

An Analysis of Classroom Rules in Secondary Schools in Turkey

Bekir Buluc

Gazi University

The aim of this study is to analyze the process of planning, preparation, application and evaluation of classroom rules at secondary schools, and to come up with some recommendations to develop functional classroom rules depending on the findings. The study is a survey of the graduates of secondary schools who are currently attending to some faculties of Gazi University. Data from a 66-item questionnaire were collected. Data were evaluated using frequency, percentage and chi-square techniques. The findings indicated that rules play an important role in creating a democratic classroom atmosphere. Rules should be reasonable, pedagogic, fair and harmonious with social values. Students do not accept rules that are prepared by the teacher alone, do not see teachers as a model during the application of the rules, and do not feel responsible about applying the rules.

Introduction

Student discipline and classroom management have always been a major concern for most teachers, administrators, and parents, because effective teaching can be realized more easily in well disciplined classes. When a teacher first enters a classroom her/his impression on the students is very important. Unfortunately there is no direct and easy way or method to provide effective discipline in classrooms and schools. As the teachers' professional experiences increase, discipline becomes a less important problem in schools and classrooms.

Literature Review

Educators have the professional responsibility to provide effective classroom management that demonstrates their ability to manage student behavior and provide a safe classroom, as well as to conduct teaching/learning experiences in an orderly and student-friendly manner. Unfortunately, the challenges of classroom management probably will grow more acute as student misbehavior becomes more prevalent in many schools and, in some cases, more aggressive and violent (Manning and Bucher, 2003). According to Blandford (1998), all teachers are responsible, as professionals, for managing discipline in schools. Self-esteem and self-confidence are central to management of discipline.

Discipline is concerned with the development of an internal mechanism that enables individuals to control themselves; there is a need for agreement on boundaries for attitudes and behavior. All members of the school community will need to know and understand what is acceptable behavior with the community.

According to the American Heritage Dictionary (2001), the word "discipline" is described in various ways. Discipline can be "training that is expected to produce a specific character or pattern of behavior" or "controlled behavior resulting from such training." However, it can be "punishment intended to correct or train" and a set of rules or methods. Over the years, discipline has been equated with punishment, specifically corporal punishment. Discipline is not punishment, although punishment is one possible way of maintaining discipline (Martella and others, 2003). As seen in these definitions, discipline involves training other people and students in a manner that places certain limits on personal behavior.

School control begins with class control. The reciprocal nature of schoolwide discipline and classroom discipline notwithstanding, the classroom still is the nucleus for discipline improvement (Alderman, 2000). Many kinds of problems occur in classrooms: individual emotional problems that require the aid of a guidance counselor, problems of evaluation that often require tough decisions regarding proper grading of students, motivational problems that require creative methods in order to encourage learning, and 'discipline problems' that often require immediate assertive action on the part of the teacher (Seeman, 1988).

For effective learning, classrooms need to have a peaceful environment, because a disruptive class will create stress for teachers and other students. The classroom must be safe and supportive for learning activities. All teachers know that a safe, orderly, comfortable and attractive classroom can stimulate learning and help build a classroom community. A positive classroom atmosphere not only focuses on learning activities, but also takes into account the students' social and emotional needs. According to the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the opportunity to learn is severely compromised in a disorderly school, teachers cannot teach, students cannot concentrate, and precious classroom time is lost. If disorder and disrespectful behavior are tolerated, they will proliferate. What one student is allowed to get away with, another will soon try. Over time, almost imperceptibly, expectations of what constitutes acceptable behavior are redefined (AFT, 2004).

Rules are important for effective classroom management. They provide students with a sense of what to expect from the teacher and other

school personnel. Rules attempt to prevent behavior problems from occurring (Woolfolk, 1998). Sometime students do not behave according to adult expectations because they do not understand what is expected of them. Rules should be broad and fairly general so that a few rules encompass many situations. It is important that students understand what they are allowed to do as well as what they are not allowed to do. Besides rules which apply to specific classroom situations, rules applicable in school wide situations should be clear to all (Smith, 1984).

