

Managing Students' Disruptive Behaviors in High Schools in the *Oueme* Department by Trainee Teachers in Their Second Year of Steps at Injeps

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Abstract: *In Benin, beginning secondary school teachers encounter real difficulties in dealing with students' indiscipline in the classroom. Faced with this observation, it appeared the implementation of the preventive management method of student disruptive behavior in high schools in Ouémé Department in Benin, kept by undergraduate students who are studying at the National Institute of Youth, Physical Education and Sport of University of Abomey - Calavi in Benin. The objective of this subject is to analyze how trainee teachers deal with students' disruptive behavior during Physical Education and Sport classes in various schools in the Ouémé Department. To that end, a quantitative research based on the use of a written questionnaire was carried out. Eighty - six (86) subjects chosen using the formula of Schwartz (1995) received the questionnaire and were observed in their teaching environment. The results obtained indicate that the trainee teachers pursuing a Bachelor's degree lack experience in managing student disruptive behaviors (DB). In this perspective, the study encourages teacher training institutions to improve and revise their training curricula to prepare teachers so they can better manage students' DB strategically.*

Keywords: Physical Education, undergraduate students, Disruptive Behaviors, lack experiences

1. Introduction and Problem Statement

Managing discipline in a classroom is an essential pillar of the teaching profession. Without the ability to manage students' disruptive behavior (DB), it becomes very difficult for them to benefit from a successful learning.

This is what Flavier *et al* (2002) suggests in their statement: "the question of order in classroom is a primary concern of teachers, even before students are engaged in learning tasks". This particular concern which beginning teachers typically are faced with has very much complex characteristics.

These teachers sometimes find it difficult to deal with certain distressing situations that occurred during their class periods. The existence of such situations indicated the use of corporal punishment a few years ago to curb disruptive behaviors. However, the implementation of article 130 of the 2015 Children's Code prohibiting corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure in schools has further increased disruptive behaviors of students in high schools instead of improving performances in the education sector.

A broadcast communiqué in October 15, 2020 from the Ministry of Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational Training of Benin has emphasized the nationwide discontinuation of corporal punishment in schools. In this communiqué, Mr. Cakpo Mahougnon, the then Minister of Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational Training of Benin stated that:

"I have noted a recrudescence of corporal punishment in our public and private high schools despite my circular dated November 22, 2018, a situation which comes as a violation of their internal rules. Therefore, I once again urge the heads of public and private schools to strictly comply with those internal rules and ban the use of any form of corporal punishment on learners. In any case, any public - school head who would still perpetuate such acts on students in violation of their internal rules will simply be relieved from his duties and will be referred to the Joint Administrative Commission on charge of serious misconduct. As for the private institutions where the afore mentioned prescriptions are not followed, their license will be simply revoked and the accused will be brought before the competent courts."

Unfortunately, the communiqué has been conducive to all excesses and whims by students in public and private high schools since they were no longer exposed to corporal punishment. Many actors in the educational system have voiced their concern about this situation and Amoussou (January 21, 2021), in an edition of the *LaNouvelle Tribune*, stated that “*there is a circular of the Minister of Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational Training dated November 22, 2018 that prohibits corporal punishment in schools in Benin. Since its issuance students have indulged in whims and excesses with the awareness that they have become untouchable.*” This sustains the idea that the ban on corporal punishment has adversely impacted the education sector in Benin.

In fact, it seems to have exacerbated the phenomenon, making it more difficult for trainee teachers to cope with. For trainee teachers, managing and tackling disruptive behaviors involved several factors such as the ability to make the right choice in a situation of emergency, the emotional control to deal calmly with problems, the quality of pre - class preparation, the ability to anticipate or simply perceive disruptive behavior, the influence that disruptive students have on the classroom climate or the well - being of the teacher and other students, to name just a few.

