Classroom Discipline in Australia

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INTRODUCTION

In addressing classroom management this chapter focuses primarily on what teachers do in response to student misbehavior, rather than what they do to avoid it. The term used for such behavior is classroom discipline. The discussion first establishes the significance of teachers' disciplinary behavior in classrooms. Second, the gap that exists between Australian students' and teachers' perceptions of good disciplinary practice and that which is practiced in Australian classrooms is examined. Finally, the impact of various discipline strategies on students is considered. In conducting this analysis, all patterns within the data are established before interpreting their significance and any implications for practice.

IMPORTANCE OF CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE

Classroom discipline serves a number of functions. One of the most important is to facilitate students' subject learning (Bagley, 1914; Lewis, 1997a; Wolfgang, 1995). Without adequate responses to students' inappropriate behavior, teachers will be unable to present even their best-planned lessons (Barton, Coley, & Wenglinsky, 1998; Charles, 2001).

A second recognized function of classroom discipline is to facilitate good citizenship (Anderson, Avery, Pederson, Smith, & Sullivan, 1997; Barber, 1998; Bennet, 1998; Cunat, 1996; McDonnell, 1998; Osborne, 1995; Osler & Sturkey, 2001; Pearl & Knight, 1999; Print, 1996/1997).

Within Australia, there is a great deal of concern about the need for schools to provide students with a curriculum capable of preparing them for democratic citizenship and social competence (Ainley, Batten, Collins, & Withers, 1998; Civics Expert Group, 1994; Curriculum Corporation, 1998; Kennedy, 1996, 1998; Lewis, 2001; Mellor, Kennedy, & Greenwood, 2001).

In the words of Dr. Brendon Nelson, the Australian Federal Minister for Education, "Civics and citizenship education is an important national priority. Our democracy depends on informed
participation. Schools play a crucial role in helping to foster such participation" (Nelson, 2002, p.1).

The significant role that schools play in developing appropriate values in their students is also recognized by teachers. For example, Mellor et al. (2001) reported that 98% of 352 Australian teachers surveyed believed that civic education matters a great deal for Australia.

In an ongoing attempt to promote appropriate values, the national Curriculum Corporation developed, and continues to promote, a package entitled "Discovering Democracy" (Curriculum Corporation, 1998). As a result of being exposed to this curriculum, students are expected to "develop personal character traits, such as respecting individual worth and human dignity, empathy, respect for the law, being informed about public issues, critical mindedness and willingness to express points of view, listen, negotiate and compromise" (Curriculum Corporation, 1994, p. 7). However, it is acknowledged that civics education programs focusing on knowledge transmission alone have limited effect. The values that are to be promoted have to be incorporated into the day-to-day experience of students if they are to be truly understood and become an integral part of their character. Experiencing democracy appears to be a good way to build civic knowledge and gain some commitment to civic processes. (Mellor et al., 2001, p. 134).

In addition to establishing order and promoting citizenship values through classroom discipline, a third function of discipline is to facilitate within students more generally the development of appropriate morals and values (Fenstermacher, 2001; Narvaez, Bentley, Gleason, & Samuels, 1998; Hansen, 2001; Lickona, 1996; Pring, 2001; Richardson & Fenstermacher, 2001), and character (Benninga & Wynne, 1998; Fisher, 1998; Glanzcr, 1998; Houston, 1998; Jones & Stoodley, 1999; Rothstein, 2000; Ryan & Bonlin, 1999; Schaeffer, 1999; Siebold, 1998).

In a bid to achieve one or more of these aims some educators strongly support what Wolfgang (1995) would call interventionist strategies such as reward and punishment (Canter & Canter, 1992; Swinson & Melling, 1995). Others, in contrast, argue for strategies that provide for more student involvement in decision making, such as one-to-one discussion and class meetings (Freiberg, Stein, & Huang, 1996; Hyman & Snoek, 2000; Kohn, 1996, 1998; Pearl & Knight, 1999; Schneider, 1996). This chapter investigates the effectiveness of various discipline strategies in the Australian context by considering how closely teachers’ and students’ conceptions of best practice is implemented in Australian classrooms. In addition, it reports on the perceived impact of teachers’ disciplinary behavior on the attitudes of students toward their schoolwork, the teacher, and the misbehaving students.

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE

Before ideal and real classroom discipline can be compared, and the impact of classroom discipline assessed, teachers’ disciplinary behavior must be measured. However, validly observing teachers dealing with inappropriate student behavior in classrooms is not easily accomplished. Two factors adversely influence the validity of such observations. First, once an observer (or recording device) is present, students may alter their characteristic behavior. Some may become more provocative because of the additional adult audience, whereas for others, the adult presence may lessen the likelihood of misbehavior. Second, teachers who are aware that they are being observed may alter their characteristic behavior. Some may toughen up and become more controlling, whereas others may tend to avoid confrontation by increasing their ignoring of inappropriate behavior or by responding more gently.

A further difficulty associated with assessing the impact of classroom discipline via observations relates to cost. Obtaining sufficient observations to approximate a representative
sample of a teacher’s disciplinary behavior is extremely expensive, involving a number of visits to a teacher’s classroom to ensure a valid sample of behavior. Consequently in preparing a chapter on classroom discipline in Australia, it was not surprising to find that all relevant research had used the perceptions of students and the self-reports of teachers.

MISBEHAVIOR AND RELATED TEACHER STRESS

When addressing the issue of classroom discipline and the associated teacher stress it is common for the Australian popular press to sensationalize the problem. For example, articles entitled “Safety of Teachers Must Come First” (O’Halloran, 2003), “Critical Delay on ‘Bad Kid Classes’” (‘Critical Delay,’ 2002), or “Counsellors Needed for School Discipline Crisis” (“Counsellors Needed,” 2002) appear to suggest that school misbehavior threatens both teachers and students. However, research that reports levels of student misbehavior does not indicate the presence of a very significant problem (Fields, 1986; Hart, Wearing, & Conn, 1995; Johnson, Oswald, & Adey, 1993; Oswald, Johnson, & Whittington, 1997; Lewis, 2001). Similarly, Australian research on teacher stress and concern levels shows that they are both only moderate (Applied Psychology Research Group, 1989; Dinham 1993; Independent Education Union 1996; Lewis, 1999a, 2001; Louden 1987; Otto, 1986; Pithers & Soden, 1998; Sinclair 1992; Smith, 1996).

