

Students' perception on disciplinary measures in public secondary schools in Kedah, Malaysia: A case study

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ABSTRACT

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Facing and dealing with discipline problems caused by secondary schools students probably among the most difficult and unpleasant part of teaching profession. Disciplinary measures adopted for ensuring discipline has been a very challenging encounter. School administrators and teachers have often overlooked, marginalized or even neglected the inclusion of an important component, "the student's opinion" in seeking solutions for problems pertaining to student related matters. It is only rational or rather logical to ask the most informed group that is the students themselves on what they actually think or feel regarding issues directly concerning their welfare. This study therefore, explores the perception of secondary school students on disciplinary measures imposed by the school authority. 1200 secondary school students from 24 secondary schools were purposively selected. The study findings revealed that even though majority of the students in this study perceived that some disciplinary measures imposed were unfair, unreasonable and unsuitable, interestingly, the same students perceived that those disciplinary measures will decrease their indiscipline behaviors in future. Among all the disciplinary measures imposed, counselling yielded the highest percentage of agreement that it is fair, reasonable and suitable for the students. This suggests that in order to deal with indiscipline behavior caused by the students in secondary school, counselling approach is essential.

Keywords:

Secondary school, students, disciplinary measures, perception

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1. Introduction

No doubt that students are considered as priceless assets and most essential elements in education, but on the other hand, we have to accept the fact that they sometimes become burdens on teachers and school administrators whenever they engaged in any indiscipline behavior. According to Burden [1] any behavior that threatens the conduct of teaching and learning, or the flow of academic performance in a particular context, can be defined as indiscipline behavior. Basically, indiscipline behaviors occur when a student refuses to obey rules of the classroom or school. Rules that deal with human actions will eventually be broken and require some sort of

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punishment. In 1978, via its periodical *The Malaysian Teacher*, the National Union of the Teaching profession (NUTP), for the first time highlighted the seriousness of student discipline in schools. It said, "The Education Ministry has acknowledged the seriousness of student discipline problems in schools and has called for combined efforts of both teachers and the education authorities to arrest the undesirable trends in student behavior". It added that, issues of student discipline will be given due priority; highlighting the statement by the then Director General of Malaysian Education, Datuk Haji Murad Bin Mohd. Noor, "The future development of the society depended on school discipline today!". Since the 1990s, there have been consistent reports in the Malaysian media on student deviant behavior [2-3].

Most teachers would agree that discipline problems caused by the students are probably among the most difficult and unpleasant part of teaching profession. In order to become the so called 'successful school' good discipline and behavior of students are necessity. It is absolutely necessary to direct students to exhibit acceptable attitude and behavior within and outside the school. Students involvement in indiscipline behavior is not something new in Malaysia education scenario and even in the 21st century, it is still a prevailing problem which affecting schools especially secondary schools. Students who always involve in indiscipline behavior or misconduct in secondary schools indirectly interferes the teaching and learning processes in the classroom. Classroom discipline problems can impact teachers negatively on their emotional, stress level and social wellbeing [4-5]. This behavioral problem are also thought to be a leading contributor to teachers' stress and motivation to teach [6-7]. Sometimes students' indiscipline have tormented secondary schools leading to series of unrest.

Currently, based on the news reported in the social media regarding secondary schools students' indiscipline behavior in Malaysia, we have to accept the fact that it is still one of the major problems that need serious attention [8]. In order to curb the indiscipline behavior of students particularly in secondary schools, the Ministry of Education (MOE) of Malaysia introduced the punish-based disciplinary practice, and disseminates and enforces a comprehensive set of school rules and regulations. Schools provide learners with a copy of the school rules and regulations [9]. School rules are enforced by means of a system of surveillance, penalties and punishments, which include demerit points, corporal punishment, alternative school placement, suspension and expulsion [10]. At present, the method for maintaining school discipline is prescribed in the "School Disciplinary Procedure Handbook for Headmasters and Teachers". Schools and their teachers are expected to follow the guidelines outlined in the guidelines, especially in handing out punishments to misbehaving students. We must bear in mind that indiscipline behavior among students in secondary schools is a concern to schools and parents and as well as to other students, whose education may be adversely affected. Any student who involved in indiscipline behavior must be tackled immediately and schools must tailor a suitable type of disciplinary measures and policy. Students must realize that if they refused to obey or follow rules set in the classroom or in the school, it is considered as misbehavior that required some sort of punishment. When schools effectively communicate rules, set high expectations and provided frequent feedback, the need for discipline will likely be infrequent. The disciplinary measures taken often determines its effectiveness. Even though some approaches to discipline are negative, punitive and reactive, which result in bad feelings for all parties involved, some schools are still practicing those approaches for some reasons.