In light of the aforementioned points, it must be emphasized that managing all these factors is beyond the ability of many beginning teachers of Physical Education and Sports (PE). In this regard, several authors state that it appears that “*beginning teachers of physical education and sports often have insufficient skills to effectively manage all the complexities of educational situations in this discipline*” (Desbiens *et al.*, 2009, citing Fernandez - Balboa, 1991). Desbiens (*ibid.*) explains, among other things, that “*their ability to observe the relevant elements of situations, to process them and to interpret them is limited.*” But how do trainee students in their second year of Bachelor’s at the Science and Technology of Physical and Sports Activities (STAPS) department deal with that situation? Along with its own conclusion this work will present all the findings derived from the in - field observations. According to our findings, it appears that the trainee students encounter some difficulties in managing their learners’ disruptive behaviors, which led us to state the following research question: How do trainee teachers manage student disruptive behavior during their training?

To answer this research question, the following hypotheses are formulated:

- The lack of experience of trainee teachers explains their difficulties in managing disruptive situations.
- This research aims at analyzing the management method of student disruptive behaviors applied during lessons in physical education and sports by the trainee teachers in their second year of STAPS in the different high schools in the Ouémé department. It specifically aims to:
 - Determine the preventive management of student disruptive behavior applied in high schools in the Ouémé department by second year trainees.
 - Identify measures taken by trainees in the event of persistent disruptive behavior.

2. Methodology

2.1 Study population

All teachers beginning their teaching career certainly have problems related to student misbehavior management. The participants in this study are students in the second year of their pedagogical training in Physical and Sports Education at the INJEPS in Porto Novo. They all agreed to participate in this research project voluntarily. The age range of the students is between 17 and 25 years and more and they all have one - year experience in teaching Physical and Sports Education as trainees. This population was chosen because these students are in the early stages of their teaching experience in secondary school. In addition, the curricula of the INJEPS are designed to teach pre - service teachers the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to help them make a smooth transition from student teacher to teacher.

2.2 Sample size and technique

Sampling is understood as the selection of a set of units that are part of the study population. This proportion of the population is called a sample. Sampling has its own technique and method depending on whether the research is quantitative or qualitative

To determine our sample size, the Schwartz formula was used:

$$N = Z^2 pq / d^2$$

N: sample size;

d²: the error (0.05) ²;

Z: standard deviation (1.96) corresponding to the risk of error;

p: target population of the selected class is 137 subjects;

q = 1 - p with p as proportion.

The number of people selected from the target population is 130. Therefore, applying the Schwartz formula gives us the following sample:

$$N = (1.96)^2 \times (130 \div 137) \times (1 - p) / (0.05)^2$$

$$N = 3,84 \times 0,94 (0,06) / 0,0025$$

$$N = 86$$

2.3 Sampling method and technique

The method used in the research is probability sampling. Probability sampling involves the selection of a sample from a population based on the principle of randomization (selection by chance) or chance. In this research the technique used is probability proportional to size sampling.

2.4 Data collection tools

In this research, three data collection tools were used: *on - site* observation, documentary research and a written questionnaire. Documentary research was one of the research methods we used to collect documentary materials. In this regard, different libraries, notably that of the INJEPS and the Center for Educational Activities of Benin (CAEB) have been extensively exploited. We also collected data on the web. In addition to the documentary compilation, we used another tool called *in situ* observation. This tool

allowed us to observe the trainee teachers in teaching situation in order to verify how they manage the misbehavior of their learners.

A questionnaire was also used and helped us obtain more information on the research topic. The questions were inspired by the articles of Desbiens *et al* (2008, 2009 and 2011), who used the Disciplinary Incidents Observation System (DIOS) developed by Brunelle *et al* (Brunelle, Gagnon, Goyette, Martel, Marzouk and Spallanzani, 1993). For each question, apart from the definition, the subjects have between three and eleven suggested answers to note their opinions. We selected the emotions for the questionnaire according to Parrott's (2001) inventory of primary emotions. We also added "helplessness" and "loss of control" to these primary emotions. The questionnaire consists of an open and closed - ended question followed by multiple choice questions.

2.5 Data analysis and processing

All questionnaires were manually processed. The data obtained was used to create tables and graphs using Excel 2016.