In the most recent research reporting on misbehavior in Australian classrooms and teachers’ levels of concern over discipline issues, Lewis, Romi, Xing, and Katz (2005) presented data from 491 secondary teachers from Melbourne (as well as 98 from Israel and 159 from China). They demonstrated that approximately two thirds of the Australian sample of teachers report that they expect “hardly any” or “none” of their students to misbehave, and all but three of the remaining respondents indicate that only “some” students will misbehave. When asked “to what extent is the issue of classroom discipline and student misbehavior an issue of concern to you?” 61% report that it is no more than a minor stressor, 27% say moderate, and only 12% state that discipline is a major source of stress. In summary it can be seen that there is little support for the view that there is a crisis in classroom discipline in Australia. Nevertheless, over one third of Australian teachers appear to be experiencing at least moderate levels of stress as a result of classroom discipline and student misbehavior.

In summary, in addition to the obvious need to prevent student misbehavior from interfering with the teaching–learning process, classroom discipline remains significant because of the demand in Australia that schools provide students with a curriculum capable of preparing them for democratic citizenship and social competence (Ainley et al., 1998; Civics Expert Group, 1994; Curriculum Corporation, 1998; Kennedy, 1996, 1998; Lewis, 2001; Mellor, et al., 2001).

Having established the significance of students’ misbehavior and classroom discipline in Australia it is now appropriate to address the major focus of this chapter, namely, how perceptions of teachers’ classroom discipline strategies compare to perceptions of best practice.

STUDENTS’ PREFERRED DISCIPLINARY STRATEGIES

In a series of studies conducted between 1980 and 1987 Lewis and Lovegrove gathered data from year 9 students (approximately 14 to 15 years old) regarding their teachers’ classroom discipline. All of the studies were conducted in Victoria, Australia. Initially 34 characteristics defining good or bad teachers, and 46 disciplinary strategies used by such teachers were generated from taped group interviews of five classes of year 9 students. These then formed the focus of a number of surveys. In one study (Lovegrove & Lewis, 1982), in which 264 year
9 students were surveyed, respondents indicated which strategies their best and worst teachers used. As a result, it was possible to identify strategies most preferred by students.

In a later study (Lewis & Lovegrove, 1983), year 9 students were once again surveyed. On this occasion 364 respondents used a modified version of the earlier instrument to describe one of their current teacher's disciplinary practices. They also indicated the extent to which they liked this teacher. Consequently, in this study it was possible to make inferences regarding not only the discipline preferred by students but also teachers' current classroom practice.

A third study replicated the second with an additional 710 year 9 students. This was followed by a fourth study in which a slightly modified version of the previous questionnaire was administered to a sample of 408 year 9 students. In this investigation respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which a "good" teacher is characterized by the disciplinary items provided. In synthesizing all these data, Lewis and Lovegrove (1987a) highlighted the discipline strategies preferred by students in the following terms:

One can infer that students appear to desire the teacher to take responsibility for the maintenance of order in the classroom and not involve either parents or other teachers. They want clear rules, designed in conjunction with students and based on a number of reasons including the needs of the students and the teacher. The use of sanctions should occur after a warning, should involve only the miscreant and should be applied in a calm manner, minimizing embarrassment to the miscreant. The sanctions used should focus on isolating students who misbehave and should not include arbitrary or harsh punishments. They should be applied consistently. Finally, good teachers should recognize appropriate behavior, both by individuals and by the class. (p. 100)

In comparison to the range of discipline strategies assessed by Lewis and Lovegrove, King, Gullone, and Dadds (1990) provided only four possible teacher responses to student misbehavior for 616 Melbourne elementary and secondary students to consider. These were permissiveness (let the student get away with it), physical punishment (smack the child), discussion (talk with the child), and exclusion (put the student in another room). These alternative responses were used for three independent problems, namely a student refusing to pick up books, student aggression toward a classmate, and temper tantrums in the classroom. In each situation the students rated discussion as the most desirable teacher action, followed by exclusion, then physical punishment, and finally permissiveness. Clearly there are some similarities with the results discussed earlier. Students wish teachers to intervene, they are supportive of isolation as a form of consequence, and they prefer to receive explanations as to why the behavior is unacceptable. Their support for talking with the child was not something that students in the earlier studies had the opportunity to evaluate; however, in the teachers' preferences sections that follows, it is clearly identified as a desirable technique.

TEACHERS' PREFERRED DISCIPLINARY STRATEGIES

In 1991, 427 elementary and 556 secondary school teachers were provided with a list of 61 disciplinary strategies and asked to indicate the extent to which each would characterize an "ideal" teacher (Lewis, Lovegrove, & Burman, 1991). The items listed were those provided to students in earlier studies, but were augmented by the addition of a number of items to cover areas such as discussions with and involvement of students.

The results indicate that elementary school teachers described an ideal teacher's discipline as being based on very clear rules, determined in part by the students. Students would also help identify the punishments to be applied to misbehaving students. Ideal teachers would be very much in charge, although when necessary they would involve the parents of students.
who misbehave. Explanations regarding the need for appropriate behavior would be primarily based on disruption to the class, and to a lesser extent, disruption to the teacher. Good behavior would be modeled and rewarded, and punishments would take the form of logical consequences and social isolation aimed only at the students who misbehave. Students would be allowed an opportunity to explain their side of the story and be assisted to see the impact their misbehavior had on others. In this way they would be expected to identify how to improve their behavior in future. At all times the ideal elementary teacher would avoid becoming angry and yelling at or embarrassing misbehaving students.

In general there is strong agreement between the secondary teachers' responses and those of the elementary teachers. The main differences lie in the areas of recognition of appropriate behavior, inclusion in decision making, and punishments. Secondary teachers provide less, yet still considerable, support for rewarding or praising students for doing what is expected. They also want less student involvement in defining both rules and sanctions for misbehavior. In addition, secondary teachers profess greater support for a range of assertive strategies. For example, they are more likely to characterize "ideal" teachers as making greater use of demands for appropriate behavior, isolation of misbehaving students inside or outside the classrooms, and detention. They are also less disapproving of yelling at misbehaving students and embarrassing them than are elementary teachers. Possible explanations for these differences are examined later in the chapter.

In summarizing preferred teacher discipline, it can be seen that the views of teachers and students are very similar. Both appear to support the concept of an interventional teacher having clear rules (with some student input into their definition). According to the data, teachers should provide warnings or explanations based on disruption to learning and to a lesser extent teaching, recognition of appropriate behavior, and punishment for misbehaving students only (primarily catch-up work, social isolation, and detention). Then they should consistently and calmly follow through, but in doing so minimize embarrassment of students. Finally, counseling is strongly supported by teachers and students (when the latter were provided an opportunity to comment).

