

The Problems and Countermeasures of Implementing Educational Discipline for Rural Teachers

Yao Chen^{1,2*}, Qianhong Chen²

¹Hunan Academy of Educational Sciences, Changsha 410006, Hunan Province, China

²College of Elementary Education, Changsha Normal University, Changsha 410100, Hunan Province, China

*Corresponding author: Yao Chen, 93803857@qq.com

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Abstract: Educational discipline has received widespread attention in both practical and academic fields in recent years. By using the event sampling observation, multiple incidents of teacher education discipline were collected in a rural primary school in C County, H Province of China within one semester. Through analysis, the educational discipline in the school included three kinds: verbal discipline, behavioral discipline, and psychological discipline. Through interviews with relevant teachers and students, it was found that teachers have an insufficient understanding of relevant regulations, an inaccurate understanding of the connotation of educational discipline, a fear of using educational discipline, and an unclear basis for educational discipline when implementing it. The main reasons include that the school's promotion of educational discipline policies is not sufficient, teachers lack active learning of relevant laws and regulations, some parents have misunderstandings about the implementation of educational discipline for teachers, and social public opinion has also had a negative impact. It suggests that schools should strengthen training and improve management systems, while teachers should strengthen learning and enhance cooperation in educating students. In addition, parents should enhance their identification and share the responsibility of educating children, and society should optimize the environment and enhance social awareness.

Keywords: Rural teachers; Primary school teachers; Educational discipline; Disciplinary measure

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1. Literature review and problem statement

1.1. Literature review

From the perspective of the concept of educational discipline, the “Rules for Education Discipline in Primary and Secondary Schools (Trial)” define it as the educational behavior in which schools and teachers manage, train, or correct students who violate rules and regulations based on educational purposes, prompting students to take warning, recognize, and correct their mistakes^[1]. Some scholars believe that educational discipline is a form of

education and teaching^[2], and educators should recognize the inherent goodness and moral pursuit of students, guide students who make mistakes to recognize their mistakes, and voluntarily accept punishment^[3]. From a micro perspective of educational discipline, the interaction between teachers and students in the same educational context focuses on implementing appropriate educational discipline for unruly students^[4]. From the perspective of the rights and responsibilities of using educational discipline, educational discipline is not only a legitimate right possessed by teachers but also a “nurturing” responsibility stipulated by law^[5]. Chen (2021) proposed that schools and teachers must combine education with the educational process when educating students, otherwise they have no right to impose punishment^[6].

From the current situation of teachers implementing educational discipline, existing research often focuses on the construction of theories such as concepts, values and logic. Although there are some studies on teacher discipline behavior, there are relatively few empirical studies specifically exploring teacher discipline behavior and its internal influencing mechanisms. Wu *et al.* (2022) pointed out that the purpose of educational discipline is to help students who violate regulations become “adults,” and both “law” and “teaching” are effective means to achieve educational goals^[7]. Literature often focuses on the elements of discipline, such as students’ misconduct and specific intervention procedures for teacher discipline. Malak *et al.* (2017) developed an attitude scale for primary school teachers toward student misconduct, and believe that teachers’ attitudes toward student misconduct are an important factor^[8]. Drawing on the debates of contemporary political philosophers on “rationality,” “human beings are the goal,” “independence and autonomy,” and “a better life,” clarifying the legitimacy of educational discipline provides potential guidance value for implementing educational discipline^[9]. Existing research on educational discipline is mostly related to formal laws and regulations, with little in-depth examination from a philosophical perspective.

Regarding the strategy of implementing educational discipline for primary school teachers, some scholars believe that the purpose of educational discipline is to educate, transform, and develop individuals, rather than to punish or retaliate^[10]. The starting point of discipline is to educate students, and the methods adopted should be reasonable and legitimate, without harming the physical and mental health of students^[4]. Educational discipline aims to encourage students to comply with school rules and regulations, correct bad behavior, and strengthen their self-restraint ability^[6]. From the perspective of the subject of educational discipline, some scholars have proposed that students who receive discipline should be regarded as one of the subjects of educational discipline^[6]. Scholars have also proposed that when there is a dispute between teachers and schools regarding disciplinary actions, schools should conduct in-depth investigations following the principle of due process to ensure the right of teachers to defend their statements^[11]. When exercising disciplinary power, educators should consider students’ age and cognitive characteristics^[12]. From the perspective of teachers’ implementation of educational discipline, teachers should enhance their sense of educational responsibility and maintain educational justice^[13]. When implementing educational discipline, students’ personality traits should be taken into consideration. After implementing educational discipline, teachers or schools should keep records and track and observe^[6]. Before punishing, teachers should first consider the extent of students’ mistakes, make them aware of the non-legitimacy and potential consequences of their misconduct, and avoid inappropriate methods such as scolding and blaming^[14]. From the perspective of social collaboration in educational discipline, Wu *et al.* (2022) believe that it is necessary to improve legal regulations and guide public opinion to recognize educational discipline^[7]. Qin *et al.* (2022) proposed that schools should regularly report students’ on-campus performance to parents^[15]. Wu *et al.* (2022) believe that the social support (subjective norms) and behavioral control that teachers receive can affect their attitude toward discipline^[16].