Discipline problems occur when a student refuses to obey a rule. Rules that deal with human actions will eventually be broken and require some sort of punishment. The concept of matching the punishment with the rule violation requires that the rules be presented in a written format and that punishments for violations be specified. Rules must also relate to the stated function of education. Again, common sense must prevail in establishing disciplinary action for breaking a rule. Furthermore, all students must be aware of the rule before disciplinary action can be administered (Bonfadini, 1993). In order to optimize a child's chances for success, teachers and parents must take the time to clearly outline their expectations, their rules, and what may be gained by living up to these expectations and rules. According to Good and Brophy (2003), teachers' expectations are inferences that teachers make about the future behavior or academic achievement of their students, based on what they know about these students now. Teacher expectation effects are effects on student outcomes that occur because of the actions that teachers take in response to their expectations.

Implementing classroom rules and procedures is more a matter of instruction than control, although it is important to follow through on stated expectations. Effective managers not only tell their students what they expect but personally model the procedures for them, take time to answer questions, and, where necessary, allow time for practice of the procedures. In short, procedures and routines are formally taught to the students, just as academic content is taught (Brophy, 1983).

The purpose for having rules is to teach good behavior. Good rules also help people make predictions about what others are most likely to do. So, rules should be designed to teach effective behavior and to create a stable foundation from which children learn to face a risky world (Wayson, 1985). Rules by themselves do not create positive expectations, but classrooms have always had rules and consequences for good reason. Rules establish basic behavior expectations on which learning expectations

can be built (Prosis, 1996). To create effective classroom rules, teachers must take the time to develop them. Rules are not something that are developed whenever one wants and put up on the board the first day of class. Thus rules must be prepared carefully and scientifically at the beginning of the school year.

The rule development process contains several steps such as the following:

1. Discuss the value of rules with students.
2. Gather student input to develop rules while keeping in mind the following:
 - Develop only three to five rules,
 - Use simple language,
 - State rules positively,
 - Use different sets of rules for different situations, if needed,
 - Keep class and school rules consistent,
3. Gain student commitment to follow the rules,
4. Teach rules explicitly,
5. Post rules in a prominent location,
6. Monitor and review rule following (Martella, 1998).

Wayson (1985) suggests five criteria for judging the rules one makes:

1. A rule must be stated or taught clearly enough so that everyone affected knows what is expected.
2. The rule must be reasonable, which means that the child can do what is expected.
3. The rule must be enforceable, so that the rule maker can ensure that the students behave accordingly.
4. A rule must be enforced every time it is violated until the desired behavior is learned.
5. Sometimes irrelevant behavior must be ignored, so that the teacher can maintain momentum.

If rules are made by the students, they will be seen as fairer and the students will not complain about them. For rules to be effective, they need to be linked to discussion with students during the establishment phase of the year. Good rules are the preventive side of discipline. It is normal to find that the rules will be tested to establish their credibility even when the students have participated in rule making (Rogers, 1991). Also, good and well designed rules help teachers and students with motivation. According to Brophy (1998), in the classroom context, the concept of the

student motivation is used to explain the degree to which students invest attention and effort in various pursuits, which may or may not be the ones desired by their teacher. Motivation refers to students' subjective experiences, especially their willingness to engage in lessons and learning activities and their reasons for doing so.

Each school, each student, and each situation is unique. There is no single solution to discipline problems (Gushee, 1984). According to Seeman (1998), no one can give you your rules; you have to decide them from what you believe in and feel about specific infractions and standards. Thus, while preparing classroom rules:

1. Decide on a consequence that you will enforce, in the form of a warning, if a rule is broken. The rule should be one that is for the sake of the students' education, not just for your convenience.
2. Your first response to an infraction should be as nonverbal as possible. Do not deliver your rule in the third person; Be direct and say what you need to say. Without becoming long-winded.
3. Do not allow other students to decide who you warn or the nature of your reprimand.
4. When you warn a student, tell him/her not only the consequence if she/he breaks the rule, but sometimes also explicitly tell him/her the next couple of steps you will follow if she/he continues to misbehave (Seeman, 1988). Also according to Brophy (1983) many behavioral problems can be eliminated when teachers begin to understand individual differences in students.