In interpreting these findings it is useful to briefly refer to a theory of power developed by French and Raven (1959). This analysis of power in relationships continues to provide a valuable framework for those examining classroom discipline (Tauber, 1999). In dealing with the misbehavior of students, teachers may knowingly or unknowingly draw upon five kinds of power (Tauber, 1999). The first is Coercive power. It is the power a teacher has over a student that comes from the student's desire to avoid punishment associated with inappropriate classroom behavior. The second is Reward power. Teachers who provide desired recognitions and rewards for appropriate behavior have such power. The third, Legitimate power, is the power that is inherent in the role occupied by teachers. It is bestowed on them by society, coming with the position they occupy. The fourth is Referent or relationship power. This is the power that students give to teachers whose relationships they value. It stems from respect for, or liking of, the teacher. Teachers with Referent power are trusted by students, as friends are trusted. The fifth and final power, Expert power, stems from students' belief that the teacher has the ability to pass on important knowledge and skills, and they will gain something valuable if they cooperate.

According to the students' preferences for discipline strategies reported previously, they appear to attribute Legitimate power to teachers, in that they expect them to take charge of student behavior. The presence of clear, fully explained rules, which form the basis for teachers to make demands and follow through if students fail to comply, supports such an argument. Teachers should use Coercive power in the form of logical or reasonable consequences. Students also support the isolation of students who misbehave but want to minimize the likelihood of emotional discomfort. This expressed need for calm, reasonable teachers provides evidence of the relevance of Referent power. Further support for Referent power relates to the expressed
desire by teachers for students to have a voice, both individually and as a class group. It is interesting to note that compared to elementary teachers, secondary teachers appear to provide less support for both Referent and Reward power while giving greater emphasis to Legitimate and Coercive power.

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS' DISCIPLINARY BEHAVIOR

In addition to investigating students' preferences for discipline, Lewis and Lovegrove (1988) also reported the results of two surveys of students' perceptions of their current teachers' disciplinary practices. The survey contained 39 disciplinary strategies in one study and a subset of 36 of these in the other. In general students report that teachers' disciplinary behavior is consistent with the way they would like it to be. Teachers are seen as very unlikely to ignore misbehavior and tend to deal with it themselves rather than enlisting the aid of parents or other teachers. They are likely to explain to misbehaving students that they, and to a lesser extent other students, are adversely affected by the misbehavior. Rules are clear but students are very unlikely to be allowed to work these out by themselves and they generally have no role in determining the sanctions to be applied to misbehaving students. Teachers are seen to generally target only the misbehaving students and not involve innocent bystanders. Although they will praise the class if all students are behaving well, individual students are not likely to receive recognition for behaving appropriately. Inappropriate behavior is met with explanations that focus on its disruptive nature and the threat of being moved within or outside the class, and detention. Teachers are seen as unlikely to use more arbitrary punishments such as yard duty, and very unlikely to make misbehaving students complete extra schoolwork or to write out multiple numbers of lines.

In more recent research, Lewis (2001) reported on teachers' classroom behavior by noting the perceptions of 592 year 6 (elementary) students and 2,938 (secondary) students from years 7, 9, and 11. In this study the 39 survey items describing teachers' disciplinary behavior provide measures of the extent of usage of six discipline strategies. The first strategy indicates the extent to which teachers recognized the appropriate behavior of individual students or the class (e.g., rewards individual students who behave properly). The second provides a measure of the frequency with which teachers punished students who misbehaved, increasing the level of punishment if necessary (e.g., increases the level of punishment if a misbehaving student stops when told, but then does it again). Third, respondents reported on whether the teacher talked with students to discuss the impact of their behavior on others, and negotiated with students on a one-to-one basis (e.g., gets students to change the way they behave by helping them understand how their behavior affects others). The fourth strategy focused on the extent to which the teacher involved students in classroom discipline decision-making (e.g., organizes the class to work out the rules for good behavior). The fifth strategy showed whether the teacher hinted at, and gave nondirectional descriptions of, unacceptable behavior (e.g., describes what students are doing wrong, and expects them to stop). And the final strategy comprised the use of aggressive strategies (e.g., yells angrily at students who misbehave).

Elementary students report that their teachers very frequently hint that there is a problem when students misbehave, allow students to have input into the definition of classroom rules, and praise and reward both individuals and the class when students behave appropriately. They are seen to frequently discuss with students the impact their misbehavior has on others (in a bid to have them change the way they behave), and punish students who misbehave, increasing the level of consequence if students argue or repeat the misbehavior. Rarely are elementary teachers perceived to act aggressively by humiliating students or acting unfairly.
### TABLE 46.1
Aggression Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Nearly Always</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>A Lot of the Time</th>
<th>Some of the Time</th>
<th>Hardly Ever</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elementary Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yells angrily at students who misbehave</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes sarcastic comments to students who misbehave</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeps the class in because some students misbehave</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puts down students who misbehave</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yells angrily at students who misbehave</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes sarcastic comments to students who misbehave</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeps the class in because some students misbehave</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puts down students who misbehave</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In contrast, secondary teachers are seen as less likely to use all strategies apart from punishment and aggression. They appear to frequently hint and punish, only sometimes recognize appropriate behavior and have discussions with students, and hardly ever involve students in decision making or act aggressively against them. Nevertheless, as reported by Lewis (2001, p. 312), “both primary and secondary teachers are seen, at least sometimes, to yell angrily at students who misbehave and to keep a class in because some students misbehave.” To investigate further the extent of perceived teacher aggression, data were examined for some of the individual items composing the aggression scale. Table 46.1 reports the data for the four most commonly reported items.

Inspection of the data in Table 46.1 shows that 62% of secondary students and 68% of elementary students report that their teachers at least sometimes yell in anger at students who misbehave. In addition, 42% of secondary and 35% of elementary respondents report that their teachers at least sometimes use sarcasm, and 30% and 19%, respectively, report the use of put-downs. Finally, 45% and 60% of secondary and elementary teachers, respectively, are seen to at least sometimes keep the class in because some students misbehave. These figures are substantial and a cause for concern.

**TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS’ DISCIPLINARY BEHAVIOR**

Students are not the only ones to have reported on teachers’ classroom disciplinary behavior. Australian teachers’ perceptions of the strategies they use to discipline students in classrooms have also been extensively investigated. For example, Oswald et al. (1997) reported on the responses of a comprehensive sample of approximately 3,400 South Australian teachers asked
to indicate which discipline strategies they used to deal with student misbehavior. The most commonly used strategies are reported to be reasoning with students, in and out of class, and having discussions with the class. Almost half of the teachers surveyed stated that they used these strategies often. In addition, there was a range of more interventional strategies used less frequently, yet still often enough to be common. These include verbal reprimand, sending a student out of class, setting extra work, removing privileges, giving detention, or involving the students' parents. Compared to elementary teachers, secondary teachers were noticeably less likely to reason and discuss issues with students, even though these were still their most commonly used strategies (Oswald et al., 1997).

