

Maladjusted Behaviors of Pre-Adolescent Learners As Perceived by Teachers

Sittie Zhaynab H. Z. Ali,

Mindanao State University,
Marawi City, Mindanao, Philippines

Asnaidah A. Macadatar,

Mindanao State University,
Marawi City, Mindanao, Philippines

ABSTRACT

This study was designed to identify the maladjusted behaviors among pre-adolescent learners in selected elementary schools in Marawi City as perceived by their classroom advisers, School Year 2011-2012. The study made use of the descriptive survey method of research. A total of ninety-eight (98) respondents participated in this study. There was no sampling involved since the study focused on the Grade VI class advisers only. The information related to the maladjusted behavior was collected through the aid of researcher-made questionnaire, which was in a checklist type. In conclusion, the maladjusted behaviors in terms of personality and academic aspects were all encountered by the classroom advisers in the selected private and public elementary schools in Marawi City Division, under study. Of these, the two behaviors on top rank based on the aspects were: creating distracting noise during class hours and failing to submit requirements given by the teacher. Between the aspects in question, the academic aspect ranked first in the maladjusted behaviors indicated.

Keywords: maladjusted, behavior, personality, academic, classroom adviser.

INTRODUCTION:

Most pupil maladjustment can be detected early when children first enter school. It is possible to describe, in some considerable detail that-, home and social situations which clearly put children's mental health at risk and one need to identify circumstances in early school life are likely to precipitate if not, cause trouble in class. Everyone knows too that disturbances become more difficult to contain or to cure as maladjusted behavior progresses (Wall, 1994). From long practical experience and from researchers over the past years, the general lines and principles of what should be done and might in fact be successful have been made clear (Lovitt, 2011). The term behavior refers to the way a person responds to a certain situation or experience. Behavior is affected by temperament, which is made up of an individual's innate and unique expectations, emotions and beliefs. Behavior can also be influenced by a range of social and environmental factors, including parenting practices, gender, and exposure to new situations, general life events and relationships with friends and siblings (Sanden, 1997). Most children learn to regulate their reactions and feelings over time in the early years through emotional connections with "significant others" and learned self-understanding. They use facial expression, voice and body language to communicate their reactions to others. If the child receives appropriate responses then an emotional connection is established, which would ensure that the child would learn and development would be enriched (Darley, 1991).

Maladjusted behavior refers to a habitual pattern of behaviors which are detrimental to the individual. It is frequent and ultimately harmful to the individual, environment, or other persons, and impedes adaptation and healthy development. Individual behaviors are maladaptive only if they occur as part of a consistent pattern. All children break the rules from time to time. It is a common characteristic of maladjusted children, that disciplinary actions are usually not effective at curtailing their negative behaviors. They continue to misbehave in spite of the threat of punishment. It seems they are unable, or unwilling, to consider the consequences of their

behavior. For this reason, they require extra attention, either in the form of counseling or behavior modification (Slavin, 1997). As mentioned by Slavin (1997), behavior modification will be utilized so as not to spoil the child, for instance if the child will be provided of all her wishes. On the other hand, disciplining the child must also be limited to what he is capable of. Imposing too heavy punishment might lead the child into more complex situation psychologically.

After the family, the school environment is the most important influence in a child's life in promoting social, emotional and academic development. As children start and progress through school they are continually called upon to adapt to new expectations, and therefore a certain amount of anxiety is to be expected. However, when a particular behavior results in undue stress for the child and elicits negative reactions from others, the behavior represents a distress signal. When this occurs, a thorough analysis of what the problem behavior actually means to the individual child can lead to interventions that can change the behavior and result in a more productive adaptation for the child (Bootzin, 1991).

Pupils aging from 11 to 14 years old have almost reached the adolescent stage. It is a critical stage where various developmental tasks are expected to come out, physically, socially and emotionally. Since pupils spend most of their time in school, five days a week and eight hours a day, teachers are the significant people who could straightforwardly determine and assess the maladjusted behaviors that they observed on their pupils. They can also cite reasons behind the behavior of their pupils as they allocate collaborative efforts with the parents and the community for the growth of the children.

Threatening behaviors are observed in the classroom setting, most of which incur among boys. All children have moments when they lash out in anger by swearing, shouting, throwing or kicking objects. There are times when the aggression they show can seem particularly frightening and out of control. Pupils oftentimes engage themselves in questioning the teacher's authority in front of the class and continue to insist in speaking to the teacher during classroom instruction. Verbal abuse against the teacher and other pupils is another behavior of maladjusted children. They talk or curse loudly directed at a particular person. They feel intimidated once scolded and threaten the teacher or other pupils through verbal or body gestures or persistent staring angrily at a certain person in class. These threatening behaviors, if not controlled, may result in serious actions of the students, such as physical assault or violence.

