the teacher, living environment of the student, success, interaction level, social skills, needs of the student, student lack of understanding of the classroom rules, excessively crowded classrooms, inappropriate physical conditions and inappropriate sitting plan [2]. It is considered that the negative impact of these behaviours on the education period will negatively affect the future lives of the individuals. Understanding the unfavourable behaviours of the students is a requirement for a better teaching and learning process. For this reason, the unfavourable behaviours are needed to be minimised. The students having different cultural backgrounds and socio-economic levels and having various characteristics,

needs, perceptions, manners and choices come together in the classroom environment. It is quite difficult that the students having these kinds of different characteristics share the same classroom without any problem [3].

The basic roles of the teachers in the classroom are ensuring learning, guiding the students and preventing the unfavourable behaviours. Effectively dealing with the unfavourable behaviours of students is one of the basic conditions to create effective learning and teaching environment. However, the occurrence of unfavourable behaviours even in different quality and intensity should be both seen as an inevitable natural case and as a good opportunity to gain appropriate education experiences. One of the most important factors in prevention and elimination of the unfavourable behaviours in the classroom is the knowledge, skill and efficiency of the teacher. The teacher will be able to determine a strategy based on his/her knowledge, skill and efficiency and implement this strategy [2]. Therefore, it is recommended that the teachers prepare their plans considering the physical conditions of the school and the classroom in order to prevent the occurrence of unfavourable behaviours. In addition, such preventive work as arranging physical conditions of the classroom, describing the instructions clearly, preparation of teaching materials and social skill teaching can prevent unfavourable behaviours or decrease the number of these behaviours. However, this may not be always enough. In this case, more individualistic and systematic methods and strategies are required to be used[4].

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Unfavourable behaviours can be seen in every level of education while they are faced during the pre-school period. According to Başar [5], during the pre-school period, the classroom management's strategies used by the teachers are of utmost importance in terms of supporting the development of students as well as preventing their unfavourable behaviours, gaining favourable behaviours and ensuring that they will be individuals with auto-control in the future. Classroom management is one of most important elements of effective teaching. The behaviours and academic success of the students change depending on the level of management of the teachers and there is a direct correlation between the teachers' behaviours and positive and negative behaviours of the student. An effective classroom management can be described as a management system aiming to increase the success of the teacher and their participation in the teaching process while preventing the possible problematic behaviours [6].

The problematic behaviours faced during the pre-school period are generally; fear-concern, timidity-shyness, lying, using objects without permission and aggressive behaviours.

According to the conducted studies, it was concluded that methods used by the teachers for preventing the unfavourable behaviours differ. In this study, it was aimed to determine which methods are used by the pre-school teachers for which problems.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Model of the Study: This study is a descriptive study where screening model was used. Screening model is a study approach aiming to describe a past or still existing case as it is or it was. The individual or object which is the subject of study is tried to be described under its own conditions and as it is. No effort is paid to change or affect in any way [7-23].

Population and Sample: The working group of the study is composed of 5 male and 45 female pre-school teachers working in private pre-schools in the districts of Etimesgut and Yenimahalle in Ankara province. The sample of the study is mainly composed of the teachers between the age ranges of 20-24

Data Collection Tools: In the study, a questionnaire developed by the researches was used to collect the data. The questions regarding the sex, age, graduate school, graduate department, duration of teacher service, the target age group of the teacher and the number of the students in the class are stated in the first part. In the second part of the questionnaire, there are questions regarding the problematic behaviours faced by the teachers in the classroom and the methods of dealing with these behaviours. The questionnaire was filled by the teachers [19-21].