3. Results

3.1 Socio - Demographic characteristics

Figure 1 shows the gender distribution of the students we met.

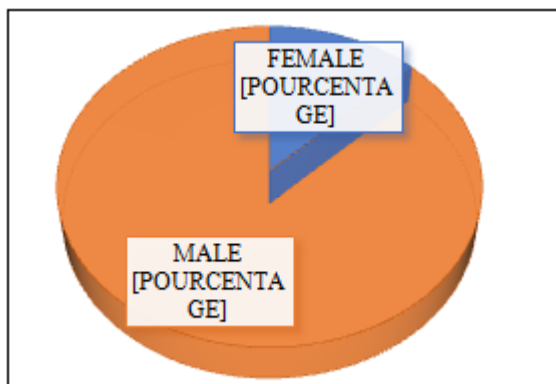


Figure 1: Distribution by gender

Out of a total of 86 subjects, 11 (13 %) are female and 75 (87%) are male.

Table 1: Statistical characteristic of Age

	Female	Male	Total
Age 17 - 18	1	5	6
Age 19 - 21	8	23	31
Age 22 - 25	2	35	37
Age 25 +	-	12	12
Average	2, 75	18, 75	21, 5

This table shows that the average age of women aged between 17 and 25 is 2.75 years old and the average age of men aged between 16 and 25+ is 18.75 years old, which gives an average age of 21.5 years old for the whole sample.

3.2 Definition of disruptive behavior in PE classes

The information provided by the participants in the questionnaire regarding the definition of disruptive behavior is grouped as follows: it is behavior that deviates from the established framework, that goes beyond the established limits and that does not respect social rules at school. It leads to a degradation of the quality of learning, disturbs the teacher, the other students and disrupts the lesson.

3.2.1 Presence or absence of disruptive behavior in PE classes

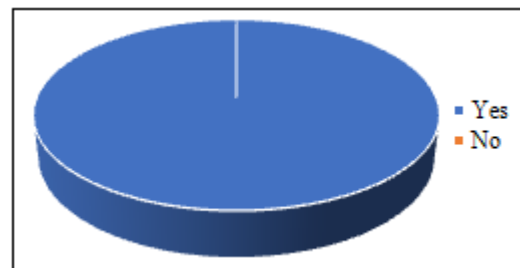


Figure 2: Presence or absence of disruptive behavior in PE classes

From this graph, it is clear that 100% of the subjects mentioned that disruptive behaviors occur in their classes.

3.2.2 Disruptive behavior in PE classes

Table 2: Mentions of disruptive behaviors occurring in class

Disruptive behavior	Number of mentions
Nattering	55
Late	44
Distracted	36
Squabbling	24
Deforming the Rules Intentionally	22
Criticizing	18
Leaving the Classroom and Ridiculing	17
Dangerous behavior	12
Fooling around	9
Being rude	4

This table presents a list of undisciplined behaviors cited by beginning teachers. This list is based on the different disruptive behaviors listed by Desbiens (2009). Participants gave answers that can be differently interpreted (e. g., disregarding the peers' and teacher's instructions). The 11 undisciplined behaviors selected from those defined by Desbiens were mentioned by the participants.

3.2.3 Frequency of disruptive behavior occurrence

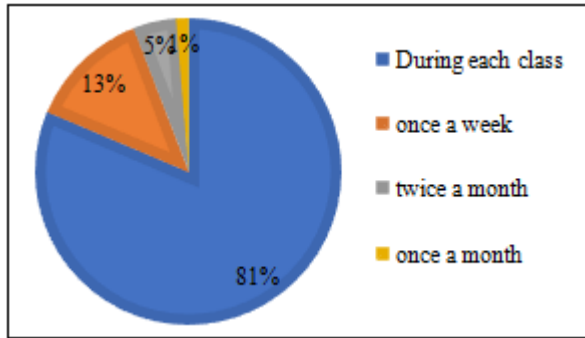


Figure 3: frequency of disruptive behaviors occurrence from the participants' perspective.