This study anchors on the different personality and behavioral theories that will explain the developmental task that a human being has to undergo. The following theories were cited from the book of Dr. C. George Boeree (1997). Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory has challenged prevailing notions of human nature and human development by proposing that we are driven by motives and emotions of which we are largely unaware and that we are shaped by our earliest experiences in life (Sanden, 1997). The Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development revised Freud's theory by placing more emphasis on social influences, developing stages with a broader focus, emphasizing the ego, expressing a more positive view of human nature, and applying the theory across the entire life span (Sanden, 1997). This psychological approach can be applied both for the adults and children, however, it must depend on the case undergone by the person.

METHODOLOGY:

Objectives:

The objective of the study is to identify and analyze the maladjusted behaviors among Grade VI pupils in the selected elementary schools in Marawi City as perceived by their classroom advisers, School Year 2011-2012. This study were about 6 years ago, which can be served as an assessment tools for the future researchers. The descriptive profile of the respondents are age, gender, civil status, post graduate degree earned, teaching experiences, and duration in handling Grade VI class (in terms of years). The maladjustment behaviors perceived by the teachers covered on the personality and sociability aspects.

Research Design:

The study used the descriptive survey method of research.

Instrument Used:

The instrument used in this study was self-administered questionnaire based on the maladjusted behavior of Grade VI pupils of elementary school in Marawi City Division. The instrument was prepared by the researchers using questionnaires which were personally structured and books related to the present study as guide. The questionnaire was a checklist type, which could be interpreted and analyzed easily. It was divided into two parts. The first part was the personal and professional data. It included the respondents' profile in terms of age,

gender, civil status, post graduate earned, duration of handling Grade VI class and teaching experience, in terms of years. The second part was the observed maladjusted behaviors of the pupils consisting of two aspects: personality and academic.

In measuring the second part of the questionnaire, the following Likert-like scaling was used.

Descriptive Rating

- (1) Not True
- (2) Sometimes True
- (3) Moderately True
- (4) Often True
- (5) Always True

Scaling

- 1.00-1.80
- 1.81-2.60
- 2.61-3.40
- 3.41-4.27
- 4.28-5.00

Data Gathering Procedure:

Before the distribution of the questionnaire to the respondents, permission was sought from the school principals of the ninety-eight (98) elementary schools in Marawi City for their cooperation, assistance and guidance to the researcher. When request was granted, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to the classroom advisers to gather the necessary data.

Statistical Tools Used:

The following statistical tools were employed in treating the data gathered. The responses to each item in the questionnaire checklist were tallied, tabulated and the data gathered were treated by using the following statistical tools: frequency counts and percentage, and weighted mean.

RESULTS :

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Age

Age in Years	Frequency	Percentage
Above 50	7	7.14
46-50	13	13.27
41-45	8	8.16
36-40	11	11.22
31-35	13	13.27
26-30	16	16.33
20-25	30	30.61
Total	98	100.00

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	8	8.16
Female	90	91.84
Total	98	100.00

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Civil Status

Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	33	33.67
Married	59	60.20
Widow	4	4.08
Separated	2	2.05
Total	98	100.00

Table 4: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Post Graduate Degree Earned

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Ph.D. Graduate	0	0.00
With Ph.D. Units	7	7.14
Master's Degree	15	15.31
With Master's Units	51	52.04
Baccalaureate Degree	25	25.51
Total	98	100.00

Table 5: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Teaching Experience

Years	Frequency	Percentage
Above 20	8	8.16
16-20	13	13.27
11-15	16	16.32
6-10	24	24.49
1-5	37	37.76
Total	98	100.00

Table 6: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Duration in handling Grade VI Class

Years	Frequency	Percentage
10 and above	15	15.31
7-9	10	10.20
4-6	19	19.39
1-3	54	55.10
Total	98	100.00

Table 7: Mean Ratings of the Perceived Personality Aspect of Maladjusted Behavior of Pupils (Refer to Appendix A – Sample Questionnaire)