In addition, other researchers (Ramsburg, 1997; Bonfadini, 1993; Alderman, 2000; White and others, 2001; Cotton, 1990; Churchward, 2003; Schwartz, 2003; UEA, 2004) have determined some special rule characteristics. These are:

1. Have rules that are fair and cover all types of subjects. Be sure that any set of rules includes the rule that students are required to follow instructions given by the teacher, office, or any other employee of the district. Put your rules in writing and provide copies for students and parents.
2. Rules, sanctions, and procedures must be developed with input taken from students. Effective rules must be announced when students are calm and listening. The rule must be publicized to the students. Whether it is issued orally or in writing, school

authorities must take reasonable steps to bring the rule to the attention of students.

3. Enforce rules fairly and consistently. Do not ignore behavior which violates school or classroom rules. Disruptive behaviors should elicit an immediate warning. Also support good behavior. Praise will go a long way.
4. The rule must have a rational relationship to the achievement of legitimate educational purpose. The rule may affect an individual student's learning situation or the rights of other students in the educational setting.
5. Rules must be prepared together with students, parents, other teachers and school managers.

As seen from the above discussion, classroom rules constitute a very important part of an orderly training environment. In Turkey, discipline problems at the secondary level, are much bigger than at other education levels. Because secondary school students are generally 14-18 years old, they have a very sensitive psychology. There is 8-10 hours of lesson time, in which students meet with 4-5 different teachers, each with different discipline styles and classroom rules. There is not enough research and knowledge related to the rule making process at secondary schools in Turkey, so the secondary school level has been chosen as the subject of this research.

Aim of The Research

The aim of this study is to analyze the process of planning, preparation, application and evaluation of classroom rules at secondary schools, to come up with some recommendations for functional classroom rules.

In order to achieve this goal, an attempt has been made to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent are the rules important to maintain classroom discipline?
2. What are the ideas of students related to planning and preparation of the rules?
3. What are the ideas of students related to the application of the rules?
4. What are the ideas of students related to the evaluation of the rules?
5. Is there a meaningful difference between the ideas of the according to their gender?

Method

This study is a survey type research. The subjects of the study are new graduates of secondary schools who are currently attending The Faculty of Technical Education, The Faculty of Vocational Education and The Faculty of Education of Gazi University. The data has been collected by using a 66-item questionnaire which was a likert type scale. It was designed as 1: strongly disagree, 2: disagree, 3: undecided, 4: agree and 5: strongly agree. Data were analyzed using SPSS 11.0. When the data were analyzed, the option of "undecided" was not included. The questionnaire's reliability has been found to be .94. The factor analysis of 66 items of the questionnaire has also been carried out and a factor load of 48 and more has been detected. In this analysis, data frequency and percentage methods have been used and the dependency of the factors has been tested at the levels of chi-square and .05 significance.

Results

Two hundred students attending the first year of different departments of Gazi Education Faculty, Vocational Education Faculty and Technical Education Faculty were involved in the research, 41.5 % male (83) and 58.5 % (117) female. Of these 68.5% graduated from general high schools and secondary education institutions and 31.5 % from the schools in district centers (See Table1).

Table 1. Frequency and percentage rates related to school types students graduated from (N=200).

School Type	f	%
High School	33	16.5
Industry Vocational High School	16	8.0
Girl Vocational High School	63	31.5
Technical High School	30	15.0
Trade High School	8	4.0
Imam Hatip High School	5	2.5
Anatolian Teacher Training High School	5	2.5
Anatolian and Super High School	40	20.0
TOTAL	200	100

In part one of the questionnaire, 17 questions were asked about the importance of accomplishment of classroom management. The results are shown in Table 2.

On the 1st question, 28% of the students agreed and 38% strongly agreed with the opinion that "The rules are a part of discipline providence." The 2th statement claims that the rules are arranged in order to direct the class systematically. In their response to this statement, 37.5% of the students were undecided, 27% agreed, and 23% strongly agreed. However, 4% strongly disagreed and 8.5% disagreed. In responding to the 3st statement, "The rules teach respect for authority," 17% of the students strongly disagreed, 21% disagreed, 28% were undecided, 22% agreed, and 12% strongly agreed. Item # 4 in the questionnaire, "Rules develop students' ability to discipline themselves," had the following response: 12.5% strongly disagreed, 17.5% disagreed, 22% were undecided, 31.5% agreed, and 16.5 % strongly agreed. In response to the 5th statement, "Rules set a democratic classroom environment," 17% strongly disagreed, 35% disagreed, 28.5% were undecided, 21.5% agreed and 24% strongly agreed.