Through the review of existing literature, it can be seen that in recent years, scholars have paid high attention to the issue of implementing educational discipline for teachers, and the academic research on educational discipline is relatively rich. Scholars have conducted specific analyses and research on the purpose, subject, and strategy of educational discipline, which is of great significance for improving the problems existing in teacher education discipline. However, existing research still has shortcomings: (1) there are many studies on educational discipline, but there is a lack of specific investigation and research; (2) the survey methods are relatively single, the survey subjects are not clear, and the survey objects and subjects have not been refined.

Based on this, this article will combine existing research results and conduct a specific analysis of educational discipline from a micro perspective. This study collected incidents of teacher education discipline in the case school to understand the problems that exist in the implementation of education discipline. Based on the actual situation, improvement strategies were proposed to provide reference suggestions for primary school teachers to implement education discipline.

2.2. Problem statement

In recent years, the country has successively issued multiple documents related to educational discipline. In December 2020, the Ministry of Education issued the “Rules for Punishing Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (Trial)” (hereinafter referred to as the “Rules”), which for the first time stipulated educational discipline in the form of departmental regulations, systematically defining the attributes, scope of application, implementation rules, procedures, measures, requirements, etc. of educational discipline, aiming to bring it into the track of the rule of law and better promote schools to fully implement the government’s education policy and the fundamental task of cultivating morality and talents. The “Rules” explicitly prohibit seven types of inappropriate educational behaviors: Corporal discipline that directly causes physical pain through hitting, stabbing, etc.; Behavior that insults or violates the personal dignity of students through discriminatory or insulting words and actions; Due to personal emotions, likes and dislikes, or selective implementation of educational discipline^[2]. However, in reality, educational discipline has become a serious problem that troubles teachers, and there is a polarization trend of “abuse” and “fear” in the behavior of teacher discipline. Teachers’ reluctance, unwillingness, inability, and inability to manage have become important factors that hinder and impede the development of education. Based on the above considerations, this article takes primary school teacher education discipline as the research topic, mainly focusing on primary school teachers and students as the research objects. Through methods such as event sampling observation, case analysis, and interview, the problems and causes of primary school teachers’ implementation of education discipline are studied, and corresponding solutions are proposed.

3. Investigation and analysis of the current situation and problems of implementing educational disciplines for rural teachers

This study focuses on 7 teachers and 3 students from a rural primary school in C County, H Province (**Table 1** and **Table 2**). From September 1 to January 5, 2023, the event sampling observation method was used to observe and record the incidents of educational discipline by teachers in the school, supplemented by interview methods, to understand the current situation of primary school teachers implementing educational discipline, analyze the problems and reasons behind the current situation.

Table 1. Introduction to the basic information of seven teachers in M primary school

Teacher	Gender	Age	Grade	Subject	Class teacher
Teacher L	Female	21	Grade 3	Language	Yes
Teacher LO	Male	38	Grade 4	Mathematics	Yes
Teacher Z	Female	35	Grade 5	Language	No
Teacher P	Female	29	Grade 5	Language	No
Teacher T	Female	51	Grade 6	Mathematics	No
Teacher C	Female	38	Grade 6	English	Yes
Teacher Y	Female	52	Grade 6	Language	Yes

Table 2. Basic information of three M primary school students

Student	Gender	Age	Grade	Academic record	Personality	Class positions
Student A	Male	12	Grade 6	Not satisfactory	Naughty	-
Student B	Female	10	Grade 4	Good	Obedient and responsible	Team leader
Student C	Male	11	Grade 5	Common	Cooperate with teachers' work	Sports committee

3.1. Three ways of the educational discipline of rural teachers

By tracking and observing the selected cases, the author categorizes how M primary school teachers implement discipline into three types: verbal discipline, behavioral discipline, and psychological discipline. The following will provide a specific analysis for each type.

3.1.1. Verbal discipline

Verbal discipline refers to the use of visual verbal stimuli to discipline students, making them directly aware of the problem and actively reflecting and correcting it. Verbal discipline, due to its strong immediacy, is the most frequent form of discipline adopted by M Elementary School teachers.