As indicated previously, students' data from 3,430 students in 37 schools in Victoria have recently been published (Lewis, 2001). In that study, the views of approximately 500 teachers were also collected regarding discipline in 35 of these schools. These views are now considered. The number of teachers completing the survey ranged from 1 to 17 in the 19 elementary schools and from 1 to 53 in the 18 secondary schools. This was partly because some schools distributed copies of the questionnaire to all teachers whereas in others only the teacher responsible for coordinating the distribution of questionnaires to students completed a teacher survey. In total, 145 elementary and 363 secondary teachers completed questionnaires. The survey provided data on the same 39 disciplinary strategies that were given to students (refer to Lewis & Lovegrove, 1988). Each item required a response on a 6-point scale to indicate how frequently the teacher used the particular discipline technique "when trying to deal with misbehavior." The response alternatives provided—Nearly Always, Most of the Time, A Lot of the Time, Some of the Time, Hardly Ever, and Never—were coded 6 to 1, respectively. For purposes of comparability with the students' results, data for scales comprising between two and six items will be reported.

Table 46.2 reports for each scale the average of all respective item means, and where applicable, the average standard deviation of these items, Cronbach Alpha coefficient of internal consistency, and the number of scale items. In addition, for each measure, the elementary teachers' reports are compared to those of teachers in secondary schools using t tests for independent means. Therefore t and p values are also reported. Because with large sample sizes even small differences are statistically significant, a conservative level of statistical significance will be used (p < .001). As can be seen from the Cronbach alpha coefficients in Table 46.2, the reliability of each scale was acceptable although two were modest. One of these however (Involvement) contained only two items.
In general, elementary teachers’ perceptions are quite similar to those of their students. They report very frequent recognition and reward of appropriate behavior, discussion with students and hinting, and frequent student involvement in decision making. They punish only a little more often than sometimes and hardly ever become aggressive. As can be seen by inspection of the t values in Table 46.2, the most noticeable differences between elementary and secondary teachers occur for student involvement, recognition and reward for good behavior, discussion with students aimed at exploring their reason for behaving inappropriately, and nondirective hints. There is also a small but significant difference in the perceived usage of aggression, which is seen as more likely to occur in secondary schools. These differences in teachers’ perceptions correspond closely with those reported for elementary and secondary students. It is noticeable that although there is substantial agreement between elementary students’ and teachers’ perceptions of classroom disciplinary behavior, the same cannot be said for teachers and students in secondary schools. Compared to the students, secondary teachers report a more “user-friendly” style consisting of greater use of discussion and reward, and less punishment.

As can be seen in Table 46.2, the mean score for the six aggression items indicated that these strategies were reported as used less frequently than “hardly ever” by teachers. Similar to the students’ responses however, inspection of individual item means shows that 36% of teachers state that they at least sometimes yell in anger at misbehaving students and 22% at least sometimes keep a class in when only some students misbehave. These proportions are substantial.

In summary, a comparison of preferred and practiced discipline appears to show that elementary teachers are generally acting consistently with the ideals of both students and teachers in the area of classroom discipline. Secondary teachers also approximate the ideal identified by teachers and students, but with three areas of contention. First, it appears that, according to students, they fail to provide sufficient recognition for appropriate behavior, particularly to individual students. This observation has been highlighted in an earlier study that examined the disciplinary behavior of teachers rated by students as the best they had experienced in their 9 years of schooling (Lewis et al., 1991): “Students indicate that good teachers should praise kids when they behave properly but in this case the best teachers are actually seen to avoid doing so” (p. 102). Second, secondary teachers should provide more of a voice for students, both individually and collectively, for example, in determining expectations for appropriate behavior in class and, to a lesser extent, choice of sanctions. Finally, to act more in accord with perceptions of best practice, teachers should reduce their use of group punishments and loss of temper when handling misbehavior in classrooms. In terms of the power analysis discussed earlier, teacher aggression can be seen to contribute toward increasing their Coercive and Legitimate power but reducing their Referent power. To act more in accord with a conception of perceived best practice, secondary teachers would need to increase their Reward and Referent power, while reducing their use of the more extreme forms of Coercive and Legitimate power.

**Styles of Discipline**

In attempting to identify the real and perceived ideal classroom discipline behavior of teachers it is possible to examine the results of a number of studies that have considered styles of discipline rather than discipline strategies. For example, as part of a large-scale qualitative investigation into South Australian teachers’ views on classroom discipline, Johnson and Whittington (1994) identified four distinct styles of discipline. The first, the Traditional style, was teacher-in-charge. It primarily consisted of establishing clear rules and a number of escalating punishments for noncompliance. The second was called Liberal-Progressive and promoted social equality, mutual respect, shared responsibility, cooperation, and self-discipline. The third style involved a Socially Critical Orientation, and as such saw student disruption as reasonable resistance to
oppression. The last style considered was Laissez-faire, which derived from the free-choice movement within schooling. After examining transcripts of interviews with teachers totaling 50,000 words, Johnson and Whitington concluded:

The vast majority of teachers held either traditional or liberal progressive views of school discipline. For secondary teachers (Yrs 8-12), roughly 70% embraced mainly traditional views of discipline while about a quarter held liberal progressive views. The reverse was true at the elementary level (Yrs 3-7) with approximately two-thirds of teachers embracing liberal progressive views and 30% holding traditional views. At the junior elementary level (Reception, Yr 1 & Yr 2), an overwhelming majority of about 90% of teachers held liberal progressive views compared with about 10% who held traditional views. (p. 271)

Research conducted by Lewis (1999a) also examined perceptions of three theoretical styles of teacher discipline. In these studies the styles of discipline were called Control, Management, and Influence, two of which align somewhat closely with those of Johnson and Whitington. The first of these three styles is Control and it corresponds to Johnson and Whitington’s Traditional style, with the addition of recognition for appropriate behavior. The remaining two, Group Management and Influence, both reside within Johnson and Whitington’s Liberal Progressive model.

In Group Management it is the teacher and students as a group who are responsible for the definition of norms and the securing of prosocial behavior. When applying this style, teachers organize students to make their own decisions. They choose to allow power to reside with the students and themselves as a group, where all have equal rights to contribute toward the determination of behavior standards. Consequently, rules, and consequences for inappropriate behavior, are defined at classroom meetings during which the teacher is a group leader, but chooses not to use any more power to decide classroom policy than any other group member. Once policy is established, the teacher carries it out. The ultimate sanction in the group management style is to be excluded from the group until one is willing to behave appropriately.

The style of Influence is one that encourages students to become responsible for their own behavior. It is the teachers’ role to influence each student so that he or she decides to behave well. They encourage students to learn their own way of behaving with minimum adult control and negotiate with students on a one-to-one basis, acting as an advisor or consultant. They are careful however not to force their views on students. Whenever possible teachers allow students to experience the natural consequences of their behavior, so that they can choose to modify the way they behave.

