

Snapshot of Positive Discipline in Junior High School Classrooms: The Compostela West District Experience

Cherrylene E. Villason

Publication Date: 2025/07/22

Abstract: This phenomenological study explored both the strategies used and the challenges encountered by Junior High School teachers in applying positive discipline (PD) in their classrooms. Nine (9) teachers from the Compostela West District were purposively selected as participants. Through thematic content analysis, key strategies emerged, such as reinforcing positive behavior, cultivating a supportive learning environment, and establishing clear expectations and rules. These approaches were seen to promote student accountability, nurture intrinsic motivation, and foster a respectful classroom culture. Despite these efforts, several challenges limited the effectiveness of positive discipline. The most prominent issues included insufficient teacher training and minimal parental involvement. To address these gaps, the study offered practical insights aimed at improving the implementation of PD, including the need to institutionalize regular teacher training programs and to strengthen collaboration between schools and parents. The findings highlighted that for positive discipline to move beyond sporadic classroom practices, systemic support is essential. This includes aligning school policies with PD principles, investing in ongoing professional development, and assigning dedicated guidance personnel.

By addressing these structural needs, schools can create more consistent, respectful, and supportive learning environments. Ultimately, the study emphasized that overcoming these challenges is critical not only to empower teachers but also to unlock the full potential of positive discipline in enhancing student engagement, well-being, and overall development.

Keywords: *Snapshot, Positive Discipline, Junior High School Classrooms, Compostela West District Experience.*

How to Cite: Cherrylene E. Villason (2025) Snapshot of Positive Discipline in Junior High School Classrooms: The Compostela West District Experience. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 10(7), 1521-1524.
<https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/25jul828>

I. INTRODUCTION

Creating a positive atmosphere in junior high school classrooms is really important for helping students succeed both academically and socially. When teachers focus on respect, responsibility, and self-control, they can steer students toward positive behaviors and reduce distractions. This approach not only makes the classroom a better place to learn, but it also teaches students important life skills that they'll carry with them as they grow. It's all about helping them develop into responsible and successful individuals.

Globally, Tekyi-Arhin (2024) emphasized the recognition and use of positive discipline in education and parenting. It points out that positive discipline matches modern ideas about child development. It focuses on creating supportive environments that encourage intrinsic motivation, self-discipline, and emotional intelligence in children. Furthermore, it observes the historical move away from authoritarian

methods toward more democratic and respectful approaches. This change reflects a broader shift in how society views and treats children. The ultimate goal is to nurture healthier and more resilient future generations.

In Egypt, Mahmoud Elkadi and Sharaf (2023) in their studies Positive discipline as classroom management approach can lead to students well-being and their academic achievement. Additionally, in Brooklyn Lascala (2019) wrote that “positive discipline does not include yelling, spanking, or using threats as it relates to punishments. Experts say that kids find it motivating and effective. The methods are about promoting what needs to happen, and preventing what doesn’t need to happen.

According to Makola, et.al (2022) in South Africa, educators have a variety of often superficial views on Positive Discipline (PD). Some are completely unaware of what PD actually entails, seeing it simply as a form of non-violent

discipline. Others link it to human rights but miss out on its key proactive strategies. There's also a noticeable confusion about what constitutes PD strategies; some educators mistakenly include non-PD practices like detention and expulsion alongside valid strategies such as counseling and parental engagement. Their views on how effective PD is vary widely, some praise its ability to motivate, while others highlight the challenges in applying it, and a few even reject it as ineffective.

In the Philippines, Escobal et al. (2023) refer to DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012, commonly known as "The Child Protection Policy," which underscores the importance of regulations that create nurturing learning environments for children's holistic development. Meanwhile, Padayao and Bantulo (2024) from General Santos City affirmed that positive discipline is an essential educational approach marked by patience and empathy, tailored to meet the unique needs of each student. They stressed that for positive discipline to work effectively, teachers must commit to continuous training and collaborate with parents and government entities to ensure its success.

Unfortunately, Fuertes and Fuertes (2021) pointed out that there's a real lack of support system programs from school interventions regarding positive discipline initiatives. They also noted that the guidelines for implementing these programs in District II-B of Quezon City Division are given minimal emphasis. As a result, they recommend that schools take action to implement and uphold policies and programs for positive discipline, led by school leaders and management. This approach would greatly help create a positive learning environment for everyone.

In Sarangani Province of Davao Occidental, Sichon and Guhao (2020) observed that the way student discipline is enforced can sometimes have a negative impact on children, leading to absenteeism and, in some cases, causing them to stop attending school altogether. They emphasized that when discipline is approached positively and constructively, children are more likely to show positive outcomes, which can be seen in their attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance.

Meanwhile, in the Compostela West District, junior high school educators are dealing with ongoing difficulties in applying positive discipline. Even though they strive to create respectful and supportive learning spaces, student misbehavior frequently interrupts their classes. A key issue is the lack of strong parental support for positive discipline techniques. This disconnect between school and home practices often hampers the consistency needed for effective behavior management, making it challenging for teachers to reinforce positive behaviors successfully.