Directly criticizing the disciplinary object is the simplest and most crude way for teachers to implement verbal discipline, and its discipline efficiency is the highest. The following is an educational disciplinary incident:

Event 1: Teacher Y is a 52-year-old Grade 6 Chinese language teacher and homeroom teacher who is strict and demanding of students. Once, a boy didn't listen to the English teacher's requirements before class, got angry at the English teacher, and threw the English textbook out of the classroom. After learning about this, Teacher Y said earnestly to the students, "You lost face by throwing a tantrum at the teacher today. You must sincerely apologize to the teacher, otherwise, others will say that this is Teacher Yan's student, and my teaching has failed so well." In the above incident, the verbal discipline method adopted by the teacher was to directly criticize the student's behavior for being incorrect. Teacher Yan, who has always acted decisively, used his authority to make students aware that his actions have damaged the image of the teacher and prompted them to reflect on themselves. Although Teacher Yan ordered the student to apologize to the English teacher, he failed to point out in the educational process that the student's behavior was essentially a lack of respect for the teacher and did not fully emphasize the importance of respecting teachers and valuing morality.

Event 2: Teacher C is a 38-year-old Grade 6 English teacher and homeroom teacher. During a review class explaining exercises, when the teacher asked about the fixed collocation of a phrase, the students were unable to answer, whereas they had already reviewed the fixed collocation of the phrase a few days ago. After asking

two or three times without any students being able to answer, the teacher couldn't help but loudly ask, "What is the fixed combination of this phrase? I only talked about it a few days ago! It's like a bunch of pigs, just staring without thinking in class." After Teacher Chen finished speaking, the students' eyes dimmed and they silently lowered their heads. Finally, the teacher repeated the fixed combination and sternly told them, "If you can't remember, write it down in your notebook or book. In Event 2, the teacher used verbal discipline by reprimanding students who did not listen attentively. Compared to first and second-grade students, Grade 6 students have relatively mature minds, and the teacher's verbal criticism does not have a significant psychological impact on them, which is within the range that students can accept. However, if there is a sarcastic and insulting meaning in the language, it will inevitably hurt students' self-esteem. Through post-class communication, the teacher also admitted his problem. Whenever he saw students talking about knowledge multiple times but couldn't remember it, he couldn't help but feel angry and didn't care about whether it hurt the student's self-esteem.

Event 3: Teacher T is a math teacher in a Grade 6 class. In class, when Teacher Tan was explaining homework exercises, he found that a certain boy not only did not complete the assigned tasks but also did not listen carefully during the teacher's explanation. The exercise book was blank. After class, Teacher Tan called the student to the office, criticized him, and then asked him what kind of class the after-school service was. When he learned that it was after the clay class, Teacher Tan said, "Then don't go to the clay class. Follow me. You can make up for the homework while I am giving the club class to others. If you can't make up for it, don't go back after school today." In this incident, Teacher Tan, as the subject teacher, brought the students to the office for post-class criticism and teaching. While it was reasonable for the students to make up for their homework after the criticism was over, it took up the students' time for post-class service classes and deprived them of the right to attend clay classes. This disciplinary measure is truly "tasteless."

3.1.2. Behavioral discipline

In the daily educational practice of M Elementary School, teachers not only use verbal discipline as a management tool, but also behavioral discipline is a common form of discipline. Teachers achieve the goal of punishing students by imposing certain behaviors on them, such as physical discipline, physical discipline, and so on.

(1) Physical discipline

Physical discipline mainly refers to the use of discipline stations and other forms to make students aware of their mistakes without causing physical harm, and to remind them to correct their erroneous behavior on time. In actual M Elementary School work, it is a relatively handy discipline method for class teachers. The following are individual case tracking and observation records:

Event 4: Teacher P is a 29-year-old Grade 5 Chinese teacher in a certain class. One afternoon before the physical education class, Teacher Peng angrily came to the class and accused the students of not completing their homework well. Out of more than 50 students, only one was right, and more than half of them did not do their homework well. Some students wrote poorly and crookedly, and seven or eight students did not finish their Chinese homework. Teacher Peng asked the group of students who had not finished their homework to move chairs to the window, kneel or stand to finish their homework, and then asked more than half of the students in the class who had not written their homework seriously to stand on the playground with their backs to the Sun for about 30 minutes, until the first five minutes of the second class. In Event 4, most students in the class failed to maintain a proper learning attitude and treated the homework assigned by the teacher perfunctorily. Teacher Peng has adopted different disciplinary measures for students based on their different situations of

completing homework, which shows that disciplinary measures also need to be tailored to individual needs. This is worth learning from. However, Grade 5 children gradually mature in their minds and care about other people's opinions. The students didn't disperse until five minutes before the second class. During the discipline period, there were other classmates from other classes watching and discussing, which inevitably made sensitive students feel ashamed, and not conducive to the physical and mental health of students. Teachers should grasp the "degree" of discipline when punishing, and before punishing, they should consider how to punish not to hurt students' self-esteem.