In 1991, Lewis, Lovegrove, and Burman reported three studies that note teachers’ levels of support for these styles of discipline, and in one of these studies, their perceptions regarding the extent to which they are implementing them. In one study 74 elementary and 171 secondary teachers indicated the suitability of each of the styles for 30 distinct classroom management issues such as damage to school property, completion of homework, physical aggression to other students, talking while the teacher is instructing the class, and so on. The data did not permit measurement of the levels of support for each style but did allow an indication of the extent to which teachers wished to include the voices of students in decision making. The results confirmed findings discussed earlier, in that “Elementary teachers wish to include their grade 4-6 students in decision-making about classroom behavior, to a greater extent than secondary teachers wish to involve year 7-9 students” (Lewis et al., 1999, p. 280). In a second investigation 427 elementary and 556 secondary teachers responded to an 18-item questionnaire designed to assess their level of support for each of the three discipline styles described earlier, namely, Control, Group Management, and Influence. Although there were significant gender and year level effects reported, the general findings show that teachers see as most ideal a style of...
discipline that facilitates a sharing of decision making between teacher and students. They provide only a little less support for a style based on clear rules together with recognition for appropriate behavior and punishments for misbehavior. Finally, they fail to support a discipline style that encourages students to independently manage their own behavior. The final study of discipline styles by Lewis (1999a) notes not only the level of teacher support for each of the three discipline styles but also the extent of their perceived usage. Inspection of 294 secondary teachers' preferred styles shows that between 57% and 66% of respondents wish to use each of the styles at least half of the time. However there is slight preference for control in that 36% of teachers wish to implement this style at least most of the time compared to 28% and 26%, respectively, for Influence and Group Management.

When it comes to practice rather than preference, Lewis (1999a) stated: “Teachers report that they are generally using an approach to discipline based on clear rules, punishment for misbehavior, and recognition and reward for good behavior. Seventy three percent of respondents were claiming to use a style of Control at least most of the time compared to 7 percent and 10 percent for the styles of Group management and Influence respectively.” (pp. 6-7)

These results appear remarkably consistent with the findings of Johnson and Whittington quoted earlier. In summary the data for preferred styles and strategies appear consistent across studies and over time. Preferences are for an interventional, assertive teacher who allows students a communal voice when it comes to rule definition and a private voice when it comes to discussing their misbehavior in a bid to have them plan for a better future. Nevertheless elementary and secondary teachers vary in their emphasis. Whereas elementary teachers stress more heavily student involvement, secondary teachers emphasize punishment. In terms of current practice, the data for styles support the analysis of strategies conducted previously in showing that teacher practice is more assertive and less inclusive of students' voices than is preferred practice. Secondary teachers in particular report at most only a slight preference for Control in ideal terms, but in practice they place an overwhelming emphasis on it. In summary, the basis of the discipline implemented by teachers appears to be a combination of Referent, Reward, Legitimate, and Coercive power, with elementary teachers emphasizing the first two powers, and secondary teachers the latter two. Overall, when compared to the teachers' idea of ideal classroom discipline, secondary teachers appear to place too much stress on Legitimate and Coercive power and not enough on Reward or Referent power.

Having established what discipline strategies are preferred and what are provided, it is of value to examine research conducted in Australia to identify the impact teachers' discipline behavior has on students. The range of outcome measures considered include student interest in the subject matter being taught, distraction from learning, attitude to the teacher, and the belief that the teacher's action was justified. All of these variables have been associated with perceptions of discipline, and the results of relevant studies shed light on why some classroom discipline strategies can be argued to be preferable to others.

THE IMPACT OF CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND RESPONSIBILITY

After examining the results of two independent studies of students' reports of their teachers' disciplinary behavior and their attitudes to the subject taught by that teacher, Lewis and Lovegrove (1988) concluded that students may become less interested in subjects taught by teachers who display anger, misjudge and punish innocent students, and do not provide warnings before issuing punishments. This may occur even though the importance attached to the subject is not affected. These results appear very consistent with those of Fisher, Fraser, and others who, in a series of studies, demonstrated that students who perceived their teachers as
admonishing and strict were those with more negative attitudes toward the subject being taught (e.g., Fisher, Henderson, & Fraser, 1997; Henderson, Fisher, & Fraser, 2000). The difficulty with correlational studies however is attributing causation. Although, as before, it is tempting to assume that teachers' unreasonable behavior causes negative student attitudes, the opposite is equally possible. Less interested students are more readily distracted and potentially distracting. Teachers dealing with such student behavior are more likely to act unreasonably. The most plausible explanation for correlations between teachers' controlling behavior and students' misbehavior and negative affect is one that involves both relationships. That is, there is a circularity to the pattern of interaction. In the words of Wubbels, Brekelmans, den Brok, and van Tartwijk, in Chapter 45 of this handbook, “The notion of circularity in the systems approach to communication highlights that someone’s behavior influences someone else and that the behavior of the second person on his or her turn influences the first” (p. 1163). In this case, teachers' coercive reactions to students' negative attitudes and behavior reinforces students' negativity.

In a comprehensive report that attempts to highlight the impact of teachers' disciplinary behavior on students, Lewis and Lovegrove (1987b) examined the results of two independent studies that focussed directly on this issue. A total of 1,065 students described their teachers' disciplinary behavior and how they felt when "kids misbehave and get disciplined by the teacher." Four reactions were identified. These were students' fear of the teacher, attitude toward (liking of) the teacher, distraction from schoolwork, and sympathy for the misbehaving student. On the basis of replicated findings, Lewis and Lovegrove noted that professed students' reactions to teacher anger, mistargeting, having unclear rules, moving students without a warning, using arbitrary sanctions, and failing to recognize appropriate behavior included distraction from schoolwork, less liking of the teacher, and more sympathy for the miscreant. The use of embarrassment and teacher anger also appeared to generate fear in students. In general there was a substantial minority of students who were adversely affected by witnessing or receiving classroom discipline. For example, 35% of respondents were more than sometimes distracted from their schoolwork as a result of disciplinary strategies being implemented. Twenty percent were made anxious to the same extent, and 42% felt less positively toward the teacher and more sympathetic toward the miscreant when teachers responded to misbehaving students. These proportions are sufficiently large to indicate cause for concern.

