

Teachers' efforts to improve discipline of elementary school students using positive reinforcement methods in online learning

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Abstract: Discipline is an attitude that students need to have in learning in order to help students achieve learning goals. On the other hand, learning aims to train discipline so that students can behave correctly and have good character in society. This study aims to examine teachers' efforts to use positive reinforcement in increasing student discipline in the learning process. The research method used is descriptive qualitative. The data found by the author shows that the percentage of discipline in grade IV elementary school students is 63.2%. The teacher applies a positive reinforcement method that aims to improve student discipline. The use of positive reinforcement methods shows an increase in student discipline to 73.3%. The teacher has a role as a role model and guide in building student character. The conclusion obtained is that positive reinforcement shows the percentage of success of positive reinforcement on student discipline of 10.1%. The advice given is to make more specific disciplinary indicators and research is carried out over a longer period of time so that discipline improvements are more visible.

Keywords: student discipline, positive reinforcement, elementary school

PRELIMINARY

Discipline is a reflection of a noble ethical behavior based on the values of truth. The attitude of discipline towards rules is one of the attitudes that is expected from students and at the same time needs to be trained continuously. Discipline comes from the word disciple, which means "to be a disciple", then naturally requires communication as well as guidelines and boundaries (Tung, 2014). Discipline in the classroom is one aspect of success in the learning process. The purpose of discipline according to Van Brummelen (2009) is to form students to become disciples of God and bring students to be able to fight against sin so they can live righteously. Discipline needs to be nurtured from an early age through the family and also at school so that children can show the right ethics in society.

In schools, discipline is an important thing that needs to be considered by teachers in order to create a conducive learning environment. The classroom is a place for students

to be able to interpret discipline through obedience to the rules and regulations that are enforced (Van Brummelen, quoted in Via & Padang, 2021). As for the indicators of student discipline, it can be categorized into two parts, namely time discipline (being punctual in learning, not skipping school hours, completing assignments at a set time) and discipline in action (obeying and not breaking rules and following the teacher's directions) (Jainuddin et al., 2020). Discipline indicators in learning are students carrying out class rules correctly, following teacher instructions precisely, and not creating conditions that are not conducive to learning (Wagiu & Hidayat, 2019). In more detail, Rachman & Agustian (2016) describe indicators of student discipline such as: attending lessons on time, doing all assignments honestly and on time, using clean and tidy school uniforms, following all directions given by the teacher properly and being actively involved individually or in groups. Thus, a student can be called disciplined if he fulfills several indicators as follows: being on time in following the learning process, students are able to obey the rules that apply in class consistently, and follow a series of learning processes properly.

However, the reality shows that there are still students who violate the rules during the learning process. The fact that was found during the observation process in the Field Experience Program 2 (PPL 2) was a lack of discipline shown by fourth grade elementary school students with the same variations in each synchronous session in the learning process. The lack of discipline shown during the synchronous learning session was in the form of: 1) not turning on the camera; 2) joining class late; 3) not responding to teacher calls; and 4) carrying out other activities outside of learning activities. Data obtained from observations show that students are still lacking in discipline in applying class rules such as turning on the camera, being late for synchronous classes and ignoring learning by focusing on things around them. The facts shown by students in learning show that children need direction from the teacher so that they can be disciplined during learning.

The role of the teacher in directing students to the formation of a disciplinary character is very much needed. A good method in forming discipline is a method that is guiding, habituating, exemplary, reinforcement (rewards) and consequences. Actions taken by students are influenced by stimuli generated from the surrounding environment, and reinforcement and consequences are stimuli that can influence individuals (Anggraini et al., 2019). One effort that can be done by the teacher in the formation of student

discipline is to provide positive reinforcement. This is also one of the ways that is carried out in forming the discipline of fourth grade elementary school students for approximately 4 weeks of learning in class. Positive reinforcement is a reward, reward, or reward given to students when doing something good (Kompri, cited in Anggraini et al., 2019). Positive reinforcement is given to motivate students to be more persistent and maintain their actions to achieve and do something better. Positive reinforcement is an action implemented by the teacher in responding positively to student behavior that allows this behavior to be maintained. Positive reinforcement given verbally/non-verbally is able to motivate students to increase positive behavior in learning (Wagiu & Hidayat, 2019).

Giving positive reinforcement to students can have a good impact if it is carried out according to the steps of its application. The first step in providing reinforcement and consequences so that it works effectively is to determine the form of positive reinforcement that is applied, explain the form of reinforcement given and apply it consistently. The principles that can be applied by the teacher in applying positive reinforcement are as follows: 1) creating positive reinforcement according to the context and conditions of the class, reinforcement can be in the form of praise (verbal/non-verbal); 2) wisely explaining to students the importance of discipline in obeying the rules; 3) perform positive reinforcement consistently (Anggraini et al., 2019). The results of classroom research by Nursetya & Kriswanto (2014) based on two cycles of positive reinforcement actions applied by the teacher showed an increase of 35.9% to 85.9% student discipline in class rules. Research by Wagiu & Hidayat (2019) shows that the application of positive reinforcement affects increasing student discipline, but students must continue to be guided until they understand what is being done and make it a habit.