(2) Instrument discipline

When implementing discipline, teachers occasionally use teaching tools and equipment at hand, such as whips, rulers, and even textbooks, to form a certain warning effect on students and achieve discipline goals. The following is a case observation record:

Event 5: Teacher L is a 28-year-old Grade 3 homeroom teacher and Chinese language teacher in a certain class. One day before Chinese class, Teacher Liu checked the completion status of homework and found that a boy had not completed it. So, Teacher Liu used a ruler to hit the boy three times with force, and each time a clear sound could be heard. Teacher Liu criticized him for not doing homework while hitting, and the student's hands turned red from the beating, and tears streamed down his face due to the unbearable pain.

Event 6: At the end of the lunch break, a classmate came to the office to report to Teacher Yan that a classmate in the class had paid someone else to help with their homework. Upon hearing this, Teacher Y was initially shocked that such a situation had occurred. He then asked the student to call the initiator to the office and asked for the reason. After that, he picked up the Chinese book on the desk and hit the two classmates who had paid others to do homework and received money to do homework for others heavily.

Since ancient times, the ruler has been passed down as a teaching tool and is often regarded as a symbol of teacher authority. It is still quite common in many primary and secondary school classrooms. However, if the use of rulers or other tools is not properly controlled or handled, it may lead to physical harm to students and even cause mental health problems.

3.1.3. Psychological discipline

When focusing on the daily disciplinary situation of M Elementary School teachers and observing how they discipline students, it can be summarized in various obvious ways. But, psychological discipline is often overlooked. Unlike the first two obvious disciplinary behaviors, psychological discipline usually focuses on the silent discipline of students' psychology and spirit. In theory, it does not belong to the category of legitimate discipline but is essentially a "misuse" of educational discipline by teachers. However, it is also quite common in teachers' teaching practice.

(1) Ignoring discipline

Disregarding discipline can be understood as long-term intentional neglect, deliberate neglect, or deliberate abandonment of a student. Compared to conventional discipline, this kind of discipline behavior that ignores a student's mistakes and allows them to "grow freely" should be given more attention. Here are several events organized based on observation records:

Event 7: Teacher Z is a 35-year-old Chinese language teacher from a Grade 5 class. Several students in this class always cannot complete the homework assigned by Teacher Zhang. No matter how much advice is given, it doesn't work. Therefore, Teacher Zhang chooses not to take care of their homework anymore and even tells other students in the class that they don't need to check their homework. If these people haven't completed it, they

don't need to submit their list to her.

Event 8: There is also a neglected boy in Teacher C's classroom. During the teaching process, he hardly looks up at the blackboard and often sits at the table daydreaming. Most of the time in class, he sleeps on the table and occasionally sits sideways against the wall, completely ignoring what the teacher on stage is saying. Other students who occasionally cheat will be criticized by Teacher Chen, but Teacher Chen has never cared about this student.

The classroom phenomena presented by the above two events have almost appeared in every elementary school classroom, and even in the teaching career of every teacher, they may encounter one or even several students who have to give up to varying degrees. After a conversation with Teacher Zhang after class, it was learned that the students mentioned in Event 7 had a good learning attitude at first and were able to complete the homework assigned by Teacher Zhang. However, as time passed, they became less attentive in class and their homework was perfunctory. Teacher Zhang communicated with several students to understand their current situation and inquire about the reasons. The students were able to reflect on their behavior in the early stages and performed well in a short time, but after persisting for a while, they showed their "original form" again. Considering that the students had a good attitude toward correcting their mistakes, Teacher Zhang talked to these students again. After listening, the students also changed their behavior in a short period, but they would make the same mistake again after some time. This repeated several times, and the students gradually stopped listening to Teacher Zhang's advice, so Teacher Zhang gave up on this group of students.

(2) Isolation discipline

Deliberately isolating a student is also a disciplinary measure adopted by M Elementary School teachers. The following is a case tracking observation record:

Event 9: In Teacher Z's class, a boy stood outside the classroom and was asked. It was found that the boy was punished for standing outside the door due to a small conversation with his deskmate while Teacher Zhang was giving a test paper. When he left the classroom, the boy did not bring the test paper and Teacher Zhang did not remind him. As a result, the boy stood outside the classroom for almost a class.

Event 10: Teacher LO is a 38-year-old Grade 4 homeroom teacher and math teacher in a certain class. One day during class, while exchanging my thoughts and experiences with other teachers in the second-floor office, I saw two students of Teacher Liu standing outside the office door. After investigation, it was found that these two students were asked by Teacher Liu to stand outside the office door because they hit another boy's head with a triangular ruler, causing him to bleed. However, there was no specific time for discipline, and the two boys stood there for two classes without learning anything.