To further investigate the relationship between discipline strategies and students' reactions to them, the data from the students' responses in an earlier study (Lewis, 2001) were augmented by the addition of those of another 2,259 secondary students, collected in a subsequent study. These data were then submitted to additional analyses. In both studies, students were asked to report how they "feel when your teacher deals with misbehavior in class." To document students' responses, a 10-item questionnaire was adapted from the one used in the study reported earlier (Lewis & Lovegrove, 1987b) and a common 4-point response format was adopted. Some of the 10 items comprising the questionnaire required students to report how often they felt distracted by their teacher's discipline strategies (e.g., not able to get on with my work properly, put off my work). Some others focussed on how often they felt the teacher's behavior was justified (e.g., the students deserved it, it was necessary), and a third group of items assessed the students' dislike of the teacher (e.g., annoyed at the teacher, sick of the teacher picking on kids). To respond, students indicated whether they Nearly Always, Most of the Time, Some of the Time, Hardly Ever, or Never felt the way described in the questionnaire item. Responses were coded from 4 to 1, respectively. In total, data were analyzed from 592 students in grade 6, 1,713 students in years 7 or 8, 1,624 in 9 or 10, and 846 students in 11 or 12.

Table 46.3 reports the number of items in each scale (n), the scales' average item means, standard deviations of the average item means, and alpha coefficients of internal consistency.
TABLE 46.3
Reaction to Discipline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Secondary Students (N = 4183)</th>
<th>Elementary Students (N = 592)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of Items</td>
<td>Ave Item Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distracted</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Justified</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislike Teacher</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These reliability data show good internal consistency for the longer scale and although the internal consistency figures are low for the two item scales it is partly a function of small scale length. Despite some reservations, therefore, the scales were used to examine students’ reactions to the discipline provided by their teachers. In interpreting the findings it is important to note that students who observe a teacher disciplining another target student are likely to be affected by the teacher’s behavior. This ripple effect was reported by Kounin (1970) over 35 years ago.

Examination of the scale means indicates that secondary students are, on average, more than “some of the time” distracted by their teachers’ use of discipline strategies and often feel negatively toward the teacher when he or she deals with misbehavior. They are however more than sometimes of the belief that the teachers’ intervention was necessary. Elementary students report about the same level of negative affect as do the secondary students, but more distraction, even though they are more likely to see the teacher’s interventions as justified. It is of interest to recall that in the Lewis and Lovegrove (1987b) study, which examined year 9 students’ reaction to discipline, the proportions of students “more than sometimes” distracted, seeing the teachers’ behavior as unjustified, and feeling negative toward the teacher were 35%, 42%, and 42%, respectively. The corresponding figures for the same year level, over 15 years later, are 39%, 49%, and 32%. For elementary students the proportions are 48%, 51%, and 38%, respectively. Consequently there does not appear to be a great deal of difference in secondary students’ reaction to discipline over time, although in more recent times, secondary teachers appear less likely to be thought of more negatively for implementing disciplinary strategies. In general these proportions are very substantial and indicate that many students are adversely affected by witnessing or experiencing their teacher’s handling of students’ misbehavior in their classrooms.

To allow examination of the magnitude of the relationship between specific discipline strategies perceived by students, and their reactions to that teacher’s disciplinary style, Tables 46.4 and 46.5 below report the relevant correlations. In attempting to interpret these correlations there was concern about the extent to which the way students were treated could color not only their reactions to a teacher but also their perceptions of the strategies used by that teacher. If this “halo effect” were substantial, then there would be serious questions associated with the validity of their reports. To consider such a possibility, students’ responses to two additional questions on the survey were analyzed. These questions focused on levels of student misbehavior. The first stated, “How often do you misbehave in this teacher’s class?” and the second, “How many of the students in your class misbehave in this teacher’s lessons?” For both questions, students responded by selecting one of four alternatives. For the former question the alternatives were Almost Never, Only a Little, Sometimes, and Often. For the latter they were
TABLE 46.4
Associations Between Discipline Strategies and Secondary Students' Reaction to Discipline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Punishment</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Recognition</th>
<th>Aggression</th>
<th>Involvement</th>
<th>Hinting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dislike Teacher</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td>-.26</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distracted</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Action Justified</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of St’s Misbehaving</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 46.5
Associations Between Discipline Strategies and Elementary Students’ Reaction to Discipline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Punishment</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Recognition</th>
<th>Aggression</th>
<th>Involvement</th>
<th>Hinting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dislike Teacher</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distracted</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Action Justified</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of St’s Misbehaving</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hardly Any or None, Some, Many, and Nearly All. In both cases the responses were coded from 1 to 4, respectively.

To determine the extent to which a student’s personal treatment influenced the treatment he or she said was received by the entire class, these two sets of answers were cross-tabulated. It was observed that the sets of responses correlated at 0.29 because of a tendency for students who were more likely to misbehavior being more likely to perceive misbehavior in their classmates. This correlation could be due to the increased likelihood that there is more misbehavior in the classes in which misbehaving students are situated, or it may be the result of a “halo effect.” Nevertheless, 73% of the 2,730 students who reported misbehavior Almost Never, or at most, Only a Little, still perceived Many or Nearly All students in their class as misbehaving. This indicates that the reports of the majority of students regarding teachers’ discipline in classes were not related to their own treatment for misbehavior but were probably a reflection of the way they saw their misbehaving classmates treated. In summary, these data provide support for the validity of use of students’ perceptions of their teachers’ classroom discipline strategies.

The first three rows of data in Tables 46.4 and 46.5 record the relationships between discipline strategies and student reaction for both elementary and secondary teachers, respectively. Because the sample sizes were large, some correlations less than 0.1 were still statistically significant (p < .001). However, only correlations 0.15 or greater were considered sufficiently substantial to be worthy of comment. Inspection of these data indicates that teachers who use more punishment more often are seen as more distracting when they respond to misbehavior. Punishment also associates with secondary students’ dislike of the teacher. For all students, Aggression has a reasonably strong association with distraction and dislike of the teacher. Aggression also relates to students’ belief that the teachers’ disciplinary actions are unjustified. The use of recognitions and the conduct of discussions with students associates with a more positive reaction toward the teacher and a greater belief that the teacher’s interventions are necessary. For secondary students only, teacher recognition and discussion are also related to less distraction.
Finally, greater use of both hinting and the involvement of students in decision-making surrounding classroom discipline relates to a stronger belief that the discipline actions taken by the teacher are warranted. For elementary students, greater use of these two strategies is also associated with a more positive attitude to the teacher. These strategies are not significantly associated with either attitude to teacher or distraction. The results for teacher aggression and recognition of appropriate behavior generally replicate the findings reported earlier.

As a consequence of the previous analysis it may be argued that application of Reward and Referent power generally results in less distraction when teachers deal with misbehavior, and more trust and liking of the teacher. Teachers who rely more on the use of Coercive power on the other hand appear to be more likely to distract their students when they handle misbehavior in classrooms and also generate more negativity toward them in secondary schools.