These concerns bring to light the critical need for a deeper grasp of how positive discipline is executed and viewed within the district, along with the factors that play a role in its

effectiveness. By investigating this matter, the study offers practical insights designed to enhance the implementation of positive discipline in junior high schools. This strategy not only nurtures a more respectful, safe, and supportive learning environment for both educators and students but also benefits parents and the community by promoting non-violent and constructive approaches to behavior management in schools.

II. METHOD

This study explores how Junior High School teachers in the Compostela West District put positive discipline into practice in their classrooms. It focuses on the specific challenges they encounter in maintaining this approach and seeks to gather insights that could help improve its effectiveness. A qualitative phenomenological method was used to deeply understand the lived experiences of these teachers in using positive discipline. This approach was chosen because it allows for a closer look at how teachers perceive, apply, and adjust positive discipline strategies to create respectful and supportive learning spaces. Drawing on Flood's (2010) phenomenological framework, as referenced by Tomaszewski et al. (2020), the study emphasizes real-life experiences of discipline over theoretical behavior models, placing teachers' voices and perspectives at the center of the analysis.

This study followed established ethical protocols, beginning with the approval of the RMC Research Ethics Committee, to safeguard the rights, dignity, and well-being of participants as they shared their real-life experiences, both the successes and struggles, of applying positive discipline in their classrooms. To gain meaningful insight into the topic, nine (9) Junior High School teachers were purposefully selected from schools of varying sizes, categorized as small, medium, and large, within the Compostela West District. This diversity in school settings helped strengthen the credibility of the findings by reflecting a broader range of classroom dynamics. Participants were chosen based on specific criteria to maintain the integrity of the research: they were all currently teaching in Junior High Schools within the district, had at least three years of teaching experience at that level, and had attended formal training sessions, such as seminars or workshops, focused on positive discipline. This ensured that each participant brought both theoretical understanding and hands-on experience to the study.

This study primarily relied on in-depth interviews to engage in direct, meaningful conversations with Junior High School teachers about their experiences in applying positive discipline (PD) in their classrooms. This approach was vital in uncovering their lived experiences, personal insights, emotional reactions, and practical knowledge regarding both the benefits and challenges of using PD strategies. In addition to interviews, classroom observations were used to support the data collection process. These provided valuable, real-time insight into how

teachers naturally implemented positive discipline during everyday classroom situations. By observing teacher-student interactions, rule enforcement, reinforcement methods, and how behavioral issues were addressed, I was able to document practices that may not have been fully captured through interviews alone.

As the researcher, I ensured the study's credibility by carefully designing research questions and interview guides focused on exploring how teachers in the Compostela West District carried out positive discipline in their daily teaching. I documented each session thoroughly, using audio recordings to capture rich narratives and taking detailed field notes on classroom practices described by participants. The interview data were transcribed and systematically coded to identify recurring themes and patterns in discipline strategies. To maintain analytical rigor, I applied Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis, which provided a structured process for identifying how various factors, such as school policies, adolescent behavior, and classroom dynamics, shaped the use of positive discipline. To further strengthen the validity of the findings, I employed environmental triangulation by collecting data from teachers working in diverse classroom settings across the district.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the key themes and findings of the study regarding how Junior High School teachers in the Compostela West District implement positive discipline in their classrooms. Based on the participants' accounts, below core strategies emerged that reflect their approaches to promoting a positive and respectful classroom environment.

➤ *Reinforcing Positive Behavior.*

One of the prominent themes that surfaced was the use of positive reinforcement to encourage desirable student behavior. The teachers shared various practical ways they affirm and support good conduct among learners. A common strategy mentioned was offering immediate verbal praise or recognition when students display commendable actions—such as returning lost belongings or arriving on time. These simple yet consistent gestures were shown to make a meaningful impact. This aligns with the insights of Harris (2022), who noted that positive discipline centers on respect, active listening, rewarding appropriate behavior, and reminding students they are valued, all while guiding them to understand right from wrong. Such affirming practices have helped students feel acknowledged and safe, which in turn has encouraged them to repeat those positive behaviors.

➤ *Creating a Supportive Learning Environment.*

The teachers' stories revealed that a key element in promoting positive discipline is the creation of a supportive and inclusive classroom atmosphere. They described how they build trust with students through simple daily check-ins and by

genuinely acknowledging each learner's efforts and contributions. Some teachers also shared how they integrate culturally rooted practices to help students feel a sense of belonging. Even routine classroom tasks are used as moments to instill values and develop character. These efforts help students feel seen, respected, and connected, fostering a form of discipline that comes from within. Schlebusch et al. (2022) support this approach, highlighting that positive discipline is built on the foundation of human rights, mutual respect between teachers and learners, strong relationships, active cooperation, and the preservation of students' self-worth.

In addition to offering an in-depth look into the strategies used by Junior High School teachers in the Compostela West District to promote positive discipline (PD), this study also explored the challenges they face in doing so. The major themes that emerged from the participants' narratives were the lack of parental involvement and inadequate teacher training.