Table 1: The percentage distribution of the strategies used for Conduct disorder, Lack of attention, Adjustment disorder, Activity Disturbing and Hyperactivity

Teachers' Behaviours	Problematic Behaviours				
	Conduct Disorder %	Lack of Attention %	Adjustment Disorder %	Activity Disturbing %	Hyperactivity %
1.I talk and warn	6,6%	1,7%	4,1%	7,7%	4,5%
2.I give an appointment in the classroom	5,2%	8,5%	10,7%	9,9%	10,2%
3.I impose punishment	1,4%	-	-	1,1%	-
4.I continuously observe	5,7%	4,0%	5,1%	3,9%	6,3%
5.I enable him/her to make empathy	4,2%	-	4,1%	4,4%	2,8%
6.I ignore	1,9%	,6%	,5%	2,2%	,6%
7.I set eye contact	7,5%	6,3%	3,1%	5,0%	5,7%
8.I make him/her to conduct attractive activities	7,1%	15,9%	6,1%	9,4%	9,1%
9.I care for him/her one by one	7,5%	5,7%	5,6%	2,2%	4,5%
10.I make him/her close to me	4,2%	5,7%	3,6%	3,3%	4,0%
11. I allow him/her to join group activities	3,8%	8,5%	7,7%	6,1%	5,1%
12.I talk with him/her separately	5,2%	,6%	6,1%	6,1%	4,0%
13.I tell him/her to listen to me	3,3%	4,5%	7,7%	5,0%	5,1%
14.I repeat the rules	8,5%	3,4%	8,7%	8,8%	6,3%
15.I give short period activities	2,8%	18,2%	4,6%	7,2%	8,5%
16.I make him/her apologize	6,6%	,6%	1,0%	6,1%	1,7%
17.I want him/her to think	5,2%	1,7%	1,5%	2,2%	3,4%
18.I attract his/her attention to another point	3,8%	3,4%	4,6%	2,2%	5,7%
19.I tell him/her to calm down	2,8%	,6%	3,1%	2,2%	6,3%
20.I enable him/her to join conversation	1,4%	2,8%	4,1%	1,1%	-
21.I tell him/her that I understand him/her	2,8%	1,7%	3,6%	2,2%	2,3%
22.I offer more opportunities	2,4%	5,7%	4,6%	1,7%	4,0%

Data Analyses and Interpretation: The collected data was analysed with the help of SPSS 16 programme.

The data about the sex, age, graduate school, graduate department, the years of seniority, age group of target students and the number of the students in the class are prepared in a table with the help of SPSS 16 programme and then these data are transferred to Microsoft Word and graphics were prepared with these tables.

The data collected regarding the methods of dealing with problematic behaviours used by the teachers were transferred to the SPSS programme and, the problematic behaviours were interpreted with the variables of dealing methods with the problematic behaviours with the help of frequency and percentage [23].

Findings: When the Table 1 is examined, it can be seen that the teachers participating in the research mainly use the method of repeating the rules. The method of caring for the student one by one and setting eye-contact follow the sequence. It can be seen that the teachers mainly do not prefer the methods of talking to the children who demonstrate conduct disorder or imposing punishments.

It can be concluded from the Table 1 that the teachers participating in the study give short period appointments/activities to the children who have lack of attention. It was determined that the second most used strategy is to prepare attractive activities. It is seen that the teachers less prefer the strategies of ignoring, talking separately, making him/her apologize and telling him/her to calm down when the case is the children with lack of attention.

When the table 1 is examined, it was concluded that the mostly used strategy by the teachers participating in the study towards the students showing adaptability disorder is the strategy of giving an appointment. It is seen that the teachers less prefer the strategies of making the child apologize and ignoring towards the children showing adaptability disorder. It was concluded that the teachers never use the strategy of punishment for the children with adaptability disorders.

When the Table 1 is examined, it can be determined that teachers mainly prefer the strategy of giving an appointment and making the child do interesting activities for children those disturbing the activity. It was concluded that the teachers less prefer the strategies of punishment, allowing the child to join in conversation and offering more opportunities.