Maintaining discipline in schools particularly in secondary schools is not an easy task since it goes beyond having rules and regulations, a daily routine, a code of discipline and a schedule of sanction and punishments. Whatever it takes, the bottom line is that the aim of discipline is to help the students to be well adjusted, well-cultured, well-controlled, well-behaved and useful to the society. The doctrine of school discipline is based on the concept of "loco parentis" which allows school

authorities full responsibility for students' upbringing, the right of discipline and control [10-11]. In other word, teachers indirectly given the right to punish students who break or disobey school rules. Discipline is necessary for effective management if the goals of the school are to be accomplished. In an effort to prevent and resolve students' discipline problems and ensure efficient functioning of schools and as such classrooms, there must be reasonable disciplinary policies and procedures. Disciplinary measures are therefore expected to be reasonable and properly meted out to offending students on account of the offence committed. It is expected to be moderate and commensurate with offence committed.

School administrators and teachers have often overlooked, marginalized or even neglected the inclusion of an important component, "the student's opinion" in seeking solutions for problems pertaining to student related matters [12]. It is only rational or rather logical to ask the most informed group that is the students themselves on what they actually think or feel regarding issues directly concerning their welfare [13]. Students' opinion or feedback on educational practices are often ignored or neglected due to the common assumptions that they would be in no position to provide valid information on educational matters. Opinions or views from the students themselves are essential and they must be given the chance to do so [14]. They (the students) not only have the right to be heard [15] but more importantly is their perspectives which might help contribute towards improvement in any approach related to the betterment of the students as well as the educational system. Actually, it is very important to listen to students' feeling, opinions, needs and how they look at things sometimes. When students feel their needs and aspirations are ignored they tend to develop a kind of aggression or resentment to their institution of learning and of schooling in general [12]. When their emotional and psychological investment required for engagement in their schoolwork dampens, or become meaningless altogether, students tend to disengage ending up exhibiting a variety of anti-social behavior [12]. Since students hostility and their alienation from school itself is the basic issue that needs seriously addressing, it is only sensible that their opinion are heard so that at least the authority knows what actually the truth feedback on whatever approaches they had been imposed. In relation to disciplinary measures taken by the school authority, getting to know students' opinion as individuals is encouraged [16]. The type of disciplinary measures or punishments preferred by students whenever they are being caught for indiscipline behavior may be different among students from different setting especially in Malaysian context. Therefore, this research paper identifies students' perception of the type of disciplinary measures imposed when they are being caught under serious indiscipline behavior, moderate indiscipline behavior, and minor indiscipline behavior. Hence, the paper also determine students' perception of the seriousness of indiscipline behavior/act in secondary school and identify students' perception on the type of disciplinary measures imposed that will decrease indiscipline behavior in the future.

1.1 Category of Indiscipline Behavior in Malaysian Secondary Schools

Even though Malaysian schools tend to be punitive in nature when come to disciplinary measures, basically there are two main aims for the implementation of discipline in schools. The first aim relates to safety of the school community, i.e. students and teachers. The second aim is to provide a conducive learning environment that can ensure effective teaching and learning. In this respect, teachers and school principals are to play a greater leadership role. This is because effective behavioral management either directly or indirectly paves the way for better academic success in schools [17-18].

Based on Malaysian Education (School Disciplines) Regulations 1959, under the Education Ordinance 1957, indiscipline behavior or disciplinary problems in school can be categorized into three