Based on the description of the problem and problem-solving plan that has been described above, the purpose of this research is to examine teachers' efforts to use positive reinforcement to improve student discipline in the learning process. It can be identified that the application of positive reinforcement can have a positive impact on increasing student discipline in learning. Reinforcement provides opportunities for students' good behavior to be repeated and increases students' enthusiasm for doing the right thing. Giving positive reinforcement must be applied consistently to encourage students to become self-disciplined. This research can be useful for elementary school teachers in disciplining students using positive reinforcement.

METHOD

The research method used is descriptive qualitative. Descriptive qualitative research is research that analyzes using an inductive approach and theoretical basis so that research focuses on conformity with the facts in the field (Rukin, 2019). In writing a descriptive qualitative research report, it contains citations of data (facts) disclosed in the field to provide support for what is presented in the report (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018). The research design began during the observation period which was carried out at a school in Manado from July 26 2021 to August 20 2021. The research subjects were fourth grade elementary school students, totaling 30 children. The learning process is carried out in a manner virtual *conference* through the platform *Microsoft Teams*. Researchers used data from observation sheets, reflections, and feedback from teachers to see student discipline. The data is analyzed to produce a description or description of the problem, the solutions provided, and the increased discipline that occurs after being given positive reinforcement. After the data is analyzed, the researcher makes an interpretation to reveal the meaning of the problem under study. Researchers carry out personal reflection by describing the problems studied related to student discipline and comparing them with expert theories and related research.

RESULTS

The author's efforts to improve the discipline of fourth grade elementary school students in the learning process are using positive reinforcement. The application of positive reinforcement in the classroom was carried out in two meetings by following the steps shown in the following table.

Table 1. Teacher's actions in implementing positive reinforcement

Implementation Steps	Master Realization	Information
Determine the form of positive reinforcement	Give verbal praise <i>rainbow clap</i> and stickers	The teacher determines the form of reinforcement that is adapted to the distance learning context. Positive reinforcement given in the form of praise <i>good job</i> " <i>thank you for turning on your camera</i> " and other motivational sentences, give <i>rainbow</i>

		<i>clap, as well as stickers reaction on Microsoft teams.</i>
Explaining discipline to students	Each opening of learning invites students to follow the rules	At the opening of learning (Science and Mathematics), the teacher invites students to comply with regulations such as turning on the camera, arriving on time and others. The teacher explains discipline using language that students can easily understand.
Deliver consistently	Give it to every obedient student	Verbal praise was given to each student who took the initiative to turn on the camera and join in on time for the virtual <i>conference</i> . <i>Rainbow clap</i> given to students who are able to follow instructions well (personally and as a whole student). Decal Reaction given to students who turn on the camera (in general)

The use of positive reinforcement along with expressions and intonation that are appropriate for the age of elementary school students is able to provide an increase in student discipline. The form of reinforcement given is giving stars and stickers to students who obey the rules. When applying positive reinforcement there is an increase in student discipline in obeying rules. The use of positive reinforcement methods carried out on fourth grade elementary school students resulted in student discipline as follows:

Table 2. Student discipline data after applying the positive reinforcement method

Indicator	Before Positive Reinforcement	After Positive Reinforcement
Students follow the rules that apply	10 out of 30 students turn on the camera during lessons	15 out of 30 students who turned on the camera during the lesson
Students join the lesson on time	5 out of 30 students are late for class	3 out of 30 students are late for class
Follow the teacher's instructions	22 out of 30 were involved in the teacher's direction and there were 3 students playing around	24 out of 30 students followed the teacher's directions and all students focused on learning

Table 2 shows a comparison of the disciplinary actions of fourth grade elementary school students based on the established indicators. This fact is supported by the percentage of student discipline before using the positive reinforcement method and after using the positive reinforcement method. There were 33% of students who turned on the camera, 83.3% of students who joined class on time and 73.3% of students who followed instructions in learning. These results show an increase in the percentage of student discipline from 63.2% to 73.3%. Apart from observational data, the results of increasing student discipline are supported by feedback from mentor teachers and the researcher's personal reflection. The mentor teacher said that giving positive reinforcement was able to make students motivated to follow the set class rules. Researchers also reflected that the stimulus given to students greatly influenced the disciplinary behavior shown by students during learning.

DISCUSSION

Aspects of disciplinary growth include moral growth related to rules and norms that are carried out individually and practiced in interactions with other people. Elementary students are in a transitional stage of moral growth and students continue to process to be able to follow the rules and norms that apply in class. Student discipline is formed by two factors, namely 1) internal factors, which are manifested through the will, motivation and awareness of students; 2) external factors, believe in family, school and play environment. Schools have a role in educating students to have a disciplined attitude through learning in the classroom.