Table 2: The table about the distribution of the use of different strategies against such problematic behaviours as Timidity, Stammer, Fear, Separation anxiety and Crying problem

Teachers' Behaviours	Problematic Behaviours				
	Timidity %	Stammer %	Fear %	Separation anxiety %	Crying %
1.I talk and warn	3,5%	2,1%	4,4%	6,5%	4,3%
2.I give an appointment in the classroom	15,9%	4,9%	4,9%	4,6%	5,3%
3.I impose punishment	,5%	,7%	-	,7%	,5%
4.I continuously observe	1,0%	3,5%	3,3%	1,3%	1,6%
5.I enable him/her to make empathy	1,0%	1,4%	2,2%	2,6%	1,1%
6.I ignore	-	6,3%	-	,7%	5,3%
7.I set eye contact	3,0%	2,1%	3,3%	3,3%	4,8%
8.I make him/her to conduct attractive activities	6,5%	2,8%	5,5%	5,2%	5,3%
9.I care for him/her one by one	8,5%	12,5%	12,6%	12,4%	8,5%
10.I make him/her close to me	5,0%	4,2%	6,6%	11,1%	6,9%
11. I allow him/her to join group activities	13,4%	8,3%	6,0%	3,9%	3,7%
12.I talk with him/her separately	2,0%	3,5%	7,7%	5,2%	9,0%
13.I tell him/her to listen to me	,5%	2,1%	1,6%	,7%	2,7%
14.I repeat the rules	-	-	-	-	,5%
15.I give short period activities	2,5%	1,4%	2,2%	,7%	2,7%
16.I make him/her apologize	-	-	-	-	-
17.I want him/her to think	1,0%	-	-	6,5%	2,1%
18.I attract his/her attention to another point	1,5%	1,4%	7,7%	5,9%	5,9%
19.I tell him/her to calm down	,5%	,7%	8,2%	6,5%	11,7%
20.I enable him/her to join conversation	14,4%	18,8%	4,4%	4,6%	5,3%
21.I tell him/her that I understand him/her	8,5%	9,0%	12,6%	13,1%	9,6%
22.I offer more opportunities	10,9%	14,6%	6,6%	4,6%	3,2%

It can be seen in the Table 1 that the teachers mostly use the method of giving an appointment and making the child implement interesting activities for the children demonstrating hyperactivity behaviour. It was determined that the teachers less prefer the strategies of ignoring and making the child apologize towards these children. It was concluded that the teachers never use the strategies of punishment and allowing the child to join in conversation towards the children showing hyperactivity behaviour.

When the table 1 is examined, it can be seen that the teachers use the strategy of appointing short term activities at the ratio of 18,2% for the children showing lack of attention; they less prefer this short term activity appointment strategy for children with conduct disorder, activity disturbing and hyperactivity.

When the table 2 is examined, it can be concluded that the teachers mostly use the strategies of giving an appointment for the children demonstrating timidity behaviour. The following strategies preferred are allowing the child to join in conversation and allowing the child to participate in group work. The strategies such as giving punishment, telling to the child to listen to the teacher and telling the child to calm down are the less preferred strategies.

According to the Table 2, the teachers mostly prefer the strategy of establishing conversation with them for the children demonstrating stammer behaviour. The following strategies are providing more opportunities and to care for the children one by one. The less preferred strategies by the children are determined as giving punishment and telling the child to calm down. The strategies of repeating the rules by the teachers, allowing the child to apologize and orienting the child to think are never preferred by the teachers for the children demonstrating stammer behaviour.

It can be concluded from the Table 2 that the mostly used strategies for the children who are demonstrating fear behaviour are to care for children one by one and explaining to the child that the teacher understands him/her. The less preferred strategies are telling the child to listen to the teacher, ensuring the child to make empathy, giving short term activities. It was concluded that the teachers never use the strategies of punishment, ignoring, repeating the rules, making the child apologize and directing the child to think.

According to the Table 2, it was concluded that the teachers mostly use strategy to explain to the child that the teacher understands him/her for the children having separation anxiety. The following mostly used strategies are to care for the children one by one and keeping the child close to the teacher. It was determined that the teachers participating in the study never prefer the strategies of repeating the rules and making the child apologize.

When the Table 2 is examined, it can be concluded that the teachers participating in the research mostly use the strategies of telling the child to calm down and explaining that the teacher understands him/her for children showing crying behaviour. The less preferred strategies are punishment, reminding the rules and allowing the child to make empathy. The teachers never use the strategies of making the child apologize for crying children [24, 25].