To the statement "rules set a calm and peaceful classroom environment," 73.5% of the students strongly agreed. To the statement "rules provide effective use of education timing," 76.5% of the students strongly agreed. To the statement "rules prevent unpleasant behavior," 70.5% of the students strongly agreed. To the statement "rules support pleasant behavior," 67.5% of the students were undecided or agreed. To the statement "rules affect the students' success in a positive way," 69.5% of the students strongly disagreed and disagreed. To the statement "rules teach pleasant behavior expected from the students," 61% of the students strongly agreed or were undecided. To the statement "rules teach the students what the results of their behavior are," 71% of the students were undecided or agreed. To the statement "rules effect students' social development in a positive way," 64.5% of the students strongly agreed or were undecided. The 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th questions of the questionnaire show the strong disagreement of the students regarding rules developing a sense of charity and responsibility in students, helping them with problems with other standards, and developing their abilities for self-guided study. These statements do not work in real situations.

It is possible to say, based on the data in Table 2, that a large member of students believe in the necessity of rules in terms of effective teaching and classroom management. As Wayson (1985), AFT (2004) and Bonfadini (1993) stated, in order to have an effective learning environment, it is important to develop a relationship between teachers and students and among the students. To make sure that the students are not deprived of

academic support, it is necessary to have rules that provide a suitable learning environment. But in the light of the data, rules are not valid tools in terms of providing authority and discipline for the students themselves.

When differences in the students' opinion were analyzed within a chi-squared based on gender differences, it was seen that opinions were different with regard to four questions. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. The chi-square chart related to the importance of rule in the classroom based on gender.

<i>Question Number</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Question Number</i>	<i>Chi-square</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
2	10.035	4	.040*	7	10.219	4	.037*
3	16.258	4	.003**	16	17.180	4	.002**

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

For the second statement ("rules are arranged in order to direct the class systematically"), the third statement ("rules teach respect for authority"), the seventh statement ("rules provide effective use of education timing"), and the sixteenth statement ("rules are helpful in terms of solving problems among the students") male students express agreement whereas female students strongly disagree.

In the second part of the questionnaire, 16 questions were asked about the preparation and planning of classroom rules. The data are presented in Table 4.

Students, their parents, the school management and other teachers are supposed to contribute to the preparation of the rules. In items 18, 19, 20, and 21 an attempt is made to determine the extent of the participation of all concerned with the process and the teachers' aptitude in preparing rules. As seen in table 4, the participation of those concerned is quite low and the opinions of the students are not taken into consideration. According to the data, it is possible to say that cooperation between the school management, students' parents, and other teachers is inadequate. The 22nd item suggests that in the aspect of rule preparation teachers are found inadequate by the students. 39% of the students see them as totally inadequate, 27% of the students see them as somewhat inadequate, 10% are undecided, 18% state that they find them quite adequate, and 9% find them totally adequate. In items 23- 33 of the questionnaire we attempted to determine the status of the features that should be included in the rules

Table 4. Frequency and percentage rates related to planning and preparing process of the classroom rules (N=200).

Number	Question	1		2		3		4		5		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
18	Rules are set by the teacher and the students.	29	14.5	40	20.0	51	25.5	45	22.5	35	17.5	200	100
19	In preparation of the rules, the school directors' participation is provided.	45	22.5	34	17.0	24	12.0	35	17.5	62	31.0	200	100
20	While rules are prepared, the teachers work co-operatively.	25	12.5	37	18.5	44	22.0	64	32.0	30	15.0	200	100
21	While rules are prepared, the participation of the parents is provided.	18	9.0	44	22.0	48	24.0	61	30.5	29	14.5	200	100
22	The teachers are talented in terms of preparing the rules in order to provide classroom management.	78	39.0	54	27.0	20	10.0	30	15.0	18	9.0	200	100
23	Rules are prepared to suit the education level of the students. Rules express clearly the expectations from the people who will be affected by the rules.	32	16.0	46	23.0	66	33.0	39	19.5	17	8.5	200	100
24	Rules are prepared so they suit student psychology.	49	24.5	29	14.5	49	24.5	49	24.5	24	12.0	200	100
25		30	15.0	32	16.0	58	29.0	46	23.0	34	17.0	200	100

and should be considered in the preparation of the rules. It was found that the statements made in items # 23-33 were not realistic or practical. They emphasized the suitability of the rules in relation to the level of the students, their education, and their psychology; the need to express rules clearly and to prepare rules in keeping with the students' personalities and learning styles; the number and clarity of the rules; and their suitability and practicality. The process of preparing the rules was not practical as far as the students were concerned.