types; minor disciplinary problems, moderate disciplinary problems, and serious disciplinary problems. Among indiscipline behaviors that are considered as minor disciplinary problems are playing in or around restricted area (e.g. classroom, corridor, science laboratory), keeping long nails and hair, using or taking out any school property without permission, leaving the classroom without permission, being at the school canteen without permission especially during teaching and learning session, wearing jewelry or beauty accessories, not wearing a full school uniform, display disruptive behaviors in the classroom (e.g. making noises, disrupting teacher, coming in late into the classroom), coming late to school with no solid reason, and any other similar misconducts which falls under this category (normally decided by the Disciplinary Board of the school). Disciplinary measures taken are (i) warning, (ii) issuing letters to inform parents regarding students' indiscipline behaviors, and (iii) counselling sessions. For moderate disciplinary problems such as misuse of electrical equipment and electrical supply without permission, leaving school without permission, absent from any formal school occasion, disrespectful acts towards school, state, and national anthems and flags, attending school with fancy and colorful/dyed hair, shaving eyebrows, vandalism, drawing tattoo, and committing any minor misconducts more than three times, the disciplinary measures taken would be (i) issuing letters to inform parents regarding students indiscipline behaviors in this category, (ii) counselling sessions, (iii) warning letters, (iv) canning, and (v) suspension. Indiscipline behavior such as taking, possessing, distributing and being involved directly in drugs, smoking or possessing cigarette, behaving violently towards other students or teachers, murder or attempting murder, being disrespectful towards teachers or school authority, possessing and/or using weapon, consuming alcohol, bullying, involved in gangsterism, fighting, and rape, are considered as serious disciplinary problems. For any student who caught with this disciplinary problems, disciplinary measures taken would be issuing letters to inform parents as well as calling up parent/caretaker to school, contact relevant agencies/police, stern warning, canning, school suspension not exceeding 14 days, school expulsion, being brought to the court and counselling sessions.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Participants

The sample consisted of a total of 1200 secondary school students from 24 secondary schools from six administrative districts out of twelve administrative districts in the state of Kedah, Malaysia, mean age 15.13, $SD = 5.47$, and their age spanning from 14 to 17 years.

Stratified Random sampling had been used in order to select a sample of individuals from the accessible population of this study. It is often useful to combine Cluster Random sampling with the individual Random sampling (accomplished by stratified random sampling) in order to avoid a common error, whereby, a researcher randomly selecting only one cluster as a sample. Even if there was a large number of individuals within the cluster, it is the cluster that has been randomly selected, rather than individuals, and hence the researcher is not entitled to draw conclusions about the target population of such group. Using the Stratified Random sampling the researchers had selected six administrative districts (Baling, Kota Setar, Kubang Pasu, Pendang, Pokok Sena, and Sik) randomly from the population of twelve administrative districts in the state of Kedah, Malaysia. Then, the researchers randomly (Simple Random) selected 4 secondary schools from each selected district. After that 50 students from each school had been selected using Purposive Sampling techniques. The rationale behind this purposive sampling was that these students were the ones who had been caught or involved with indiscipline behavior in their respective schools. These put them in a better position to provide relevant information for the study. With the help from the school counsellors and Senior Assistants of Student Affair (PKHEM), the samples involved in this

study had been selected based on the students' disciplinary records. All the students sampled responded to and returned the questionnaire to the researchers. The returned questionnaires were vetted by the researchers to ensure that they had been responded to as required.

2.2 Instruments

The data collecting instrument for the study was the pen-and-paper questionnaire. The reasons for using it were that it gave a quick way of collecting data. It is known to be quite valid and reliable if well-constructed. It is also economical in terms of money and time spent in its usage. There was one main set of questionnaire for the students who had been selected in this study. The questionnaire was made up of four major sections. Section (a) consists of items dealing with demographic data of the students (age, gender, number of times being caught with indiscipline behavior in that year, name of indiscipline behavior they were involved with). Section (b) of the instrument contains 3 items (statements) designed to assess respondents' perceptions of the type of disciplinary measures imposed when they are being caught under serious indiscipline behavior, moderate indiscipline behavior, and minor indiscipline behavior. Section (c) consists of 27 items designed to determine students' perception of the seriousness of indiscipline behavior/act in secondary school. Section (d) of the instrument was designed to identify students' perception on the type of disciplinary measures imposed that they think will decrease their indiscipline behaviors in the future.

In order to respond to items in Section (b) of this questionnaire, students were asked to circle a response corresponding (1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3- Agree, and 4-Strongly Agree). The internal consistency was Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$, retest reliability was $.75$ ($n = 150$). In order to respond to items in Section (c) of this questionnaire, students were asked to tick (/) a response corresponding (Not Serious, Serious, and Very Serious). For Section (d) students were asked to circle a response corresponding (1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3- Agree, and 4-Strongly Agree). The internal consistency was Cronbach's $\alpha = .83$, retest reliability was $.85$ ($n = 150$).