It can be concluded from the Table 2 that teachers use the strategy of giving an appointment for children showing timidity at the ratio of 15, 9%. It was concluded from the study that teachers do not prefer much the strategy of giving an appointment in the classroom for children showing stammer, fear, separation anxiety and crying behaviours.

According to the Table 3, the teachers mostly use the strategies of attracting the attention of the child to another point and monitoring for the children showing masturbation behaviour. It is seen that the teachers do not use the strategies of punishment, telling the child to listen to the teacher, telling the children to calm down and allowing the child to join in conversation for children demonstrating masturbation behaviour. The participating teachers never prefer such strategies as ensuring the child to make empathy, repeating the rules, directing the child to apologize and offering more opportunities.

According to the Table 3, the participating teachers mostly use the strategies of talking to the children and warning for the children swearing. The following mostly used strategies are making the child apologize and talking to the child separately. The less preferred methods by the teachers are to provide more opportunities and giving appointments. On the other hand, it is concluded that they never use the strategy of enabling the child to join in the conversation.

It can be concluded from the Table 3 that participating teachers mostly use the strategies of allowing the child to make empathy and making the child apologize for the children showing aggressive behaviour. These strategies are followed by the strategies such as repeating the rules, warning and talking and telling the child to calm down. The less preferred strategies by the teachers are allowing the child to join in the conversation and to provide more opportunities to the children showing aggressive behaviour.

Table 3: The table about the distribution of the use of different strategies against such problematic behaviours as Masturbation, Swearing, Aggressive Behaviours and Jealousy

Teachers' Behaviours	Problematic Behaviours			
	Masturbation %	Swearing %	Aggressive behaviours %	Jealousy %
1.I talk and warn	3,3%	15,6%	7,5%	7,2%
2.I give an appointment in the classroom	3,3%	1,0%	4,2%	3,9%
3.I impose punishment	,8%	4,5%	2,6%	-
4.I continuously observe	19,5%	4,0%	7,2%	3,3%
5.I enable him/her to make empathy	-	4,5%	9,4%	18,3%
6.I ignore	8,1%	2,5%	1,1%	1,3%
7.I set eye contact	4,1%	5,5%	4,2%	4,6%
8.I make him/her to conduct attractive activities	9,8%	1,5%	4,5%	3,3%
9.I care for him/her one by one	8,1%	2,5%	2,3%	4,6%
10.I make him/her close to me	5,7%	1,5%	3,8%	3,3%
11. I allow him/her to join group activities	2,4%	1,5%	1,9%	7,2%
12.I talk with him/her separately	4,1%	12,1%	7,2%	11,1%
13.I tell him/her to listen to me	,8%	4,0%	4,2%	1,3%
14.I repeat the rules	-	7,5%	8,7%	1,3%
15.I give short period activities	2,4%	1,0%	1,9%	1,3%
16.I make him/her apologize	-	14,1%	9,1%	1,3%
17.I want him/her to think	1,6%	8,0%	6,8%	9,2%
18.I attract his/her attention to another point	20,3%	3,5%	4,2%	2,6%
19.I tell him/her to calm down	,8%	3,5%	7,5%	3,9%
20.I enable him/her to join conversation	,8%	-	,4%	3,3%
21.I tell him/her that I understand him/her	4,1%	1,0%	1,1%	4,6%
22.I offer more opportunities	-	,5%	,4%	3,3%

When the Table 3 is examined, it can be concluded that the strategies of talking and walking are used at the ratio of 15,6% for children swearing. Also, the teachers do not prefer much this strategy for children showing masturbation, aggressive behaviours and jealousy.

It was concluded that the teachers use the strategy of continuously monitoring at the ratio of 19.5% for the children showing masturbation behaviour and they don't prefer this strategy much for the behaviours as swearing, aggressive behaviours and jealousy. Moreover, teachers use the strategy of ignoring for the behaviour of masturbation at the ratio of 8.1% and they don't prefer this strategy for swearing, aggressive behaviours and jealousy.