During the teaching period, teachers can take appropriate discipline measures for students who perform poorly, and provide feedback after discipline so that students can self-reflect and adjust on time. It is worth noting that the practice of forcing students to stand outside the classroom may not only make them feel isolated but also violate their right to normal learning.

3.2. Problems in implementing educational disciplines of rural teachers

To gain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the current situation of teacher education and discipline in M Primary School, the study used the interview method to select 7 representative teachers and 3 students from the schools where they work as the main interviewees. Interviews were conducted at any time during breaks and after classes in offices, classrooms, and other places, keeping the interviewees in a relatively relaxed state to ensure the authenticity and effectiveness of the interview content. During the interview process, record the entire

interview content. After the interview, organize the recorded content, convert the interview data into text, and summarize and analyze it in depth.

By summarizing and sorting out the current implementation status of educational discipline for M primary school teachers and supplementing the information obtained from interviews, the study categorizes the problems in the implementation of educational discipline for M primary school teachers into the following four types.

3.2.1. Teachers' insufficient understanding of educational discipline

Through the interview process, interviewees expressed that they were not very familiar with the "Rules for Punishing Primary and Secondary Education (Trial)" and did not know about such a document. "They have not paid attention to this aspect in their daily lives" (Teacher C). "I have not read this document and am not very familiar with it" (Teacher L). "I know this document, but only understand some regulations, and the specific content is not clear" (Teacher Z). This shows that most teachers have a limited understanding of the "Rules" and even some teachers have not heard of the document. Due to the generally low level of attention from the teacher community, they have little knowledge of the relevant regulations on educational discipline, which undoubtedly limits the reasonable exercise of disciplinary power by teachers.

After the release of the "Rules," it should serve as an important basis for teachers to implement educational discipline. However, through interviews, it can be seen that most teachers have little understanding of the "Rules," and some teachers have not read the document. Teachers who do not care about or exert importance on the national documents on educational discipline are likely to develop the phenomenon of teachers punishing students based on their teaching experience, which is not conducive to teachers' correct implementation of educational discipline power and grasping the "degree" of educational discipline.

3.2.2. Teachers' inaccurate understanding of the connotation of educational discipline

Teachers generally agree with the application value of educational discipline, but observations show that some teachers have deviations in understanding the concept of educational discipline and cannot clearly define its boundaries with corporal punishment and disguised corporal punishment. This leads to confusion between educational discipline and corporal punishment or disguised corporal punishment in practical operations. On the other hand, some teachers adhere to the traditional concept of "no beating, no success" and exceed the reasonable scope permitted by law when implementing educational discipline, occasionally resorting to corporal punishment of students. Furthermore, some teachers lack emphasis on the development of educational discipline and lack in-depth understanding and recognition of its core connotations and correct implementation methods.

When it comes to understanding educational discipline, homeroom teacher C mentioned, "When it comes to educational discipline, I think of corporal punishment. I know there is a difference between educational discipline and corporal punishment. Educational discipline helps children realize their problems and help them return to normal learning. However, corporal punishment may have a certain impact on children's physical and mental health. But, I think that in reality, educational discipline may include corporal punishment. If we only punish students through language, they may still be acting on their own and may not listen at all. The boundary between discipline and corporal punishment is indeed difficult to grasp." In fact, not only do teachers have a vague understanding of educational discipline, but students also find it difficult to accurately distinguish between them. Educational discipline, corporal punishment, and disguised corporal punishment. Many students tend to view the disciplinary actions taken by teachers after their mistakes as corporal punishment or disguised corporal punishment, which can lead to obstacles in the correct understanding and effective implementation of educational

discipline.

3.2.3. Teachers have a fear of using educational discipline

Through interviews, most teachers have concerns when implementing educational discipline. Teacher W mentioned in an interview that “when implementing educational discipline, it depends on the parents. Some parents hope that the teacher can strictly discipline their children in school, such as hitting them if they don’t listen. However, some parents have never hit their children themselves, so they hope that the teacher will not hit them. If the teacher hits their child, the parents may think that the teacher’s behavior is too excessive.” Teacher Y said, “Sometimes, we worry about accidentally hitting the child, causing the child to have trauma, causing autism or extreme emotions. To be honest, public opinion is very unfavorable to the teacher, which may make others think that the teacher is not good to the students and that the teacher does not care about them.” Teacher L said, “When I punish the student, I usually consider what type of parent the student is. If it is a reasonable parent and the student makes a mistake, I will increase the severity of the discipline. After the punishment, I will communicate with the parents to avoid misunderstandings. But if it is an unreasonable parent, I usually do not discipline the student much, just verbally criticize a few words.” Teacher Z believes that the biggest concern is the lack of cooperation from the parents, “After I punish, I basically communicate with the parents to avoid misunderstandings.” Teacher T pointed out, “I am worried about the student’s ability to bear it and whether the parents can accept my discipline method.”