Rank	Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Rating
1	He/she creates distracting noise during class hours.	3.15	1.2044	Moderately True
2	He/she lacks self-confidence during class recitation.	3.05	1.2953	Moderately True
3	He/she moves nervously by transferring to different seats.	2.96	1.2262	Moderately True
4	He/she can't concentrate on a certain situation.	2.81	1.0420	Moderately True
5.5	He/she screams a lot inside the classroom.	2.76	1.2104	Moderately True
5.5	He/she is shy or timid to react while class in session.	2.76	1.1846	Moderately True
7	He/she pinches his/her classmates for no reason at all.	2.59	1.2085	Sometimes True
8	He/she mimics or repeats the teacher's words.	2.56	1.2274	Sometimes True
9	He/she shows irritability for no reason at all.	2.54	1.2532	Sometimes True
10	He/she poorly coordinated or clumsy in physical activities.	2.51	1.2620	Sometimes True
11	He/she stares into space or seems preoccupied inside the classroom.	2.50	1.1949	Sometimes True
12	He/she repeatedly rocks head or body during discussion.	2.40	1.1991	Sometimes True
13	He/she destroys his/her things.	2.21	1.2539	Sometimes True
14	He/she bites fingernails while the teacher is discussing.	2.16	1.2819	Sometimes True
15	He/she cries a lot even if he/she is not hurt.	2.09	1.1584	Sometimes True
	Average	2.60	1.1468	Sometimes True

Scaling:

4.28-5.00	=	Always True
3.41-4.27	=	Often True
2.61-3.40	=	Moderately True
1.81-2.60	=	Sometimes True
1.00-1.80	=	Not True

**Table 8: Mean Ratings of the Perceived Academic Aspect of Maladjusted Behavior of Pupils
(Please refer to Appendix A – Sample Questionnaire)**

Rank	Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Rating
1	He/she fails to submit the requirements given by the teacher.	3.37	1.2713	Moderately True
2	He/she submits assignment late.	3.18	1.1608	Moderately True
3.5	He/she cheats answers from others in exams and other class requirements.	3.16	1.3215	Moderately True
3.5	He/she doesn't want to lead in group activities.	3.16	1.3292	Moderately True
5	He/she comes to class unprepared.	3.15	1.3031	Moderately True
6.5	He/she speaks in an unclear voice when answering.	2.92	1.2491	Moderately True
6.5	He/she has poor school work.	2.92	1.1899	Moderately True
8	He/she interrupts questions not related to the lesson.	2.89	1.2004	Moderately True
9	He/she gets easily frustrated if he got low scores or wrong answers.	2.88	1.2784	Moderately True
10	He/she doesn't follow the instructions in the exams and class projects.	2.87	1.2974	Moderately True
11	He/she skips classes to do other things.	2.84	1.3899	Moderately True
12	He/she consistently ask help from others even for easy tasks.	2.83	1.1309	Moderately True
13	He/she refuses to answer in the class recitations.	2.76	1.2405	Moderately True
14	He/she refuses to join classroom activities.	2.74	1.2707	Moderately True
15	He/she lacks energy during physical activities.	2.45	1.3012	Sometimes True
	Average	2.94	1.2623	Moderately True

Scaling:

4.28-5.00	=	Always True
3.41-4.27	=	Often True
2.61-3.40	=	Moderately True
1.81-2.60	=	Sometimes True
1.00-1.80	=	Not True

DISCUSSIONS:

It implies that a number of teachers nowadays are young and new in the teaching profession, according to Dolor-Marquez (2011). They are fitted to teach the young ones since they are responsive to new innovations and various current teaching trends which are valuable in providing world-class quality of education.

This study particularly identified the perceived maladjusted behavior of Grade VI pupils who were in a pre-adolescent stage and some were already adolescents. Many respondents were 20-25 years old, hence, they were skillfully matured enough to deal with pre-adolescents and had experienced handling those with maladjusted behavior, as cited by Dolor-Marquez (2011).

Table 2 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents according to gender. As shown, majority (90 or 91.84 percent) of the respondents were female, while only few (8 or 8.16 percent) were male. This finding infers that public and private schools are dominated by female. It is reinforced by Arjona (2010), who stated that the dominance of women in the Philippine Education is an accomplished phenomenon. He

reveals that at present, 95% of our personnel in elementary schools and 86% in both public and private high schools are female.

Based on the module of Behavior Modification in Regional Training Seminar on Guidance and Counseling in Uganda (2000), most women are believed to be compassionate and affectionately dedicated in their careers. They exert selfless effort to achieve the goals of an institution where they are connected. One of the respectable characteristics of women is their ability to sympathize with others and the potential to establish a harmonious relationship towards people. Thus, female educators are effective and proficient in interacting with the learners, especially those with maladjustment problems. They can, in some ways, contribute to assess and resolve the maladjusted behavior of pupils.

