

Teachers' Well-Being Amidst Disruptive Classroom Behavior In Elementary Schools Of Pinamungajan District I

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Abstract — Disruptive classroom behavior presents persistent challenges for educators, with implications for both teaching efficacy and teacher well-being. This study investigated the frequency and impact of learners' disruptive behavior on teachers' well-being in elementary schools of Pinamungajan District I, Cebu. Employing a convergent mixed-method design, the study surveyed 161 public school teachers from 15 elementary schools using a validated self-constructed questionnaire. Instrument validity was ensured via expert review and pilot testing, while reliability was established with high Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Data were collected through stratified proportional sampling, with quantitative results analyzed using weighted means and Pearson correlation and qualitative results analyzed through Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. Findings indicated that "talking out of turn" (WM = 3.55, interpreted as "Often") constituted the most prevalent disruptive behavior, while other common issues, including "ignoring instructions" (3.25), "getting out of seats" (3.27), and "off-task behavior" (2.91)—were rated as occurring "Sometimes." Severe behaviors such as aggression and unauthorized device use were reported as "Rarely." Teachers agreed that disruptive behavior was a significant source of stress (WM = 3.71), emotional drain (3.46), and reduced job satisfaction (3.42), yet felt supported by school administration and confident in their classroom management strategies (3.88 and 3.81, respectively). Importantly, a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.411$, $p = 0.000$) was found between learners' disruptive behavior and negative impacts on teacher well-being. Qualitative insights further revealed four recurring challenges: understanding the underlying causes of misbehavior, balancing individual needs with classroom management, involving parents in reinforcing discipline, and employing effective management strategies. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions, continuing professional development, and supportive school environments to safeguard teacher well-being and improve classroom management. Future studies should consider longitudinal designs and broader contextual variables to further inform educational policy and practice.

Keywords — disruptive classroom behavior, teacher well-being, elementary education

I. INTRODUCTION

Disruptive student behavior remains a pressing concern for educators globally, with increasing reports of classroom interruptions that compromise instructional flow and teacher well-being [1] [2]. Such behaviors, ranging from minor disruptions like talking out of turn to severe incidents of aggression, are widely recognized as detrimental to both academic progress and the psychosocial health of teachers [3] [4]. In the Philippines, similar challenges persist, where externalizing behaviors among learners have escalated concerns about classroom safety, declining student performance, and teacher burnout [5].

Research consistently links disruptive behavior to heightened teacher stress, emotional exhaustion, and reduced job satisfaction, with implications for absenteeism and attrition [3] [4] [6]. Theoretical perspectives, including the Job-Demands-Resources Model, emphasize that increased behavioral demands without adequate institutional support erode teacher resilience and efficacy [7]. Effective classroom management and teacher well-being are thus interdependent, as emotionally healthy teachers are better positioned to foster supportive learning environments and manage behavioral challenges constructively [3] [6] [7].

Despite a growing body of international literature, gaps remain in understanding these dynamics within specific local contexts. In Pinamungajan District I, Cebu, recent monitoring data suggest declines in student performance linked to behavioral and psychosocial factors, raising concerns about the impact of disruptive behavior on teacher wellness. Teachers in this district report stress, diminished motivation, and compromised classroom climate, underscoring the urgent need for context-specific inquiry [8].

This study, therefore, investigates the relationship between learners' disruptive behavior and teacher well-being in Pinamungajan District I. Specifically, it aims to identify the types and frequency of disruptive behaviors, assess teachers' well-being in relation to these behaviors, and examine the statistical correlation between the two. By situating the problem within a local educational context, the study contributes evidence to inform policy, professional development, and targeted interventions that strengthen teacher support systems and promote healthier, more effective learning environments [1] [5] [8].