The graph shows that 81% of the subjects acknowledged that disruptive behavior occurred during each of their classes, 13% mentioned a frequency of once a week and 5% mentioned a frequency of twice a month. Only one subject mentioned a frequency of once a month.

3.2.4 Preventive management of disruptive behavior

Table 3: Instructions to learners before start of class

Measures implemented beforehand	number of teachers implementing such measures
Using strict regulations and framework	40
Giving precise instructions	21
Showing consistency in punishment	18
Demanding silence	06
Isolating disruptive student	06
Using humor	01

Table 3 shows the measures implemented beforehand by our participants in the preventive management of student disruptive behavior.

In preventive management, 40 subjects mentioned that they use strict rules and regulations; 21 others mentioned that they give precise instructions to learners. Among the latter, 18 subjects also mentioned that they use consistency in punishment. Moreover, 6 subjects mentioned that they demand silence, isolate or punish a disruptive student. One last subject mentioned that they use humor.

3.2.5 Emotions felt when confronted with disruptive behaviors

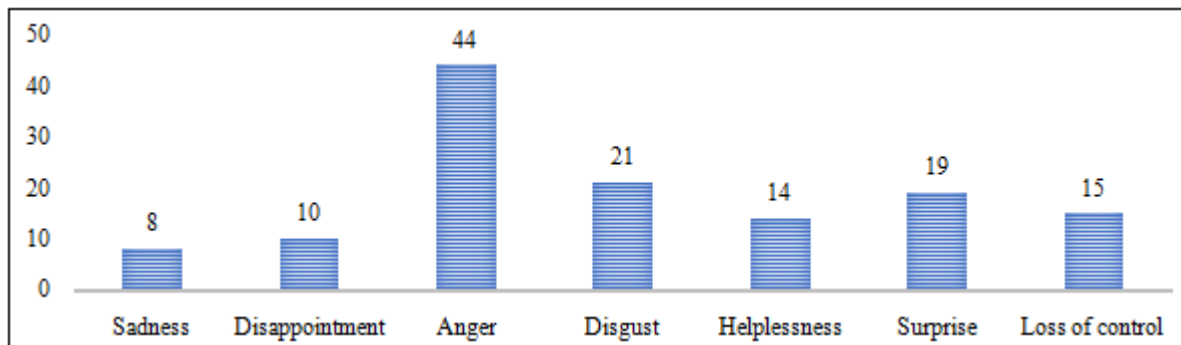


Figure 4: Emotions felt

Figure 4 presents the emotions felt by the trainees when faced with student disruptive behavior.

The 7 emotions that were proposed were listed by the subjects, which means that we have a relative reliability. It shall be noted that the participants have several answers to choose from.

3.3 Participants' responses to long - term and persistent disruptive behaviors

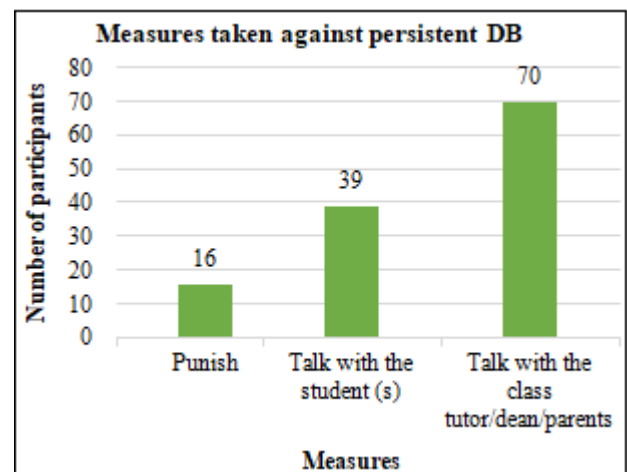


Figure 5: Measures taken against persistent DB

Participants' responses to persistent, long - term disruptive behaviors were categorized into three types: punishment (sanctions); discussion with student (s); discussion with class teacher, senior teachers, and/or parents.