In different gender theories, women are hypothesized to be more relational, expressive, and communal, whereas men are more autonomous and instrumental in their priorities (Schwartz, 2005). There is a big difference on how men and women handle things through their principles and attitudes.

Table 3 portrays the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents according to civil status. As revealed, majority (59 or 60.20 percent) of the respondents were married and it is close to 1/3 (33 or 33.67 percent) respondents out of 98 were single. Few (4 or 4.08 percent) were widowed and few (2 or 2.05 percent) were separated. This finding shows that majority of the respondents were married. This finding suggests that the respondents have a dual role to perform as mothers and as teachers. As examined by Lovitt (2011), the dual responsibilities would even inspire them to work harder for promotion and for an increase of income for a comfort and benefit of their families.

That married people are committed to creating and maintaining a family to possess a well-organized relationship, is a thought shared by Dolor-Marquez (2011). They play various roles that are essential in keeping the family with a stronger connection among members. The study concludes that teachers who are married have more experience in guiding pupils with maladjusted behavior and can easily relate to the situation, particularly those who have children of their own. Married people are found to be "warm", a plus character of a teacher, being friendly but not too friendly because there are boundaries set. But this is manifested by many married teachers; they have been exposed to cases and situations that may brought about by married people's experiences.

Table 4 demonstrates the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents according to their post graduate units earned. It proves that majority (51 or 52.04 percent) of the respondents were Baccalaureate Degrees holders with Master's units. Only some (15 or 15.31 percent) of the respondents had a Master's Degree. This datum indicates that majority of the respondents were Baccalaureate Degrees holders with Master's units who chose to focus on their jobs and do better with their careers rather than pursuing a higher degree due to multifarious reasons, such as the need to earn enough financial support and early marriage for some, according to Mangubat (2004). It is also related with Table 2 showing that majority of the respondents had ages between 20-25 years old. It discloses that the respondents were fresh graduates; therefore, they were still on the process of their study in the higher degrees.

As mentioned by Manu (2000), newly graduated teachers are well-informed regarding the current educational trends in the school system. They can exhibit modern teaching strategies and techniques and can create innovative disciplinary programs which are highly applicable to pupils possessing maladjusted behaviors. In line with this idea, school heads must ensure a thorough supervision for the effective implementation of the programs.

Table 5 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents according to their teaching experience. Many (37 or 37.76 percent) of the respondents had 1-5 years of teaching experience. Some (24 or 24.49 percent) had 6-10 years, 16 or 16.32 percent had 11-15 years, 13 or 13.27 percent had 16-20 years, while only few (8 or 8.16 percent) of the respondents had above 20 years of teaching experience.

As mentioned by Dolor-Marquez (2011), the length of years the teachers spends in a school institution indicates that they are well satisfied with the privilege they receive from the school where they are connected. They may have more opportunities to accumulate rich and varied experiences to handle the teaching-learning process.

Table 6 depicts the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents according to duration in handling Grade VI class. Majority (54 or 55.10 percent) of the respondents have 1-3 years in handling Grade VI class. Few (nineteen or 19.39 percent) respondents revealed that they handled Grade VI class for 4-6 years. This datum signifies that majority of the respondents had a short duration of experience in handling Grade VI class. It implies that they were still in a process of accommodating the varied means of dealing with pupils who were in their pre-adolescent stage (Sanden, 1997).

The length of service is a significant factor of a teacher, in relation to classroom management with maladjusted pupils, since they are directly interacting with the youth who need excellent hands for their better future. Beltran (1996) as cited by Dolor-Marquez (2011) emphasized that the longer the number of years one has spent in the

service, the better becomes one's efficiency in his work. It is then expected that the longer the teachers in the service, the better his/her performance in terms of teaching ability and effectiveness in doing his job and productivity in producing quality graduates.

Table 7 presents the mean ratings of the perceived maladjusted behavior of Grade VI pupils in terms of their personality aspect. It includes the indicators, the descriptive ratings based on the scale, and their corresponding ranks. The teachers perceived that out of fifteen indicators, they rated nine of these indicators as "sometimes true", slightly greater in number than the indicators they had rated as "moderately true."