As Wayson (1985), Rogers (1991), Martella (1998), Churchward (2003) and Schwartz (2003) stated, the participation of the people who are concerned in the process of the preparation of the classroom rules, the way the rules are explained, their appropriateness to the students' level and teachers' level of aptitude in the rule preparation are quite important for the rules to work and serve their objectives. Determining the rules together with the students helps them to adopt and maintain the rules as their own. Therefore, it is important to note that executing the process of rule preparation according to a scientific criterion and realistic expectations will play an important role in achieving success in the classroom.

There were gender differences in the responses to 4 of the 16 items in the second section of the questionnaire. The results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. The chi-square chart related to the planning and preparing process of the classroom rules based on gender.

Question Number	Chi-Square	df	p	Question Number	Chi-Square	df	p
19	9.783	4	.044*	26	20.512	4	.000***
24	11.771	4	.019*	31	15.898	4	.003**

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Items 19, 24, 26 and 31 were as follows: "In preparation of the rules the school directors' participation is provided"; "Rules express clearly the expectations from the people who will be affected by the rules"; "while the rules are prepared the personalities and learning styles of the students are taken into consideration"; and "Rules are prepared according to realistic behavior expectations." Male students showed a greater tendency to agree to these statements than female students.

In the third section of the questionnaire, 21 items related to the process of application of rules were placed. The data acquired is presented in Table-6.

Number	Question						Total						
		1	2	3	4	5							
42	Teachers are the model in implementing rules. Learners see themselves as responsible in implementing rules.	19	9.5	21	10.5	49	24.5	61	30.5	50	25.0	200	100
43		30	15.0	25	12.5	69	34.5	54	27.0	22	11.0	200	100
44	Rules are the same for everyone. When students approve of the rules, they obey them. Rules are always implemented fast and consistently.	28	14.0	35	17.5	36	18.0	34	17.0	67	33.5	200	100
45		32	16.0	33	16.5	56	28.0	35	17.5	44	22.0	200	100
46		36	18.0	60	30.0	51	25.5	32	16.0	21	10.5	200	100
47	Students are encouraged to obey the rules. Rules are moderate. Rules are balanced. Rules are positive Rules are educative. Rules are clear and fair. Rules encourage co-operation.	24	12.0	31	15.5	65	32.5	46	23.0	34	17.0	200	100
48		34	17.0	42	21.0	53	26.5	42	21.0	29	14.5	200	100
49		32	16.0	39	19.5	59	29.5	42	21.0	28	14.0	200	100
50		25	12.5	42	21.0	60	30.0	36	18.0	37	18.5	200	100
51		32	16.0	29	14.5	64	32.0	38	19.0	37	18.5	200	100
52		32	16.0	46	23.0	52	26.0	34	17.0	36	18.0	200	100
53		32	16.0	44	22.0	66	33.0	29	14.5	29	14.5	200	100
54	Rules are comprehensive and their limits are clear	23	11.5	37	18.5	43	21.5	49	24.5	48	24.0	200	100

5. Strongly agree

4. Agree

3. Undecided

2. Disagree

1. Strongly disagree

Data was acquired from the statements in items 34-40 on the appropriateness of the classroom rules prepared according to the legal texts, the way rule applications are announced to those concerned by the teachers, and students' reactions to the rules; in the statements in items 41-54, teachers and students' roles in the application process of the classroom rules, the way rules are applied, and their features are stated. As seen in the table, in the process of rule preparation, legal texts are taken into consideration and classroom rules are indicated orally to the students and the school management at the beginning of each term. Students and their families are not given a written announcement for the rules. Teachers are responsible for application of the rules. Students do not feel responsible and teachers are not good role-models as far as application of the rules is concerned. But a delightful result of this study is the fact that students believe that the rules are applied to everyone equally (item 44), and when they obey the rules they are treated fairly (item 45).