We can note that 16 of the 86 participants report that they use sanctions to address persistent disruptive behavior. Seventy (70) of the 86 participants report that they discuss with the class teacher, senior teachers and/or parents when confronted with persistent disruptive behavior. In addition, 39 of them report that they discuss with the misbehaving student (s).

4. Discussion

This section will present our findings based on the objectives set, their reliability, and how they compared with those of other authors.

The findings previously presented according the research objectives will also be discussed in this part. In this regard, the analysis model used is the theory of preventive management developed by Sieber (2001) that helps us analyze and interpret how trainee teachers intervene when confronted with student misbehavior during PE class. This model assumes that preventive management is viewed as a direct prevention of the occurrence of indiscipline in the class group. Sieber (2001) suggests that preventive management consists of two segments. The first involves preemptive actions: 1) collective management with the whole class group, 2) personalized management of the presumed disruptive student, and 3) collaborative management with the student's parents. The second segment deals with preventive management incorporated to the teaching process whereby numerous social rules are set and must be upheld by each student.

The results of our survey show that 13% of the 86 students surveyed are female and 87% are male (Figure 1). This means that few girls are enrolled in a sports institute due to the lack of information about the training provided by the institution. Thus, the cross - checking of the information given by the subjects in the questionnaire as to the definition of undisciplined behavior is as follows: *“it is a behavior that deviates from the constructed framework, that exceeds the established limits and that does not respect the rules of life of the institution. It leads to a deterioration in the quality of learning, disturbs the teacher and other students, and disrupts the lesson”*. This definition is completely in line with the definitions proposed by the authors studied in the concept clarification. Therefore, we believe that the participants' responses on the topic of disruptive behavior will be relevant. In addition, all 86 subjects participating in the research mentioned that disruptive behaviors occurred in their classes (Figure 2).

From the analysis of the findings on misbehaviors occurring in PE classes (Table II), it appears that all 11 misbehaviors selected from those defined by Desbiens were named by the participants. This corroborates the findings in Desbiens' (2009, 2011) work where misbehaviors are classified into three categories. The DB that were dominantly mentioned were “nattering” (cited 55 times), “late” (cited 44 times), “distracted” (cited 36 times), “squabbling” (cited 24 times), and “deforming the rules intentionally” (cited 22 times). These different misbehaviors appear to be the regular infractions that can have an overall negative effect on the classroom atmosphere. The DB that were averagely

mentioned were “criticizing” (cited 18 times), “leaving the classroom and ridiculing” (cited 17 times), “dangerous behavior” (cited 12 times), “fooling around” (cited 9 times) and “being rude” (cited 4 times). We can therefore say of the latter that they are less frequent in our participants' courses.

Figure 3 presents the frequency of disruptive behavior occurrence during participants' courses. It shows that 70 (81%) of the 86 participants reported that disruptive behaviors occurred during each of their classes. Eleven (13%) subjects reported a frequency of once a week, 4 (5%) others mentioned a frequency of twice a month and one (1%) stated a frequency of once a month. This does not corroborate the findings of Desbiens (2008) according to which 0.8 DB occurs every minute in a PE class, which represents 61.3 DB per 75 - minute class. The reason for such low frequencies regarding how DB's occurrence is consciously perceived by our participants may be due to the fact that some of them (“nattering”, “squabbling”, “distracted”) are extremely common and beginning teachers accept them not as DB but as an integral part of the PE class.

Table 3 shows the preemptive measures initiated by our participants in the preventive management of students' disruptive behaviors. In preventive management, 40 participants mentioned that they set rules and a strict framework, 21 mentioned that they give precise instructions to learners. Among the latter, 18 participants also mentioned that they show consistency in punishment. This result corroborates the conclusions of Sieber's work (2001) regarding preventive management integrated with teaching which is consistent with the three points mentioned by the trainees. This management consists in establishing a set of social rules that each student must abide by. It appears in this study that more than half of the trainee teachers, i. e. 69 out of 86 teachers, set precise rules for their students. They develop and implement social rules for all the students according to different strategies that are more or less participatory. The presentation of these rules generally takes place at the beginning of the school year, at the start of their training, but they can be repeated from time to time, particularly on the return from long vacations. These exchanges between teachers and students may be more informal or may be part of more formalized arrangements such as the cooperation council. Still with regard to preventive management, six other participants mentioned that they demanded silence in the event of nattering, and isolated the misbehaving student so that he would not disrupt the teaching flow. One last participant mentioned that they use humor.