Having established teachers' general patterns of classroom discipline, it was of interest to examine how they discipline classes in which more children misbehave. Consequently, the bottom rows of Tables 46.4 and 46.5 record, for elementary and secondary students, respectively, the correlations between the proportions of students misbehaving in a class and the extent of usage of the various disciplinary strategies. Only two correlations exceeded 0.13. For all students, Aggression correlated significantly with the perceived misbehavior of the class. These data may indicate that teacher aggression promotes student misbehavior, teachers react aggressively when more students misbehave, or that there is circularity of interaction and both of these explanations apply.

Even though it was stated earlier that, in general, correlations less than 0.1 are statistically significant but not of importance, there are four correlations between disciplinary strategies and classroom misbehavior that defy this generalization. The magnitude of these correlations is small enough that they appear unimportant. However, that they are not large and not positive is in itself very important. As indicated before, the last rows of correlations in Tables 46.4 and 46.5 show that the number of students who misbehave in a class correlates less than 0.1 with both Discussion and Recognition in both elementary and secondary schools. Consequently it can be argued that teachers fail to provide more recognition and discussion for misbehaving students in classes where one would assume there is greater need for these powers, as there is more misbehavior occurring.

If teachers are adapting their choice of disciplinary strategies to their clientele, one might have hypothesized that with classes of students more prone to misbehavior, teachers would have found more need for generating Reward power by recognizing responsible behavior, to increase its likelihood, just as they have found more need for Coercive power comprising punishment and aggressive responses. As indicated before, however, they not only fail to provide more recognition for appropriate behavior, they also fail to generate the Referent power that can arise from having productive discussions with misbehaving students. It is acknowledged that not all discussions teachers have with misbehaving students result in better relationships, because some teachers talk at, or to, them. However, those discussions that allow students' views and feelings to be heard, while still highlighting the damaging impact their misbehavior has on themselves and on other students, should increase the teacher's Referent power considerably.

**DISCUSSION**

From the summary of the research reviewed in this chapter, it can be argued that elementary teachers in Australia generally appear to implement their ideas of best discipline practice, in that they desire to use and are generally seen to implement a calm style of discipline characterized by the use of clear expectations for student behavior, formed in part by the students themselves. They then hint at, explain to, and discuss with students the need for appropriate behavior.
Finally, they provide recognition to those students behaving appropriately, and calmly punish misbehaving students.

To some extent, secondary teachers also act in accordance with their own best intentions, by characteristically explaining, warning, and providing punishments for misbehavior. There are however a number of noticeable exceptions. Secondary students report substantially less access to recognition of appropriate behavior, and less discussion with teachers about misbehavior than is desired. Both elementary and secondary students also note the likelihood of too many teachers getting angry with misbehaving students and yelling at them, or punishing innocent students by keeping classes in for detention.

In trying to understand these findings, it is of value to briefly contemplate four categories of students who may inhabit classrooms. The first (Category A) contains children who generally respond appropriately to the curriculum and undertake whatever work they are given by the teacher. These children usually seem to assume that the work is important enough to attempt, and easy enough to be mastered. Such students respond to hints such as a teacher pausing, moving closer, inspecting the child's work, or saying that there is a problem. The second group of students (Category B) is less interested in the work or less confident of their ability to complete it. Consequently they are occasionally distracted and sometimes distracting. The behavior of these children can often be controlled via the judicious use of rewards and punishment. The third group of students (Category C) is sufficiently difficult to warrant sending them out of the classroom. Either they resist the teacher's attempts to apply punishment, ignore the rewards, or in some other way fail to submit to the authority of the teacher. However this happens only occasionally. When it does, the teacher provides an opportunity for a "chat." It is during this discussion that the teacher helps the student become aware of the unreasonable impact his or her behavior has on the other students. Once the child acknowledges that his or her behavior is a problem, a plan or contract is developed for avoiding repetition of such unreasonable behavior in the future. Although one chat will normally not be sufficient, after a number of these chats students in Group C decide to act more appropriately. The final group of students (Category D) is those who repeatedly misbehave despite the use of all of the previous strategies.

The studies reviewed in this chapter appear to indicate that secondary teachers are very frequently using hints and assertive strategies to respond to classroom misbehavior. This is probably because such strategies meet the needs of students in Categories A and B and because teachers on average report that only some of their students misbehave, the students in Categories A and B form the majority of students in most classrooms. Although they could use one-on-one discussions before giving out punishments such as isolation and detention, it appears that this kind of response to misbehavior may only be reserved for students who are unwilling to respond to the teacher's Legitimate power, Coercive power, or Reward power although it needs to be noted that Reward power is not readily offered to individual students. It may be argued that it is only after the application of Legitimate and Reward power is ignored or resisted, that teachers adopt strategies based primarily on Referent power, and try to change students from the inside out rather than from the outside in.

In contrast, elementary teachers appear to rely more heavily on Referent and Reward power than Coercive, and could be argued to value more highly their relationship with students. The greater likelihood for secondary teachers to be characterized by less support for, and exercise of, Referent and Reward power has been recently noted by Hargreaves (2000). After analysis of interviews with over 50 teachers, he stated:

Many elementary (primary) teachers secure their psychic rewards by establishing close emotional bonds or emotional understanding with their students as a foundation for teaching and learning.
Secondary school teachers often feel not known by their students; and their emotional connections with them feel more distant than is true for their elementary colleagues. (p. 821)

The most likely explanation for elementary teachers' greater reliance on Referent power relates to differences in how elementary and secondary schools are organized. Teachers in elementary schools are responsible for approximately 25 to 30 children, and are with them for most of the day. In such settings teachers and students may develop strong loyalties, which facilitate the effectiveness of Referent power. In contrast, secondary teachers may teach up to 200 students in a day, seeing groups of 20 to 25 for periods of less than an hour. Consequently in each respective setting, teachers' choice of techniques may be strongly influenced by the characteristics of the students they teach and the way schooling is organized.

A second explanation, not unrelated to the first, is that teachers in secondary schools may see themselves as teachers of information and classes rather than teachers of individual children. This inference appears consistent with the outcome of an analysis of almost 200 elementary and 100 secondary schools' proposed codes of conduct for student behavior (Lewis, 1999b):

These findings would indicate a stereotypical distinction between primary (elementary) and secondary schools. The former appear to focus on involving, supporting and educating the whole child while the latter emphasise more surveillance and punishments to secure the establishment of the order necessary to facilitate the learning of school subjects. (p. 57)

As stated earlier, one purpose of classroom discipline is to establish order to permit teachers to instruct students in the formal curriculum of the school (e.g., reading, writing, and arithmetic). A second purpose is to provide an appropriate educational experience to shape the students' values and to teach them about the rights of individuals, particularly individuals in conflict. The data reviewed in this chapter tend to suggest that secondary teachers may be providing more emphasis to the former than the latter. Such an emphasis may already be evident during teacher training according to Wilson and Cameron (1996), who argued that teachers in training move from a very caring perspective to a more managerial outlook. In their analysis of the journals of teachers in training, these authors noted that first-year student teachers are concerned with notions of relating to and understanding their students. However, by third year, they see their students less as people and more as learners.