2.3 Procedure

The instrument was administered by the researchers themselves. Because there were 24 schools involved in this study, each researcher agreed to go to 6 schools to collect the data. They went to each school after the arrangement had been made with the respected schools. With the help from the school counsellors and Senior Assistants of Student Affairs (PKHEM), the sampled students were gathered together in a designated classroom to answer the questionnaire. All the respondents (students) received oral instructions to complete the questionnaire. They were informed that the data would be used to help improve the general knowledge regarding discipline problems in secondary schools and to construct a better prevention program in the future for the betterment of the students.

Because of the full cooperation and support from the school counsellors, PKHEMs and all the selected students of this study, a total of 1200 questionnaires were smoothly administered and collected.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Students' perception of the type of disciplinary measures imposed under serious indiscipline behavior, moderate indiscipline behavior, and minor indiscipline behavior.

Based on the records provided by the school counsellors and the PKHEM, all 24 secondary schools involved in this study had imposed all the disciplinary measures listed under minor, moderate, and serious indiscipline behavior in this study. Based on the demographic data collected in this study, out of 1200 students, 85% confessed that they had involved in minor indiscipline behavior, 53% in moderate indiscipline behavior and 15% in moderate indiscipline behavior.

Under minor indiscipline behavior, when students were asked whether certain disciplinary measures imposed are fair, reasonable and suitable, Table 1 shows that more than half of them agree that warning, counselling and other alternative such as cleaning the school compound are fair, reasonable and suitable. It seems that sending or issuing letters to parents or caregivers considered as not fair, unreasonable and not suitable by the students. This indicates that most students do not want their parents or caregivers know about what they had been doing in school especially when come to discipline matters. The reason behind this could be that, the students know and do realize that their parents might/would scold them instead of supporting or discussing the matter with them. Logically, by informing the parents/caregiver just because they did some minor indiscipline behaviors could make things worse and putting ourselves in their shoes this is of course not fair, reasonable and suitable for them.

Table 1

Type of disciplinary measures imposed for *minor* indiscipline behavior are fair, reasonable and suitable

Disciplinary measures	Agree	Disagree	M	SD
Warning	1009 (84.08%)	191 (15.92%)	3.72	0.64
Issuing letters to parent/caregiver	120 (10.00%)	1080 (90.00%)	2.11	0.45
Counselling	1111 (92.58%)	89 (7.42%)	3.79	0.47
Other alternative (e.g cleaning school compound)	789 (65.75%)	411 (34.25%)	3.42	0.35

Over all Mean = 3.26 (SD = 0.57)

N = 1200

Cronbach's Alpha = .86

When come to moderate indiscipline behavior, most or more than half of the students still agree that it is fair, reasonable and suitable to give them warning letters and send them for a counselling sessions when they were caught with any indiscipline behavior under this category. Looking at Table 2, majority or more than 80% of the students caught feel that disciplinary measures such as issuing letters to parent/caregiver, canning and suspension are unfair, unreasonable, and unsuitable for them. The reason why the students do not want their parents or caregivers aware of their indiscipline behavior could be the same as mentioned above. In terms of canning the students, while most western countries have done away with corporal punishments, canning has always been legal in Malaysian schools. The Education Ordinance 1957 (amended in 1959) allows corporal punishment, such as canning to be meted out by school authorities but only to school boys. Even though the Education Ministry of Malaysia has stipulated that canning must be used only as the last resort and only the Principals themselves or Discipline Teachers, (who are empowered by the

Principals) can execute canning, it is actually can be considered as abusing the students right according to the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia [15].

In terms of school suspension, students will have or are forced to take mandatory leave as a form of punishment that can last from one day to seven days and during that period students are not allowed to attend class or go to school compound.

Table 2

Type of disciplinary measures imposed for *moderate* indiscipline behavior are fair, reasonable and suitable

Disciplinary measures	Agree	Disagree	M	SD
Warning letter	809 (67.41%)	391 (32.58%)	3.32	0.56
Issuing letters to parent/caregiver	73 (6.08%)	1127 (93.92%)	2.76	0.43
Counselling	1120 (93.33%)	80 (6.67%)	3.88	0.36
Canning	234 (19.50%)	966 (80.50%)	2.23	0.38
Suspension	19 (1.58%)	1181 (98.42%)	2.09	0.45