At school, the teacher is a person who is a role model and mentors students in various aspects such as actions, words, and thoughts. Teachers should set a good example for students in reflecting discipline and become mentors to lead to character growth. The teacher has the highest authority in the class who must account for his role in modeling and mentoring students to the highest authority in the world, namely Allah (Tung, 2014). Teacher authority in the classroom moves teachers to look for strategies or methods that can support the formation of student discipline.

Based on the results that have been described, positive reinforcement applied in grade IV SD can improve student discipline in the classroom. Discipline and willingness to comply with regulations requires the teacher's role in instilling and using disciplinary

methods, one of which is positive reinforcement (Wibowo, 2021). It can be seen that there is an increase in discipline because the type of positive reinforcement given is in accordance with the context of elementary school students. It is important to use verbal and nonverbal reinforcement to provide enthusiasm and motivation for students to carry out the truth in the learning process (Febianti, 2018). The teacher provides verbal reinforcement in the form of expressions of praise and encouragement to maintain this, as well as giving rainbow *claps* or reaction of *Microsoft Teams*. The right stimulus or feedback is needed by a child during the character formation period. In general, every individual will feel joy when getting praise or appreciation and try to get it again. Actions followed by pleasant consequences tend to be maintained and repeated in the future to achieve a certain character (Koesoema, 2007). Teachers need to realize that simple things in the form of praise or reactions given by the teacher can be very beneficial for students to maintain correct behavior.

In the process of growth, children are personal figures that can be directed and taught, so it is important for teachers to continue to guide children. Giving positive reinforcement needs to be accompanied by directions and explanations regarding the rules that students need to follow and the reasons students need to obey the rules. Two things that teachers need to pay attention to when applying positive reinforcement are providing an understanding of discipline and applying it consistently to achieve student discipline goals (Purwanto, 2007). It is also important to provide consistent and fair positive reinforcement to all students so that the results obtained are more effective.

Research by (Widyastuti & Subekti, 2021) presents data regarding the application of positive reinforcement which shows an increase in student discipline. The conclusion of the study shows that giving positive reinforcement in the form of stickers and praise can improve discipline and motivate students. The same thing happened in research conducted by (Gultom & Siahaan, 2016), namely that it was seen that discipline was successfully improved such as students not chatting and students not playing with their things during learning. The application of positive reinforcement at Christian Elementary School 'X' Surabaya has also shown quite effective results in increasing student discipline (Krisdianti & Yoedo, 2021). The research results of Al, Havi, and Wardani (2022) added that giving awards to students is a form of motivation in developing disciplinary character so that it can become a good habit for students. The results of the study show that positive

reinforcement can be a method of increasing the discipline of elementary school students. The results obtained from this study add that the application of positive reinforcement can improve student discipline by maintaining consistency and suitability in its application.

Based on the theory of positive reinforcement and some of the research results that have been presented, it shows that positive reinforcement methods can have a positive influence on student discipline. The use of positive reinforcement is a tool that can be used by teachers in managing student behavior. One of the good things about implementing positive reinforcement is that the teacher educates students without using violence but applies love through appreciation and patience in building student character. At school, the teacher acts as a parent (*in loco parentis*) who must love every student that is taught. This becomes the basis for teachers to apply positive reinforcement by showing kindness according to God's attributes (Priyanto & Gulo, 2018). Learning will be fun and impactful when the teacher can present a conducive learning atmosphere. Students can feel love, appreciation, and guidance from the teacher to become more disciplined.

In this study it was found that there were still some students who had not implemented the disciplinary indicators set during learning. The researcher reflects that there are several things that can be improved for further research. Constraints experienced in learning, namely the use of positive reinforcement is limited to the research period which tends to be short so that not all students are stimulated to carry out disciplinary indicators. The use of this method should continue to be given on an ongoing basis because it sees the good benefits that students get. In addition, teachers need to be creative in finding variations in positive reinforcement so that students can be more interested. Positive reinforcement can also be in the form of feedback given to students in various forms aimed at enabling students to repeat good deeds in learning (Naibaho, 2017). It is also important to provide positive reinforcement, it requires assertiveness and persuasive intonation from the teacher according to the context of elementary school children. Teachers need to be sensitive to the needs of the class and be creative in combining several methods for more effective results according to the context of the class being taught. By paying attention to the things that have been described, positive reinforcement methods can contribute to increasing student discipline in the classroom.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of the paper it was found that positive reinforcement can improve student discipline. Overall, there was an increase in the percentage of student discipline from 63.2% to 73.3%. So the presentation of increased discipline is 10.1% after using the positive reinforcement method. The suggestion for this writing for readers, teachers and improving the quality of the same research topic going forward is to develop more specific disciplinary indicators so that the effectiveness of the positive reinforcement method increases. Researchers are also advised to research for a longer period of time so that the results of the success of positive reinforcement on discipline can be more visible.

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