II. METHODS

A convergent mixed-method design was employed to examine how learners' disruptive behavior affects teachers' well-being in Pinamungajan District I. This design enabled simultaneous collection and independent analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, later merged for comprehensive interpretation [9]. The quantitative strand used a descriptive-correlational design to describe disruptive behaviors and teachers' well-being, and to assess their statistical association [10]. The qualitative strand adopted a descriptive approach, eliciting teachers' lived experiences and challenges in managing disruptive behaviors through open-ended responses and interviews [11]. Integration of both strands strengthened validity and enriched findings [12]. The study involved 161 public elementary school teachers from 15 schools, representing a population of 185. A stratified proportional sampling method ensured representation across schools. Inclusion criteria required full-time teaching status and direct classroom interaction. Teachers on leave or those who declined participation were excluded.

Data were gathered using a self-constructed questionnaire and interview guide. Section 1 measured frequency of disruptive behaviors (1 = never to 5 = always). Section 2 assessed teachers' well-being using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Section 3 contained open-ended questions on challenges in managing disruptive behaviors. Content validity was established through expert review, construct validity through pilot testing with 15 teachers from a neighboring district, and reliability via Cronbach's alpha (0.85 for disruptive behavior; 0.89 for well-being), exceeding the 0.70 threshold. Test-retest reliability confirmed stability over time. Formal approval was secured from the District Supervisor and school heads. Data collection occurred in June 2025, during teachers' break to maximize participation. Surveys and interviews were administered personally, with informed consent and confidentiality observed. Completed instruments were retrieved within a week and encoded for analysis. Quantitative data were analyzed using weighted means and Pearson correlation. Interpretation scales classified disruptive behavior (always = 4.21–5.00; never = 1.00–1.80) and well-being (strongly agree = 4.21–5.00; strongly disagree = 1.00–1.80). Qualitative data were examined using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis, yielding four recurring themes of teacher challenges.

Ethical standards were strictly followed. Participants provided informed consent, were assured of voluntary participation and the right to withdraw, and confidentiality was maintained through coded data and aggregate reporting. Sensitive issues were handled with care, and the study's commitment to enhancing teacher well-being underscored beneficence and respect for participants' dignity.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Learners' Disruptive Behavior

Table 1

Disruptive Behaviors Exhibited by the Learners

Disruptive Behavior	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Talking out of turn	3.55	Often
Ignoring instructions	3.25	Sometimes
Getting out of their seats without permission	3.27	Sometimes
Physical aggression towards other students	2.67	Sometimes
Verbal aggression towards other students	2.89	Sometimes
Refusal to participate in class activities	2.67	Sometimes
Disturbing other students during instruction	2.93	Sometimes
Using electronic devices inappropriately	1.83	Rarely
Leaving without permission	2.40	Rarely
Engaging in off-task behavior during instruction	2.91	Sometimes
Overall Weighted Mean	2.84	Sometimes

Legend:

4.21–5.00	Always
3.41–4.20	Often
2.61–3.40	Sometimes
1.81–2.60	Rarely
1.00–1.80	Never

Table 1 presents detailed teacher reports on the frequency of various disruptive classroom behaviors among learners in Pinamungajan District I. It reveals that "talking out of turn" is the most prevalent disruptive behavior among learners, rated as "Often" by teachers, while behaviors such as "ignoring instructions," "getting out of their seats without permission," and "engaging in off-task behavior" are commonly observed "Sometimes." Less frequent but still noteworthy are "physical aggression," "verbal aggression," and "leaving without permission," which, though occurring less often, present persistent management challenges. The "rarely" reported misuse of electronic devices likely reflects limited access rather than an absence of such behavior, highlighting unique contextual factors compared to technology-rich settings. With an overall weighted mean of 2.84 ("Sometimes"), these findings indicate that teachers predominantly face frequent, low-level disruptions that affect classroom order and student engagement, consistent with recent insights connecting recurring verbal and minor behavioral interruptions to increased teacher stress and diminished well-being [3] [4] [7]. These results suggest that interventions should prioritize strategies for managing frequent verbal and attentional disruptions, while maintaining resources for addressing less common but more severe behaviors—aligning with contemporary recommendations for comprehensive classroom management and teacher support [4] [5].