Once the answers to the statement in the 46th item "Rules are always implemented fast and consistently" are inspected, it is observed that the learners have negative feelings regarding this. However, the response to 47th item "Students are encouraged to obey the rules", shows that learners are more diligent. When the answers to the statements in items # 48-54 concerning the process of implementing rules, are examined, it is observed that the learners do not have strong views.

As mentioned in Wayson (1985), Cotton (1990), Martella (1998), Seeman (1998) and UEA's (2004) works, it is important that the rules be prepared according to the legal texts and be announced to the families, learners and school administration verbally and also in writing. This gives the learners a sense of responsibility which is necessary if the rules are to be adopted and are to have a permanent effect. In addition to this, the fact that rules are implemented equally and consistently is encouraging for both students and teachers. It helps the teachers make decisions and reward or punish the students according to their behavior. It also helps the students understand the methods used by their teachers. Gender differences in the responses to items in Part III of the questionnaire are summarized in Table 7.

With respect to the data gathered, noticeable differences were observed regarding students' understanding and response to the statements on item 38, "The teacher informs the families by presenting the rules in writing"; item 40, "Rules prepared with the attendance of learners are preferred"; item 46, "Rules are always implemented fast and consistently"; item 48, "Rules are moderate"; item 49, "Rules are balanced"; and item 52,

Table 7. The chi-square chart related to the process of the application of the rules concerning the gender.

Question Number	Chi-Square	df	p	Question Number	Chi-Square	df	p
38	9.791	4	.044*	48	10.368	4	.035*
40	10.249	4	.036*	49	10.266	4	.036*
42	12.138	4	.016*	52	9.870	4	.043*
46	21.978	4	.000***				

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

"Rules are clear and fair." These differences indicated that male students agreed more strongly about obeying the rules and notifying the rules to the families than female students. Also, male students found that rules were more moderate and balanced. Whereas on item 42, "Teachers are the model in implementing rules," female students were more attracted to teachers as role-models than male students.

In the fourth part of the questionnaire, twelve questions were asked to identify the process of evaluation. The results are presented in Table 8 (Next page).

The analysis of the 55th question indicates that disobeying rules is not tolerated by most students. Misbehaviors are taken care of (56th item), and the disobedient students are generally punished (57th item). The percentage of disobedient students who are reported to their parents and sent to the administration is rather low (57th, 58th items). The actions taken in the event of students disobeying the rules are considered as rational (60th item), but the students who do not obey the rules are not treated in a way that enables them to discriminate between accepted and restricted behavior (60th item). The response to item # 62, "The behaviors which are not that important in terms of disobeying the rules are tolerated," was high. However, this was not the case with items 63 and 65 which stated the following: "The rules are carried out until the expected behavior is acquired"; and "Some meetings are organized with students to evaluate the rules."

Responses to the last question concerning the number of the rules show that students do not appreciate too many rules. Instead of many

Table 8. Frequency and percentage rates related to the evaluation of classroom rules (N=200), unnecessary and unfunctional rules, a few functional rules are preferred.

Question number	Question	I					2					3					4					5					Total
		F	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	F	%	f	%		
55	Violation of rules is not tolerated.	22	11.0	41	20.5	42	21.0	52	26.0	43	21.5	200	100														
56	Students who misbehave receive strict warning.	7	3.5	27	13.5	58	29.0	50	25.0	58	29.0	200	100														
57	Those not obeying the rules are generally punished.	15	7.5	39	19.5	62	31.0	51	25.5	33	16.5	200	100														
58	Those not obeying the rules are reported to their parents.	31	15.5	51	25.5	58	29.0	35	17.5	25	12.5	200	100														
59	Those not obeying the rules are sent to the administration.	24	12.0	52	26.0	53	26.5	28	14.0	43	21.5	200	100														
60	When the rules are disobeyed, the process and the results that students go through are rational.	37	18.5	29	14.5	62	31.0	37	18.5	35	17.5	200	100														
61	Those who do not obey the rules will be treated in a way that will enable them to discriminate between accepted and restricted behavior.	40	20.0	45	22.5	43	21.5	43	21.5	29	14.5	200	100														
62	The behaviors which are not that important in terms of disobeying the rules are tolerated.	34	17.0	36	18.0	45	22.5	34	17.0	51	25.5	200	100														
63	The rules are carried out until the expected behaviors are acquired.	35	17.5	40	20.0	56	28.0	42	21.0	27	13.5	200	100														
64	The rules causing negative results are reviewed.	26	13.0	40	20.0	49	24.5	56	28.0	29	14.5	200	100														
65	Some meetings are organized with students to evaluate the rules.	45	22.5	36	18.0	51	25.5	31	15.5	37	18.5	200	100														
66	The fewer rules there are, the better it is.	41	20.5	29	14.5	54	27.0	30	15.0	46	23.0	200	100														