According to the study, the teachers use the strategy of making the child implement attractive activities at the ratio of 9.8% and attracting the attention of the child to another point at the ratio of 20.3% for children demonstrating masturbation behaviour. And, teachers do not prefer these strategies much for children showing swearing, aggressive behaviours and jealousy.

DISCUSSION

In the literature, it is seen that teachers use the methods of setting eye contact, reminding the rules and talking when they face unfavourable behaviours of the students [24]. Moreover, it is stressed that one of the most preferred methods among preventive strategies by the teachers is ensuring the active participation of the child [10]. According to another study, it has been underlined that the teachers mainly prefer the strategies of setting eye contact, warning verbally and having a meeting with the parent [2]. However, it is found that the teachers mainly use the verbal and non-verbal warning methods when they face unfavourable behaviours [6]. Most commonly used strategies by the teachers are verbally warning, ignoring, warning using body language, reprimanding and threatening [25]. According to the findings obtained from this study, the teachers mostly use setting eye contact for conduct disorder; reminding the rules for disturbance of the activity; talking for swearing and ensuring active participation for timidity.

When the studies conducted are analysed, it is observed that the teachers generally prefer the strategy of attracting the attention of the child to another point for the children showing masturbation behaviour. In addition, in this study also, it was concluded that the mostly used strategy is attracting the attention of the child to another point for this behaviour. The continuously monitoring strategy follows this method.

According to the other studies, teachers use the strategies of punishment and beating when they face unfavourable behaviours [7]. The fact that the teachers do not use the method of punishment is an important factor in terms of classroom management and student development. It is seen that the ratio of teachers' use of such methods as punishment, insulting and throwing the objects is less compared with the other methods [11]. However, students think that the behaviours of the teachers are punisher, frightening and unfair [25]. The male students generally consider the punishment strategy as a rule and the result of not obeying this rule [1]. In this study, it is observed that this punishment method is mostly used for the behaviour of swearing. In addition, punishment method can also be preferred for the other unfavourable behaviours. In this respect, this study is in parallel with the literature.

In the conducted studies, it is seen that teachers use talking method for fear; explaining that they understand the children for the separation anxiety and telling to calm down for stammer [15]. In this study, the methods used for the fear and separation anxiety demonstrate parallelism with the methods used in the literature. However; it is found that the method of telling calm down is preferred much for stammer rather than orienting the child to join in the conversation.

In the literature, it is emphasized that the most disturbing behaviours for the teachers are swearing of children to each other, physical attack and robbery [24]. In this study, it is concluded that the most preferred strategy for swearing is to talk and warn. This method is followed by the method of allowing the child to apologize. It is found that teachers mostly prefer the method of allowing the child to make empathy and to apologize for children showing aggressive behaviours.

According to the literature, the method of talking and warning is mostly used for the conduct disorder; setting eye contact for the lack of attention; attracting the attention to another point for hyperactivity [15]. According to this study, it is observed that the method of giving appointment in the classroom is the most preferred method for the conduct disorder and the less preferred method is to talk. In this aspect, the study is in line with the literature. Moreover; methods used for the lack of attention and hyperactivity are in parallel with the methods used in the literature.

In line with the findings obtained from this study, it is observed that there is a statistically significant correlation between the unfavourable behaviours faced by the teachers and their reactions against these behaviours. It is found in the study that the teachers generally use the correct methods and strategies against the problematic behaviours they face.

These results cannot be generalized for all the pre-school teachers however they are only restricted with the answers obtained from the population of the study via questionnaires. As per these results, it is recommended that

- In-service training should be provided to the teachers for informing them about the classroom management and methods of dealing with problematic behaviours.
- The underlying reasons of problematic behaviours should be better analysed and relevant comprehensive studies should be conducted.
- It should be researched which method will be most effective for which problematic behaviour.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded from this study that teachers do not apply to such strategies which are student-cantered and increasing self-management, self-control and self-discipline. It is observed that the teachers generally use the method of suppressing the unfavourable behaviour when they face. In this study, it is seen that the reactions of the teachers against the problematic behaviours differ.

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