Teachers' Well-Being

Table 2

Teachers' Well-Being in relation to Learners' Disruptive Behavior

Statement	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I feel stressed due to learners' disruptive behavior.	3.71	Agree
I feel overwhelmed by managing learners' disruptive behavior.	3.35	Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Learners' disruptive behavior affects my job satisfaction.	3.42	Agree
I feel emotionally drained after dealing with disruptive learners.	3.46	Agree
I feel burnt out due to learners' disruptive behavior.	3.35	Neither Agree Nor Disagree
I have difficulty concentrating due to classroom disruptions.	3.06	Neither Agree Nor Disagree
I experience physical symptoms (e.g., headaches, stomachaches) due to stress from disruptive learners.	3.14	Neither Agree Nor Disagree
I feel supported by my school administration in managing disruptive behavior.	3.88	Agree
I have adequate strategies to manage learners' disruptive behavior.	3.85	Agree
I feel confident in my ability to handle disruptive learners.	3.81	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	3.50	Agree

Legend:

4.21–5.00	Strongly Agree
3.41–4.20	Agree
2.61–3.40	Neither Agree nor Disagree
1.81–2.60	Disagree
1.00–1.80	Strongly Disagree

Table 2 demonstrates that teachers in Pinamungajan District I generally agree that disruptive behaviors in the classroom are a significant source of stress (WM=3.71) and emotional drain (WM=3.46), with job satisfaction also notably affected (WM=3.42), which corroborates recent findings linking repeated classroom disruptions to heightened stress and reduced morale among educators [3] [4]. Interestingly, teachers neither agree nor disagree that they feel overwhelmed, burnt out, or experience physical symptoms due to these challenges, suggesting variability in the depth of their negative responses and highlighting the potential moderating effects of personal coping strategies and environmental supports [7]. The relatively high levels of agreement regarding confidence (WM=3.81), perceived adequacy of management strategies (WM=3.85), and administrative support (WM=3.88) underscore the value of professional development and school-based support systems as protective factors, aligning with contemporary research emphasizing the importance of organizational backing and teacher self-efficacy in mitigating adverse outcomes [5] [13]. Overall, the findings, reflected in an overall weighted mean of 3.50 ("Agree"), suggest that while disruptive learner behavior is a persistent stressor, many teachers feel equipped and supported to handle these challenges, though sustained attention to emotional wellness and ongoing reinforcement of support structures remain necessary for promoting optimal teacher well-being.

Test of Correlation

Table 3

Test of Relationship between Learners' Disruptive Behavior and Teachers' Well-Being

Variables	Correlation (r)	P-value	Significance Level	Decision	Interpretation
Learners' Disruptive Behavior & Teachers' Well-being	0.411	0.00	0.05	Reject H_0	Significant

Table 3 indicates a significant positive correlation ($r=0.411$, $p=0.000$) between learners' disruptive behavior and teachers' well-being among respondents in Pinamungajan District I, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and confirming that increased exposure to disruptive behaviors directly corresponds with greater negative impacts on teacher well-being. This statistically significant relationship implies that teachers facing frequent classroom disruptions are considerably more likely to experience elevated stress, emotional exhaustion, and diminished job satisfaction, reinforcing the necessity for proactive classroom management and targeted support initiatives [3] [4] [14]. These findings underscore that disruptive classroom behaviors are not isolated occurrences but systemic stressors with persistent consequences for educators, with adverse implications for teacher retention and the overall quality of education if neglected [4] [14]. Consequently, prioritizing interventions, continuous professional training, and supportive school structures is vital to safeguarding teacher well-being and sustaining a positive learning environment in settings experiencing frequent behavioral challenges.

Challenges in Managing Disruptive Behavior

Four recurring themes emerged as the challenges teachers encounter in managing learners' disruptive behavior, including struggles with understanding the underlying causes of such behaviors, balancing individual needs with classroom management, involving parents in school, and finding effective strategies for classroom management.