With regard to the impact of teachers' disciplinary strategies, it is clear from the analyses presented earlier that in both elementary and secondary schools, teacher aggression and, to a lesser extent, punishment are ineffective in fostering positive student affect and behavior. In contrast Hinting, Discussions, Recognition, and Involvement may be helpful in this regard. Yet, more difficult students generally experience more of the former but no more of the latter. It is not surprising that students who are subject to, or witness, more teacher aggression, or even escalating punishment in the face of resistance, may react negatively toward the teacher, and be more distrustful of the teacher's perceived intentions, as the data in this chapter indicate.

Many senior teachers who have misbehaving students sent to them will testify that often, the student's genuinely held belief is that "The teacher hates me!" However, when a teacher provides recognition and reward for appropriate behavior (particularly for that of difficult students) he or she demonstrates that it is the student's behavior that is the focus of the disciplinary interventions and not a dislike of the child. It is reasonable to expect that such teachers are more likely to be trusted when they do need to deal with misbehavior.

Similarly, a teacher who talks to misbehaving students about his or her concern over the impact their behavior has on other students directly challenges the miscreants' hypothesis that they, not the behavior, are the target of the disciplinary intervention. Consequently it is to be expected that more frequent use of discussions would result in a more positive student affect.
That being the case, it is problematic to note that teachers dealing with less responsible students are not more likely (and in some cases are less likely) to be using productive power such as Reward and Referent power manifested in strategies such as Hinting, Discussing, Recognizing, and Involving. It is equally problematic to see an increased use of Coercive power in the form of Aggression and Punishment, given that they are at best of limited usefulness, and at worst counterproductive in terms of the students' attitude to the teacher, their concentration on their work, and their evaluation of the need for teacher intervention.

If teachers are reacting to the level of responsibility displayed by students, it is possible that when more students misbehave, teachers may become overwhelmed by the level of misbehavior and consequently frustrated. Teachers with insufficient power in the classroom may feel confronted by their own lack of ability to ensure that all students are learning and are respectful of rights. According to the levels of aggression reported earlier, they may even become angry and hostile toward less responsible students. The emotionality in teachers' responses may not only be related to the number of students misbehaving but could also be influenced by the perceived severity of the misbehavior. For example, according to one of the teachers interviewed by Hargreaves (2000), commenting on a 5-year-old boy who refused demands to go to the principal, "You can't help but get angry and agitated when those kinds of things happen" (p. 819). Angry or upset teachers, as argued by Glasser (1997), may not be interested in being reasonable toward unreasonable and disrespectful students. They therefore may find it unpalatable to recognize difficult students when they act appropriately. Rewarding "Neanderthals" for being normal may not come naturally. Similarly they may find it unpleasant and unproductive to spend time letting such students tell their side of events, trying to get them to acknowledge that their behavior is unfair and needs to change.

Possibly because of teachers' nonproductive responses to these more difficult students, approximately one third of the students in Australian classrooms appear more than sometimes "distracted" when their teacher deals with misbehavior. As a result of witnessing, or being the target of, such a disciplinary response, many also see the teacher's behavior as unjustified and feel more negatively toward the teacher. The proportion of students affected is large enough to be of concern. If teachers were more aware of the negative impact their disciplinary behavior has on students' concentration on their schoolwork they might rate their concern about misbehavior and classroom discipline as higher than moderate.

There are other reasons to be concerned over teachers' relative unwillingness to use empowering strategies, such as Discussion and Involvement, with more difficult students. These generally relate to the educational purpose of classroom discipline discussed earlier. First, a number of experienced educators recommend these strategies as the only effective way of producing responsible students (Metzger, 2002; Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2000; Ryan & Patrick, 2001). As stated by Pastor (2002), when determining which discipline strategies are most desirable, we need to note that

When we separate our approach to discipline from our principles, we influence the ethical tone of the school community. Valuing good character and seeking the development of personal responsibility determine the school's response to discipline problems. Discipline is not primarily a matter of keeping things under control by making choices for students...it is a matter of helping students learn to make good choices and be responsible for those choices. (p. 657)

In discussing the alternatives for discipline, Maehr and Midgeley (1991) made a similar point, highlighting the limitations of Coercive power, in comparison to Referent power: "Discipline procedures can reflect sheer force or attempts to develop critical thinking about implications of one's behavior" (p. 412).

Metzger (2002, p. 657), in supporting a recommendation for more inclusion of students' voices, focused on the relevance of discipline to the development of democratic citizens when
she stated, “As we seek to prepare children to be productive citizens of a democracy, teaching them to understand and exercise their choices and voices becomes paramount.”

Not only is the need to provide strategies that involve students recommended by experienced educators, so is the need to avoid aggressive disciplinary strategies. For example, the two most important pieces of advice offered by Metzger (2002) to teachers trying to ensure the likelihood that students will remain motivated to behave responsibly are first, don’t escalate, deescalate! Second, let students save face. Clearly both of these processes, which would generate Referent power, are incompatible with an aggressive teacher response to misbehavior, and may also be at variance with escalating punishment in the face of resistance (especially for the more difficult children).

A second reason to ensure teachers minimize the use of aggressive responses toward students is the need to provide an appropriate model for children. For example, according to Fenstermacher (2001), the best way to create responsible or mannered students is to ensure that they are around responsible teachers: “The manner of a teacher takes on particular importance, insofar as it serves as a model for the students . . . as something the student will see and believe proper, or imitate, or accept as a standard for how things will be” (p. 644).

Consequently, in discussing the success of a character education program (Community of Caring), Jones and Stoodley (1999) noted, “Asking staff members to examine their own actions and their own role modeling is what makes the program work” (p. 45).

The final implication of this study relates to an observation by Roesser et al. (2000), commenting on how to facilitate the likelihood of teachers’ increasing their use of Referent power while decreasing their Coercive power, including aggressive responses, even to the most difficult of students:

Creating professional work environments where teachers feel supported by other professionals and school leaders in relation to their own needs for competence, autonomy, and quality relationships is essential to their decision to create these conditions for students. (p. 466)

It may well be that in order for teachers to increase their reliance on discipline strategies based on Referent power and decrease their use of those reflecting Coercive power they will need to experience more validation and better quality relationships with both colleagues and administration. The need for support for teachers attempting to improve the effectiveness of their professional practice is widely acknowledged (Hart et al., 1995; Punch, & Tuetteman, 1996; Rogers, 1992, 2002).

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