Over all Mean = 2.86 (SD = 0.53) N = 1200

Cronbach's Alpha = .78

Looking at Table 3, all students in this study feel that it is not fair, unreasonable, and unsuitable if the school authority expel or send them to the police should they commit any of the indiscipline behavior under serious indiscipline behavior category. Almost all of them (98%) feel that sending them to counselling session are fair, reasonable and suitable approach imposed by the school. It is not surprising that under this category, majority of the students (96%) disagree when the school issuing letter to their parents or caregivers especially under serious indiscipline behavior, as they also indicated almost the same result under minor and moderate category. Even though more than 80% of the students feel that it is not fair, unreasonable and not suitable to carry out corporal punishment upon them, surprisingly more than half of them (62%) agreed that suspension is fair, reasonable, and suitable to be imposed towards them when they are caught with serious indiscipline behavior.

Table 3

Type of disciplinary measures imposed for *serious* indiscipline behavior are fair, reasonable and suitable

Disciplinary Measures	Agree	Disagree	M	SD
Issuing letters to Parent/caregiver	47(3.92%)	1153(96.08%)	2.64	0.73
Counselling	1180(98.33%)	20(1.678%)	3.82	0.86
Canning	135(11.25%)	1065(88.75%)	2.78	0.58
Suspension	741(61.75%)	459(38.25%)	3.42	0.75
Expulsion	-	1200(100%)	3.87	0.42
Send to Police	-	1200(100%)	3.93	0.68

Over all Mean = 3.24 (SD = 0.68) N = 1200

Cronbach's Alpha = .83

3.2 Students' Perception of the Seriousness of Indiscipline Behavior/Act in secondary school

One issue that requires explanation is why students still or dare to engage in certain indiscipline behaviors, when at the same time they perceived them to be very serious offences? The opinion of the students on the extent of seriousness of indiscipline behavior in the schools involved in this study is presented in Table 4, Table 5, and Table 6.

Under the category of minor indiscipline behavior, as observed from Table 4, it is clear that more than half of the students agreed that playing in or around restricted area, keeping long nails and hair, using or taking out any school property without permission, and wearing jewelry or beauty accessories are not serious indiscipline behaviors. However, majority of them (more than 70%) perceived leaving the classroom without permission, being at the school canteen without permission especially during teaching and learning session, display disruptive behaviors in the classroom (e.g. making noises, disrupting teacher, coming in late into the classroom), and coming late to school with no solid reason as serious indiscipline behavior. While most students perceived not wearing a full school uniform as serious (57%) and very serious (36%) act of indiscipline, 7% of the students perceived this behavior as not serious.

Table 4

Students' perception of the seriousness of *minor* indiscipline behavior in the school

Indiscipline Behavior	Not Serious	Serious	Very Serious
Playing in or around restricted area.	987(82.25%)	178(14.33%)	35(3.42%)
Keeping long nails and hair.	656(54.67%)	375(31.25%)	169(14.08%)
Using or taking out any school property without permission.	993(82.75%)	156(13.00%)	51(4.24%)
Leaving the classroom without permission.	234(19.50%)	897(74.75%)	69(5.75%)
Being at the school canteen without permission especially during teaching and learning session.	89(7.42%)	998(83.17%)	113(9.41%)
Wearing jewelry or beauty accessories.	1047(87.25%)	87(7.25%)	66(5.50%)
Not wearing a full school uniform.	89(7.42%)	678(56.50%)	433(36.08%)
Display disruptive behaviors in the classroom (e.g. making noises, disrupting teacher, coming in late into the classroom).	67(5.58%)	997(83.08%)	136(11.33%)
Coming late to school with no solid reason.	120(10.00%)	909(75.75%)	171(14.25%)

Table 5

Students' perception of the seriousness of *moderate* indiscipline behavior in the School

Indiscipline Behavior	Not Serious	Serious	Very Serious
Misuse of electrical equipment and electrical supply without permission	124(10.33%)	867(72.25%)	209(17.42%)
Leaving school without permission.	997(83.08%)	134(11.17%)	69(5.75%)
Absent from any formal school occasion	1110(92.50%)	64(5.33%)	26(2.17%)
Disrespectful acts towards school, state and national anthems and flags	999(82.50%)	126(10.50%)	75(7.00%)
Attending school with fancy and dyed hair.	245(20.42%)	798(66.50%)	166(13.08%)
Vandalism.	145(12.08%)	945(78.75%)	110(9.17%)
Drawing tattoo.	542(45.17%)	558(46.50%)	100(8.33%)