1. Understanding underlying causes

Disruptive behaviors in learners often stem from deeper issues such as emotional struggles, learning disabilities, or family-related problems, making it crucial for educators to identify these root causes before implementing interventions. Respondents highlighted how academic disengagement, lack of supportive feedback at home, or external stressors can manifest as classroom disruptions, whether through attention-seeking or aggression. The difficulty lies in the complexity of these influences, as some learners silently endure challenges that surface as misbehavior. These narratives emphasize the strong linkage between home environment and classroom conduct, underscoring the need for teachers to develop diagnostic sensitivity and professional competencies to avoid mismanagement and escalation of behaviors. Professional development programs that enhance educators' ability to recognize and respond to these multifaceted causes are therefore indispensable [15].

2. Balancing individual needs with classroom management

Educators face the persistent challenge of addressing individual student needs while maintaining order for the collective learning environment. Respondents described the tension between giving tailored support to struggling learners and ensuring that disruptions do not compromise the educational experience of others. Managing simultaneous misbehaviors or providing differentiated instruction while enforcing discipline often results in lost teaching time and heightened stress. These accounts highlight the necessity of inclusive strategies that balance personalized attention with structured classroom management. A nuanced approach, one that fosters empathy, accommodates diverse learning needs, and preserves instructional flow, positions teachers as facilitators who can harmonize individual growth with collective progress [16].

3. Involving parents in school

Parental involvement emerged as a decisive factor in shaping student behavior, with respondents stressing that a lack of

support from families often undermines school-based interventions. Teachers reported difficulties when parents dismiss behavioral concerns, remain unresponsive, or fail to reinforce discipline at home, leading to recurring cycles of misbehavior. Without parental collaboration, classroom strategies lose their effectiveness, leaving educators to manage challenges in isolation. These reflections underscore the importance of building strong partnerships between schools and families, where consistent reinforcement of expectations across home and school environments can foster positive behavioral outcomes. Equipping teachers with tools to engage parents meaningfully is therefore vital for coherent and sustainable discipline [17] [18].

4. Finding effective classroom management strategies

Effective classroom management requires flexible strategies tailored to the diverse causes of disruptive behavior. Respondents shared techniques such as proximity control, clear rule-setting with consistent consequences, and individualized approaches that recognize underlying needs like boredom or attention-seeking. These strategies highlight the importance of combining preventive measures with responsive interventions, ensuring that discipline is both fair and constructive. A structured yet adaptable approach enables teachers to maintain focus, foster engagement, and support academic achievement. Professional development should prioritize equipping educators with a repertoire of management techniques, empowering them to address varied behavioral challenges while cultivating a positive and inclusive learning environment [19] [20] [21].

IV. CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the elementary teachers in Pinamungajan District I most frequently encounter verbal interruptions and minor off-task behaviors among learners, while more severe acts such as aggression and unauthorized device use are relatively rare. Importantly, teachers reported experiencing significant stress, emotional drain, and diminished job satisfaction as a result of these disruptive behaviors, even though many expressed confidence in their management strategies and felt supported by their school administration, key protective factors known to buffer such adverse outcomes. The significant positive correlation between learners' disruptive behaviors and teacher well-being substantiates a direct link: as classroom disruptions increase, negative effects on teachers' well-being intensify, echoing global findings and recent literature. Qualitative insights revealed four recurring challenges—understanding underlying causes, balancing individual needs with classroom management, involving parents, and finding effective strategies—which underscore the systemic nature of these stressors. These results contribute to current understanding by confirming that persistent, low-level disruptive behaviors are systemic stressors with tangible implications for retention, morale, and educational quality, while contextualizing the challenge amid local resource constraints and support structures. Limitations include the cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported perceptions, which may not fully capture behavioral nuance or underlying causes. To address these challenges, stakeholders should strengthen ongoing professional training, reinforce support systems, and adopt evidence-based interventions focused on both common disruptions and teacher resilience. Future research should investigate longitudinal effects and broader contextual factors to further inform policy and practice.

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