➤ *Lack of Parents Involvement.*

The accounts of the teacher-participants reveal a consistent struggle with limited parental involvement, which significantly affects the successful application of positive discipline in schools. One key issue they raised was the deep-rooted cultural belief in punitive discipline, with many parents still endorsing corporal punishment based on how they were raised. This creates a mismatch between the school's efforts to use respectful, non-violent discipline and the practices reinforced at home. As noted by Zondo and Mncube (2024), the absence of parental support complicates the role of teachers in maintaining discipline both inside and outside the classroom. However, findings from this study also suggest that when parents and other stakeholders are actively involved, such as by contributing to the school's code of conduct, it eases the responsibility placed solely on teachers and fosters a shared commitment to discipline.

➤ *Inadequate Teacher Training.*

Another major challenge highlighted by the participants was the lack of targeted training on how to effectively implement positive discipline strategies. While many had attended general classroom management workshops, they felt these did not equip them with the practical skills needed to respond to actual behavioral issues in a non-punitive way. This gap left many teachers feeling unsure and often resorting to trial-and-error approaches. Padayao and Bantulo (2024) support this concern, noting that insufficient training, cultural resistance, and inconsistent implementation are among the global barriers to adopting constructive discipline, especially in public school systems. Several participants in the study also pointed to the absence of clear protocols or role-playing activities that could help them practice handling misbehavior. Similarly, Letuma (2024), drawing on Malone and Tietjens (2000), emphasized the importance of establishing classroom rules that uphold students' rights and prevent one learner's behavior from infringing on another's.

In addition to examining the strategies, challenges, and coping mechanisms of Junior High School teachers in the Compostela West District in promoting positive discipline (PD), this study also puts forward practical, evidence-based recommendations to enhance the implementation of PD in schools. One key recommendation is to institutionalize comprehensive training programs on positive discipline for both pre-service and in-service teachers. These programs should focus on equipping educators with practical, research-backed strategies for managing behavior in a respectful and constructive way. Another important recommendation is to strengthen collaboration between schools and parents by promoting consistent communication and meaningful engagement. This partnership can help build a unified and supportive approach to student discipline. By addressing these areas, schools can create a more positive and effective learning environment that supports both teachers and learners.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- [2]. Escobal, C., Arboleda, M. S., Jarina, & J.A., Caluza, L. J.(2023) Philippine Public School Values Education Teachers' Experiences in Classroom Positive Discipline: A Phenomenological Inquiry. *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.8305107.
- [3]. Fuertes and Fuertes (2021). Extent of Implementation of Positive Discipline Program in Selected Schools in District II-B Division Of Quezon City. *Academic Journal of Digital Economics and Stability*. 1 (1). <https://academicjournal.io/>.
- [4]. Harris, B. (2022). *Positive discipline in the classroom: Developing respect, responsibility, and resilience in students* (2nd ed.). Corwin Press.
- [5]. Lascala, M. (2019). What Is Positive Discipline? Experts Say This Method Is Effective at Getting Kids to Behave. <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/parenting/a26754534/positive-discipline/>
- [6]. etuma, M.C. (2024) Alternatives to Establishing Conducive Learning Environment (AECLE) Model for Schools: Assertive Discipline Perspective. *Research in Educational Policy and Management*. 6: (2) 42-57. Volume: 6 Issue: 2 2024 pp. 42-57.
- [7]. Mahmoud Elkadi E.A.F. & Sharaf R.S. (2023). The Impact of Positive Discipline as a Classroom Management Approach on Students' Well-being and Academic Achievement: A Case Study in an International School in Cairo. *ESI Preprints*. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esipreprint.5.2023.p57>
- [8]. Makola, S., Ndlovu, M. & Schlebusch, G. (2022) Educators' Perceptions on Positive Learner Discipline at Selected Public Secondary Schools in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa. 16th International Technology, Education and Development Conference. DOI:10.21125/inted.2022.2269
- [9]. Padayao, H. and Bantulo, J. (2024) Exploring the Implementation of Positive Discipline Among Learners From the Lens of Public-School Teachers. *Psych Educ*, 2024, 25(1): 88-120. doi:10.5281/zenodo.13737489.
- [10]. Schlebusch, C. L., Dada, S., & Alant, E. (2022). Positive discipline for children with developmental disabilities: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 31(4), 1023-1037. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-021-02173-1>.
- [11]. Sichon & Guhao (2020) Implementing An Effective Student Discipline: School Heads' Perspective. *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research*. 9 (3). <https://www.ijstr.org/final-print/mar2020/Implementing-An-Effective-Student-Discipline-School-Heads-Perspective.pdf>
- [12]. Tekyi-Arhin, O. (2024) Understanding Positive Discipline. DO- 10.13140/RG.2.2.27314.21448.
- [13]. Tomaszewski, L.E, Zarestky, J. & Gonzalez, E. (2020) Planning Qualitative Research: Design and Decision Making for New Researchers. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* Volume 19: 1–7. DOI: 10.1177/16094069406920967174
- [14]. Zondo, S. & Mncube, V. (2024) Teachers' challenges in implementing a learner's code of conduct for positive discipline in schools. *South African Journal of Education*, Volume 44, Number 2. doi.org/10.15700/saje.v44n2a2410.