From the above interviews, it can be found that some teachers are concerned that punishing students may cause dissatisfaction among some parents. Therefore, they will decide whether to impose punishment based on the type of parents. Even if a student makes a mistake, they will not dare to punish them because of their parents. This violates the fairness of punishment and easily encourages students to make mistakes, which will make other students who have been punished dissatisfied and raise doubts about the teacher. Some teachers may also worry about their disciplinary actions causing harm to students. Therefore, teachers should grasp the “degree” of punishment, focus on education rather than punishment, communicate with students on time after punishment, and give them care.

3.2.4. Unclear basis for teachers’ disciplinary actions in education

During the interview, the study noticed that teachers generally lack clear evidence when implementing educational penalties. Most teachers determine the severity of punishment based on the degree of student error, which is subjective and difficult to ensure fairness and consistency. In contrast, only a few teachers refer to the school’s rules and regulations or class conventions as the basis for punishment.

When asked about the basis for implementing educational discipline in teaching, Teacher Z said, “I punish students with a responsible attitude. Parents send students to school for education. If some students behave badly, I don’t discipline them, which is irresponsible to both the students and their parents. School discipline and class rules tell students what they can do and what they cannot do. If a student makes a mistake afterward, they will be punished accordingly.” From the interview, it can be seen that most teachers punish students based on subjective understanding, and there are relatively few cases of punishment based on school discipline, class rules, and laws and regulations. This will lead to teachers’ lack of objectivity in implementing punishment, inaccurate grasp of punishment intensity, and students questioning teachers’ disciplinary behavior.

In the interview, some students reported that the severity of the teacher’s punishment is sometimes influenced by their emotional state, especially when they are in a bad mood, the teacher may take more severe

measures. Considering that emotional fluctuations are human nature, teachers are no exception, especially when faced with the complex situation of educational work, they often have more emotions than other human bodies. If personal emotions cannot be properly managed, teachers are prone to being dominated by negative emotions, which may lead to improper disciplinary behavior, as reflected in the interview data.

During an interview with students, student A stated, “The main reason for teachers to punish them was because they violated school rules and did not finish their homework. Sometimes when the teacher is in a bad mood and very angry, we happen to make a mistake and will be punished even more severely.” Student B mentioned, “Sometimes when I don’t make a mistake, but other classmates make the teacher angry, the teacher will punish the whole class because one person made a mistake. For example, asking all of us classmates to stand up and listen to the lecture.”

From the above interview, it can be seen that teachers tend to direct their anger towards students when they are in a bad mood. Due to their young age and relative lack of strength, elementary school students are particularly vulnerable to teacher dissatisfaction and negative emotions being transmitted to them. Emotional management is a fundamental skill that a qualified teacher should possess. From the moment they enter the classroom, teachers should control their emotions and respond rationally to students’ mistakes. Teachers determine the severity of punishment based on their mood, lacking objectivity in punishment.

Some students have stated that their class has established class rules, but they are verbally explained by the teacher, and sometimes the rules are only set after students make mistakes. Teachers’ disciplinary actions are not standardized, and there is no clear provision on what principles will result in punishment for violating them. Most of the disciplinary actions are based on teachers’ subjective opinions.

Students B and C both stated that they have class rules set in their classes. However, when it comes to whether the rules have been publicly posted and promoted in the class, both students said, “No, usually after we make a mistake, the teacher will tell us not to do so, otherwise they will punish us.” The interview results showed that most teachers did not follow a unified standard when implementing educational discipline, but decided based on personal long-term accumulated experience or mood. This approach makes the punishment standards vague, and students find it difficult to know under what circumstances they will be punished. The lack of clear disciplinary standards not only leads to confusion among students about their behavior but also easily exacerbates misunderstandings and conflicts between teachers and students, thus failing to achieve the expected educational effect.

4. Analysis of the reasons for the problems in rural education discipline

4.1. The school’s promotion of educational discipline policies is not in place

According to interviews, teachers stated that the school has not conducted specialized research and discussion on educational discipline issues, nor has it held any meetings to understand the “Regulations on education discipline in Primary and Secondary Schools (Trial),” and has not been able to improve teachers’ level of implementing educational discipline through systematic training. The school’s lack of emphasis on educational discipline is not conducive to teachers forming a correct concept of punishment. Of course, teachers themselves also need to actively learn knowledge related to education and teaching, but schools should also take responsibility for teacher training and guidance. The current situation indicates that there are significant deficiencies in teacher training and guidance, as well as inadequate learning of professional knowledge in schools. Especially in the sensitive and cautious field of educational discipline, without organizational training and guidance from schools, it is difficult

for teachers to accurately grasp the spirit of relevant documents.