Most of the respondents ranked number 1 the personality aspect of maladjusted behavior of pupils, particularly in "creating distracting noise during class hours." It has a mean rating of 3.15 with a descriptive rating of "moderately true." The respondents ranked last the behavior of "crying a lot even if he/she is not hurt", with a mean rating of 2.09, described as "sometimes true." The personality aspect of maladjusted behavior has an average mean rating of 2.60 with a quality description of "sometimes true."

From the ratings on the Table 8, the findings indicate that the personality aspect of maladjusted behaviors of pupils is evidently observable in the classroom setting. As cited by Manu (2000), an individual's personality is considered as everything a person does. It is the individual's distinctive way of conducting himself. It includes the person's physique, appearance, aptitudes and character traits. It can also be defined as the holistic picture of an individual. It is, in short, the sum total of an individual's behavior which helps us understand why pupils do the things they do.

In Carl Roger's view, as cited by Dagmar (1996), personality change is certainly possible and is further a necessary part of growth. However, he notes that self-acceptance is a prerequisite. Rogers described self as the organized, consistent, conceptually composed of perceptions of the characteristics of the "I" or "me" and the perceptions of the relationships of the "I" or "me" to others in various aspects of life, together with the values attached to these perceptions.

Table 8 represents the mean ratings of the academic aspect of maladjusted behavior of the Grade VI pupils. It also includes the fifteen indicators, the mean and their corresponding descriptive ratings and ranks.

Among the fifteen indicators that have the descriptive ratings of "moderately true" that have a mean rating between 2.61-3.40, only one of these was described as "sometimes true" with a mean rating of 2.45, as perceived by the respondents. The indicator is specifically the behavior of the pupils of "lacking energy during physical activities." This finding denotes that maladjusted behavior does not mean being physically incompetent in the daily activities of the pupils. The findings suggest that the physical activities in the classroom setting is highly applicable in all areas of discipline, which has been considered also as new teaching strategy that motivates the learners to participate and help them develop themselves. The academic aspect of maladjusted behavior has a descriptive rating of "moderately true", with an average mean rating of 2.84. It points out that most of the maladjustment behaviors of the pupils were mostly manifested in the teaching-learning process and eventually reflecting their academic performance.

CONCLUSIONS:

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions have been drawn:

- Many of the respondents were of ages between 20 to 25 years, female, married, mostly Baccalaureate Degree holders with Master's units, had 1-5 years of teaching experience, and had 1-3 year experience in handling Grade VI class.
- The maladjusted behaviors in terms of personality and academic aspects were all encountered by the classroom advisers in the selected private and public elementary schools in Marawi City Division. Of these, the two behaviors on top rank based on the aspects are: creating distracting noise during class hours for the personality aspect and fails to submit the requirements given by the teacher as indicated in the academic aspect.
- Among these aspects, academic aspect ranked first since classroom advisers can directly observe the pupils in the class and, therefore, can sincerely identify the behaviors in the academic aspect.

REFERENCES:

- Beltran, Jane Q. (1996). *Sociology and Society*. Manila: Grandwater Publication
- Boeree, C. George (1997). *Personality Theories, Electronic Textbook*. <http://webspace.ship.edu/cgboer/perschapterpdf.html>
- Bootzin, Richard R. et.al. (1991). *Psychology Today: An Introduction, 7th Ed.* USA: Mc Grawhill, Inc.

- Dagmar, P. (1996). *An Analysis of Carl Roger's Theory of Personality*. Pacific Palisades, CA: Goodyear Publishing Co.
- Darley, John M. (1991). *Psychology, 5th Ed.* USA: Prentice Hall
- Dolor-Marquez, G. (2011). *Leadership Behavior of the Principals in Marawi City*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Mindanao State University, Marawi City
- Lovitt, T. (2011). *Managing Inappropriate Behaviors in the Classroom*, ERIC Digest
- Mangubat, R. & Hadji Zuhayer, S.Z. (2008). *Employability and Level of Job Satisfaction and of the BEEd English Graduates of MSU-IIT, S.Y. 2004-2007: A Tracer Study*. Unpublished Thesis, MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology, Iligan City
- Manu, Patrick (2000). *Perspectives in Psychology Pure*, P.J. Enterprises
- Sanden, Scarr Vander (1997). *Understanding Psychology*. New York: Random House Inc.
- Schwartz (2005). *Environmental Influences on Young Children's Behavior*. Pearson Allyn Bacon Prentice Hall
- Slavin, Robert E. (1997). *Educational Psychology: Theory and Practice*. USA: Allyn & Bacon