Based on the demographic data collected from all the students in this study, only 15 % of them indicated that they did involve in one or two of the eleven indiscipline behaviors listed under serious indiscipline behavior category. Table 6 shows that all indiscipline behaviors listed were being

perceived as serious or very serious by the students, accept smoking and possessing cigarette. This could be among the reasons why many students were being caught smoking even though they were aware and realize that this offence is under serious indiscipline behavior. All students perceived murder or attempting murder and rape as very serious indiscipline behaviors. Majority of the students viewed taking, possessing, distributing and being involved directly in drugs, consuming alcohol, possessing and/or using weapon, bullying, and involved in gangsterism as very serious offences. More than half of the students perceived being disrespectful towards teachers or school authority and fighting as serious offences.

Table 6

Students' perception of the seriousness of *serious* indiscipline behavior in the school

Indiscipline behavior	Not Serious	Serious	Very Serious
Taking, possessing, distributing and being involved directly in drugs	-	256(21.33%)	944(78.67%)
Smoking or possessing cigarette	1005(83.75%)	120(10.00%)	75(6.25%)
Consuming alcohol	-	332(27.67%)	868(72.33%)
Behaving violently towards other students or teachers	-	567(47.25%)	633(52.75%)
Murder or attempting murder	-	-	1200(100%)
Being disrespectful towards teachers or school authority	-	689(57.42%)	511(42.58%)
Possessing and/or using weapon	-	67(5.58%)	1133(94.42%)
Bullying	-	345(28.75%)	855(71.25%)
Fighting	-	768(64.00%)	432(36.00%)
Involved in gangsterism	-	277(23.08%)	923(76.92%)
Rape	-	-	1200(100%)

3.3 Students' Perception of Type of Disciplinary Measures that will Decrease Indiscipline Behavior in the Future

When disciplinary measures imposed on students based on indiscipline behaviors that they have committed, normally school administrators and teachers seldom or never asked the students about whether those measures can actually decrease their indiscipline behaviors. Based on Table 7, out of nine disciplinary measures imposed in the schools involved in this study, about six or 66% were perceived will decrease students indiscipline behavior in the future. More than half (80%) of the students agreed that all six disciplinary measures (Issuing letters to parent/caregiver, counselling, other alternative, suspension, expulsion, and send to Police) will decrease their indiscipline behaviors in the future. The discipline measure that attracted significantly high percentage of students disagreement that it will decrease their indiscipline behavior in future is canning which shows 90.17%. This stems from the revelation that majority of the same students agreed that this kind of punishment as unfair, unreasonable and unsuitable means to deal with indiscipline behavior (refer to Table 2 and Table 3). It is important to note however, that this does not imply that students are against punishment.

3.4 Discussion

In the present study, in terms of students' perception whether disciplinary measures imposed on them are fair, reasonable and suitable, it seems that counselling yielded the highest percentage of agreement from students involved in this study. Bear in mind that those students involved in this

study were actually been caught involved in certain indiscipline behavior in their respective schools. Hence, their perception is important input to this study. This suggests that in order to deal with indiscipline behavior caused by the students in secondary school, counselling approach is essential. Majority of the students also perceived that counselling approach will decrease their indiscipline behavior in the future. This suggestion of course in away opposed suggestion made by Sackey and his co-researchers [16] whereby they claimed that counselling co-coordinators should not be made to discipline students who misbehave and it must be separated in order to prevent students from seeing their counselors as punitive agents and refusing to send their problems to them.

Table 7

Students' perception of type of disciplinary measures that will decrease indiscipline behavior in the future

Disciplinary Measures	Agree	Disagree	M	SD
Warning	578 (48.17 %)	622(51.83%)	2.07	0.53
Warning letter	409 (34.08 %)	791(65.92%)	2.62	0.66
Issuing letters to parents/caregiver	1008(84.00 %)	192(16.00%)	3.36	0.55
Counselling	996(83.00%)	204(17.00%)	3.35	0.77
Other alternative (eg: cleaning school compound)	989 (82.42%)	211(17.58%)	3.29	0.43
Canning	118(9.83%)	1082(90.17%)	1.23	0.67
Suspension	978(81.50%)	222(18.50%)	3.26	0.72
Expulsion	1020(85.00%)	180(15.00%)	3.40	0.71
Sent to police	1005(83.75%)	195(16.25%)	3.35	0.65
Overall mean = 2.88 (SD = 0.77) N = 1200			Cronbach's Alpha = .78	