5. Strongly agree

4. Agree

3. Undecided

2. Disagree

1. Strongly disagree

It is also crucial to evaluate and check these rules in order to build up functional classroom rules and make them permanent. An effective checking system can be established by identifying the misbehaviors and not tolerating some of these behaviors. However, as Ok and others stated (2000), extreme controlling and checking of the classroom rules creates anxiety, a monotonous atmosphere in the class, even unfairness, prevents the flexibility of some various rules, and mechanise the relations.

An inflexible application of the rules results in replacing the positions of objectives and tools, which means the rules are no longer the tools, but obeying the rules becomes the objective, just like eating for living transforms into living for eating. In addition to all this, unfunctional rules should be reviewed and the necessary changes and precautions mechanises should be taken immediately; both teachers and students should not be confused by too many rules. With the sole goal of fulfilling this objective, students, parents, the other teachers in the school should organize meetings from time to time and discuss classroom problems and their solutions (Cotton, 1990; Bonfadini, 1993; AFT, 2004;).

There were different viewpoints, based on gender, regarding five items. The results are summarized in Table 9.

Table 9. The chi-square chart related to the process of the evaluation of the rules concerning the gender.

Number	Chi-Square	df	p	Number	Chi-Square	df	p
58	11.049	4	.026*	64	23.741	4	.000***
60	12.488	4	.014*	65	22.224	4	.000***
63	12.885	4	.015*				

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

As is clear from Figure 9, males and females reported differently to items # 60, 63, 64, and 65, which were as follows: "When the rules are disobeyed, the process and the results that students go through are rational"; "The rules are carried out until the expected behaviors are acquired"; "The rules causing negative results are reviewed"; and "Some meetings are organized with students to evaluate the rules." More males reported to the above statements than females. However, with regard to item # 58 stating "Those not obeying are reported to their parents," it was found that more females responded to this statement than males.

Conclusion

It was determined through an analysis of the findings that, rules that are harmonious with the laws and that respect the students' individual rights play an important role in creating a democratic classroom atmosphere. Rules should be reasonable, pedagogic, fair and harmonious with social values. Classroom rules that have been prepared democratically help create ethical criteria which aid the learning and assimilation of the term 'democracy.' They are significant in forming an efficient education environment. However, some problems can be seen on examining the process of planning, preparation and application of classroom rules in Turkish secondary schools.

According to the findings, the majority of the students state that regulations are important in providing discipline and order in the class and creating a democratic classroom environment, whereas they fail to teach respect for authority and the teachers are not fully able to prepare rules. In addition, it is observed that those concerned in the rule preparation process (students, parents, the school administration) do not participate in the process adequately, and regulations have not been prepared in keeping with the level students are at their education, student psychology, and their learning styles.

Rules are prepared fitting to the laws and are announced to the students and the school administration at the beginning of the term orally but not to the students and their parents in written form. Students do not accept rules that are prepared by the teacher alone, do not see teachers as a model during the application of the rules and, do not feel responsible about applying the rules. The data gathered from the evaluation section indicate that the breaking of important rules has not been tolerated; instead it has generally been punished; that the families of the students who violated the rules have not been contacted; that these students have not been treated to differentiate between the positive and negative; that the rules have not been implemented until the expected behavior occurs; and that continuous assessment meetings have not been held regularly. However, a desirable finding is that teachers often ignore the violation of rules which are not very important.