Figure 4 provides information on the emotions felt by trainees when faced with student disruptive behavior. According to this figure, the emotion mostly felt by the trainees is “anger” (cited 44 times), followed by “disgust” (cited 21 times), “surprise” (cited 19 times), “loss of control” (cited 15 times), “helplessness” (cited 14 times), “disappointment” (cited 10 times) and finally “sadness” (cited 8 times). The feeling of anger predominates simply because the teacher realizes that the reliable disciplinary framework he or she has established didn't prevent the occurrence a DB.

Figure 5 presents the measures taken by trainees in the event of persistent DB. This figure shows that 16 of the 86 participants report that they address persistent disruptive behavior with sanctions. Seventy (70) of the 86 participants report that they discuss with the class teacher, dean, and/or parents in the event of persistent disruptive behavior by a student. In addition, 39 of them report that they discuss with the student (s) in question. It also appears that many beginning teachers (70 out of 86) seek help by sharing their experience with senior teachers or parents when faced with persistent student DB. This is consistent with the findings of Griffin (2003) according to which dialogue with others helps beginning teachers to “externalize their thinking skills and develop their perspectives”. In the same vein Forster (2014), follows up by stating that “restoring a working climate in difficult teaching situations is a process that takes time to accomplish, requires some form of commitment to ongoing training and self - effort.” On the other hand, it appears that few subjects (39/86) commit themselves to discuss with the disruptive student or students. One possible explanation may be that these teachers assume that talking to the disruptive student helps him behave better. This is in line with the interactive pedagogy of openness developed by Desbiens (2009) in which the teacher describes the behavior - expresses his feelings about it - develop an understanding - acknowledges the feelings - encourages. Moreover, only 16 of the 86 subjects report that they use sanctions to deal with persistent disruptive behavior. This underlines as inconsistent our hypothesis that beginning teachers resort to sanction to tackle persistent student disruptive behavior. We can therefore conclude that these trainee teachers sanction students based on the “clear, precise, explicit” disciplinary framework they have pre - established. This corroborates the conclusions of the work of Aliu (2014) which states that on the one hand, sanction should have meaning for the student and that it should be thought - provoking so that he “understands the meaning of the sanction and the importance of the rules, with the aim of educating him and making him responsible”.

5. Conclusion

This study aims at analyzing the management of students' disruptive behavior in high school by second year trainees. The findings show that the preventive management method favored by the second - year trainees at the INJEPS is setting well - defined rules for the students at the beginning of the year. The objective is that of reducing the occurrence of student disruptive behavior in PE classes. Furthermore, when student disruptive behaviors persist, the findings of this research show that these trainees discuss with experienced teachers and/or parents.

Based on our methodological approach, we had a number of students participate in our research. We used the probability sampling method. The technique used with this method is sampling with probability proportional to size. To collect data, we shared some questionnaires with students. We based our study on the theory of preventive management developed by Sieber (2001) and the results of some researchers in our literature review. Sieber's model (2001), assumes that preventive management is seen as a direct prevention of the occurrence of disruptive behavior in the

class group system. The trainee teachers in their second year of Bachelor's degree at the INJEPS set rules to be respected at the beginning of the year in order to prevent the occurrence of disruptive behaviors. These results allow us to understand that the preventive management integrated to teaching through the installation of a number of social rules that each student must respect is a good method to prevent disruptive behaviors.

These trainees also discuss with elders/tutors/parents when confronted with persistent student DBs, which confirms that they lack experience in managing student disruptive behavior.

This study as with most studies presents some limitations which include the teaching method, age, experience, or gender of the teacher as well as the level of the class he/she teaches. These aspects can be examined in another study.

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