From the finding we can see that majority students feel that it is unfair, unreasonable and unsuitable to issue letter to their parent or caregiver once they were caught involved in any indiscipline behavior be it minor, moderate, or serious category. Students are kind of aware that their parents will sure scold or even punish them and automatically side the school because it is their children were the one who committed the indiscipline behavior in the first place. Involvement from the family members especially the parents are important because family cohesion is equally important to all children rather than being relatively more protective to those exposed to risk factors [19]. Even though majority students feel that it is unfair, unreasonable, and unsuitable to inform their parents/caregivers about their indiscipline behaviors in school, interestingly on the other hand, majority or the same students perceived that this disciplinary measure will decrease their indiscipline behavior in future.

As majority students in this study feel that it is unfair, unreasonable and unsuitable to canning them for any indiscipline behavior (under moderate and serious indiscipline behaviors), majority of them also perceived that this kind of punishment does not decrease their indiscipline behavior in the future. Mostly, education experts around the world agree that physical punishment instills a climate of fear in the classroom and is associated with students skipping class and dropping out of school. If canning is properly done, it can improve learning but if used wrongly, it could cause hostility and chronic misbehavior among students [20]. Even though the use of corporal punishment such as canning in schools is becoming highly controversial in recent time, Malaysia is not ready to abolish canning in schools due to certain reasons [21]. Corporal punishment of boys is lawful in schools, regulated by the Education Regulations (Student Discipline) 2006 under the Education Act 1996. Article 350 of the Penal Code 1936 confirms that canning of a scholar by a head teacher/principal does not amount to criminal force. In other word, corporal punishment is a valid and legal form of punishment in Malaysia [22]. Despite the fact that canning has more negative effects on students, is it still relevant to imposed this kind of punishment as there are other ways which students perceived can decrease their indiscipline behavior in the future? Based on the finding of this study, majority

students perceived that issuing letters to parent/caregiver, counselling, other alternative (e.g. cleaning the school compound), suspension, expulsion, and send them to the police will decrease indiscipline behavior in the future. On the other hand, even though students perceived these disciplinary measures as not favorable to them, except counselling, none of them physically hurt or harm the students.

In terms students' perception of the seriousness of indiscipline behavior in the school, the analyses revealed that majority of the students agree that all the types of indiscipline behaviors listed under serious indiscipline behavior as serious offence except smoking and possessing cigarette. This can be considered as sincere and genuine response from the students in this study. Logically, it is unfair to expect students to see or perceived smoking and possessing cigarette as serious offence while at the same time they might be seeing their family members or people around them smoking right in front of them. Furthermore, young people tend to engage in smoking behavior because they believe that smoking makes them look more mature, attractive, cool, and helps them to control their body weight [23].

4. Conclusion

Even though students perceived some of the disciplinary measures as unfair, unreasonable and unsuitable, at the same time most of them agreed that those disciplinary measures do play an important role in order to decrease their indiscipline behavior. Having discussed to what extent the students perceived the seriousness of certain indiscipline behaviors under minor, moderate, and serious category, it is equally important to emphasize the need for school rules and regulations. Whether they like it or not, disciplinary measures are necessary for maintaining safe, conducive, harmony, controlled, and positive environment in secondary school. In an effort to prevent and resolve students' discipline problems and ensure efficient functioning of schools as a second home for the students, there must be fair, reasonable, and suitable disciplinary measures where students' perception should be taken into account. Disciplinary measures are therefore expected to be reasonable and properly meted out to offending students on account of the offence committed. It is expected to be moderate and commensurate with offence committed. School discipline must be diligently tackled by school authorities. Supervision by school administrators from time to time regarding how the teachers actually carry out certain disciplinary measures is very important in order to avoid unnecessary faults. Supervision by schools administrators actually indirectly improve the quality of teachers as well as motivate them in carrying out their duties or tasks [24-25]. This is very important in order to equip teachers with the characteristics of high quality of educators because with strong identity, more committed to the profession, teachers are ready to face the challenges of increasingly demanding education [26].

We suggest to future researchers to extend this study to include all stakeholders e.g. School Board of Management, Parent Teachers Association (PTA), parents, teachers, and school alumni. As stakeholders in the education of students, their perceptions about discipline and contributions will provide suggestions to improve the discipline in secondary schools for the betterment of the students.

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