4.2. Teachers lack proactive learning of relevant laws and regulations

Most teachers punish based on years of teaching experience, and rarely actively learn about laws and regulations related to educational discipline, with little understanding of legal knowledge related to educational discipline. Due to an insufficient understanding of the theoretical basis for implementing punishment, teachers are unable to exercise their educational discipline power correctly, resulting in behavioral deviations and sometimes infringing on the legitimate rights and interests of students. As one of the main bodies implementing educational discipline, teachers need to study legal regulations, clarify the purpose of educational discipline, and correctly exercise educational discipline.

4.3. Parents' misunderstandings about the implementation of educational discipline for teachers

Some teachers may not dare to discipline students due to parental reasons, and even give up on educating them. It cannot be denied that there are indeed some teachers who deviate from the people-oriented educational philosophy when implementing educational discipline. These teachers often vent their dissatisfaction by allowing students to experience physical pain. Therefore, some parents are affected by such incidents and hold a negative attitude towards educational discipline. In addition, some parents excessively spoil their children, showing great love and affection towards them in their daily lives. They cannot bear to beat or scold their children, nor do they want to see their children punished by teachers in school. The widespread existence of this situation seriously hinders the further development of educational discipline.

4.4. The social public opinion environment has caused negative interference with teachers

In recent years, the negative public opinion generated by media reports on teacher corporal punishment incidents has caused difficulties for teachers in implementing educational discipline. The media plays a significant role in guiding public opinion and should have exposed social ugliness and promoted righteousness. However, some media outlets exaggerate without investigation to attract attention and mislead the public's perception. When certain disciplinary events are excessively exaggerated and the public has misunderstandings and biases towards educational discipline, it may create strong public opinion pressure, causing teachers to hesitate and worry heavily when implementing punishment.

5. Countermeasures for rural teachers to implement educational disciplines

5.1. Schools should strengthen training and improve management systems

(1) Strengthen relevant training and clarify guidance direction

To improve teachers' educational and disciplinary abilities, schools can start from multiple dimensions. For example, conducting targeted educational and disciplinary training activities to help teachers systematically master the correct methods and principles of punishment. In addition, organizing teachers to study educational and disciplinary laws and regulations can not only lay a solid theoretical foundation for teachers to enhance their disciplinary abilities but also effectively prevent the legitimate rights and interests of teachers and students from being infringed upon. For teachers who lack disciplinary experience, schools should provide scientific and reasonable guidance plans, integrate disciplinary case studies into teaching and research activities, encourage

experienced teachers to share their experiences in implementing disciplinary measures reasonably and promote the comprehensive improvement of educational disciplinary abilities through communication and collaboration among colleagues.

(2) Improve school discipline and class rules to lay the foundation for management

When formulating school rules and regulations, schools should follow national policies and widely listen to the opinions of faculty, students, and their parents to ensure that the formulation of school rules and regulations is both scientific and reasonable. At the same time, the formulation of school rules and discipline also needs to be combined with the specific situation of the school, ensuring fairness and justice, ensuring that students' violations can be properly dealt with, and flexibly formulating disciplinary measures according to different situations. In addition, school rules should clearly define the behaviors that teachers and students should abide by and prohibit, providing clear guidance for teachers to formulate class management systems and implement educational penalties based on school rules.

5.2. Teachers should strengthen their learning and enhance educational cooperation

(1) Deepen learning understanding and enhance the educational level

To improve teachers' understanding of educational discipline and their ability to implement educational discipline, multiple aspects can be considered. Teachers should actively learn about laws and regulations related to educational discipline, abandon outdated disciplinary concepts, and recognize the differences between educational discipline, corporal punishment, and disguised corporal punishment to prevent misuse and abuse. Teachers can also participate in educational lectures organized by the school, participate in themed activities such as scenario observation and case sharing, and continuously improve their level of educational discipline by learning successful cases of educational discipline. In short, through continuous learning and practice, teachers can apply educational discipline more scientifically.

(2) Pay attention to home-school communication and strengthen educational cooperation

To enhance the scientificity and effectiveness of educational discipline, it is particularly important to establish effective communication channels between teachers and parents. Before taking disciplinary measures, teachers need to communicate with parents on time, seek their opinions, and work together to agree on the most suitable disciplinary strategy. At the same time, clearly explain the reasons for the punishment to the students who are about to be punished, and encourage them to reflect on themselves and recognize their mistakes. When encountering complex situations, it is necessary to communicate with parents in time and report to school leaders to jointly seek solutions. Given the indispensable role of the family environment in students' growth, some parents have failed to fully fulfill their educational responsibilities and shifted the blame to schools, resulting in superficial cooperation between families and schools. Therefore, teachers should exert importance on communication with parents, guide them to establish correct educational concepts, enhance their comprehensive understanding of students, and promote the substantive development of home-school cooperation.