Recommendations

From the analysis of the data gathered from the research in secondary schools, the following recommendations are put forward to make classroom rules more functional and pedagogical:

1. The rules should be prepared with the contribution of students, families, the school administration and other teachers,

2. The rules should be taught to students from the beginning of the term and the first year.
3. The rules must be in written form and a copy must be given to students, families and the school administration.
4. The rules must be clear, detailed, fair, logical, applicable, few in number and must teach the desired behavior types.
5. Responsibility should be given to students in the process of the application and inspection of the rules.
6. The rules should be applied rationally and obeying them must be reinforced.
7. Teacher should be informed and educated about classroom management and the rule formation process, and this must be provided by means of in-service training. Developing, regulating and preventive activities concerning school discipline and rules must be integrated into school development plans.

References

- AFT. (2004). [American Federation of Teachers]. *Setting the stage for high standards: Elements of effective school discipline*. <http://www.aft.org>
- Alderman, T. (2000). Total school discipline includes us all. *Education Digest* 65, 9.
- Blandford, Sonia. (1998). *Managing discipline in schools*. London: Routledge.
- Bonfadini, J.E. (1993). *Discipline: Education's number one problem*. Monograph 2 of the Virginia Council on Technology Teacher Education. Available [http://teched.vt.edu/vctte/VCTTEMonographs/VCTTEMono2\(Discipline\).pdf](http://teched.vt.edu/vctte/VCTTEMonographs/VCTTEMono2(Discipline).pdf)
- Brophy, J. E. (1983). Classroom organization and management. *Elementary School Journal* 83, pp. 265-285.
- Brophy, J.E. (1998). *Motivating Students to learn*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Cotton, K. (1990). *School wide and classroom discipline*. Available: <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/5cu9.html>.
- Churchward, B. (2003). *The honor level system*. Available <http://www.honorlevel.com/techniques.html>.
- Good, T. L.; J.E. Brophy. (2003). *Looking in classrooms*. Ninth Edition. Pearson Education Inc. USA.
- Gushee, M. (1984). *Student discipline policies*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management Eugene OR. (ED259455).

- Manning, L.M and K.T. Bucher (2003). *Classroom management: Models, applications, and cases*. New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Martella, R.C; J.R. Nelson and N.E.M. Martella. (2003). *Managing disruptive behaviors in the schools: A school wide, classroom, and individualized social learning approach*. Boston: Pearson Education Inc.
- Ok, M.; O. Göde; V. Alkan. 'İlköğretimde Öğretmen-Öğrenci Etkilesimine Sınıf Yönetimi Kurallarının Etkisi'. Milli Eğitim Dergisi, Sayı, 145. Ocak-subat mart 2000).
- Prosis, R. (1996). *Beyond rules and consequences for classroom management*. 96-67179. Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation Bloomington, Indiana.
- Ramsburg, D. (1997) The debate over spanking'. (ED405139), ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education Urbana IL. Available [http://www.ed.gov/data bases/ERIC_Digests/ed405139.html](http://www.ed.gov/data_bases/ERIC_Digests/ed405139.html).
- Rogers, B. (1991). *You know the fair rule: Strategies for making the hard job of discipline in school easier*. Longman industry and Public Service Management, England.
- Schwartz, W. (2003). *Developing social competence in children*. Available <http://iume.tcColumbia.edu/choices/briefs/choices03.html>.
- Seeman, H. (1988). *Preventing classroom discipline problems*. Pennsylvania: Technomic Publishing Company, Inc.
- Smith, D.D. (1984). *Effective discipline: A positive approach to discipline for educators in all settings*. Austin, Texas.
- The American Heritage Dictionary*. (2001). Forth edition. Dell Publishing, New York.
- UEA. (2004). [United Educators Association]. Available <http://www.ueatexas.com>.
- Wayson, W. (1985). *Rules for making rules that work for you*. Available <http://ss.uno.Edu/SS/ New/CMRules.html>
- White, R; B, Algozzine et al. (2001). Unified discipline: A school-wide approach for managing problem behavior. *Intervention in School & Clinic*, 37 (1), pp. 3-8.
- Woolfolk, A.E. (1998). *Educational psychology*. (7th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Copyright of Educational Research Quarterly is the property of Educational Research Quarterly and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.