5.3. Parents should enhance their identification and take on the responsibility of educating children

(1) Enhance disciplinary identification and approach punishment rationally

Parents need to have a trusting attitude towards schools and teachers and understand and cooperate when implementing scientific and reasonable punishment in schools and teachers. In the current social context, parents generally oppose traditional "stick education," however, excessive protection of their children may

lead to neglecting the value of educational discipline. Therefore, parents should deepen their understanding of educational concepts and clarify that punishment aims to prevent and correct bad behavior, rather than simply physical punishment. When a child is punished, parents should remain calm and rational, and understand the situation before taking appropriate measures. When a teacher is punished, parents should provide support and assistance to help their children correct their behavior.

(2) Pay attention to family education and consciously assume the responsibility of educating people

Education requires the joint participation of schools and families, and their collaborative efforts are crucial for the growth of children. They complement each other and are indispensable. Parents play the role of guardianship and education until their children enter primary school, and this responsibility does not end with the child entering the campus. On the contrary, parents should exert great importance on family education, continue to fulfill their educational responsibilities for their children, and consciously take on the responsibility of managing students. However, due to the numerical gap between teachers and students, teachers often find it difficult to cover all aspects of their daily teaching work. At the same time, modern family structures often involve three generations of grandparents and grandchildren, with four or five parents jointly managing one or two children. This excessive indulgence can easily lead to children forming a self-centered mentality, only accepting praise but not criticism, which brings great difficulties to teachers' student management work. Therefore, parents should consciously let their children exercise, receive setback education, cultivate their awareness and ability to actively integrate into the collective, and promote their comprehensive development. This kind of home-school cooperation will help form a joint force in education and create better conditions for children's healthy growth.

5.4. Society should optimize the environment and enhance social awareness

(1) The media creates a favorable environment to support the development of education

In recent years, negative reports on educational discipline have led many teachers to hesitate and even choose to ignore students' erroneous behavior. Although the cases of improper punishment reported by the media do not represent the whole, with the widespread dissemination on social media, such incidents have significantly affected the overall impression of the teaching staff in society. From the above, it can be seen that regulating the social media environment and creating a healthy public opinion atmosphere are particularly crucial. The media should uphold the principle of objectivity and impartiality in information dissemination, avoiding exaggeration and sensationalism of topics. At the same time, actively promoting the value of educational discipline, showcasing successful cases, eliminating public cognitive biases, and guiding public opinion to evolve in a positive direction. Moreover, the government needs to strengthen its supervision of the media industry, prevent false reporting from misleading the public, and ensure that education and punishment are recognized by society. Only by creating a tolerant and open public opinion environment can strong guarantees for teachers be provided to exercise their disciplinary power reasonably, and thus promote the healthy development of education.

(2) Strengthen the promotion of disciplinary policies and enhance social awareness

Strengthening the promotion of policies is a crucial step in the implementation stage. Effective publicity can enhance teachers, parents, and students' understanding of educational disciplinary policies, thereby ensuring their effective implementation. Given that public opinion has a profound impact on teachers' understanding of policies, relevant departments need to increase their efforts. The government education department should establish a social support platform, make good use of social funds to promote policy implementation and mobilize social organizations to supervise the policy implementation process. Internet regulatory authorities need to strengthen

the monitoring of new media, clarify false reports, and punish violations. The Ministry of Education should widely promote policy content, make good use of the positive guidance function of online public opinion, provide convenient channels for the public to understand policies, and eliminate obstacles in implementing policies.

6. Conclusion

As an effective means of managing student behavior, educational discipline not only demonstrates its necessity but also inevitably triggers many discussions and controversies. For some time now, educational discipline has become a serious problem that troubles teachers. Teachers dare not manage, are unwilling to manage, do not know how to manage, and cannot manage, which to some extent affects the reasonable use of educational discipline. Based on the above considerations, this article takes primary school teacher education discipline as the research topic, mainly focusing on primary school teachers and students. Through event sampling observation method, case analysis method, interview method and other research methods, the problems and causes of primary school teachers' implementation of education discipline are studied, and corresponding solutions are proposed from the perspectives of schools, teachers, parents, and society.

Due to limitations in research conditions, this study focused on a rural primary school in H province, resulting in limited conclusions and a lack of broad representativeness. Future research may consider expanding to different regions and more primary school teacher samples to enhance the generalizability of research conclusions. Due to the high sensitivity of the issue of educational discipline, some interviewed teachers may avoid specific questions due to concerns and only make general remarks, which poses a challenge to the accuracy of the research. Therefore, in future research, emphasis will be placed on establishing a stable trust relationship with teachers, clarifying the purpose and value of the research through in-depth communication, alleviating their doubts, and obtaining more authentic feedback.

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