



DESAFÍO Y PERSPECTIVAS ACTUALES EN EL CAMPO DE LA EDUCACIÓN

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TYPE AND NUMBER OF SCHOOL SANCTIONS WITH ADAPTATION AND SELF / HETERO ASSERTIVENESS

Javier Yuste, M^a del Mar Saneiro, Elena del Campo

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SUMMARY

Disruptive behaviours within the classroom, are acquiring a growing curve in recent years. They are influencing in a very negative way not only in the daily coexistence but also in the educational process. This article seeks to ascertain the relationship between the type and number of school sanctions received by the students and their Adaptation and Assertiveness. The results show that sanctioned pupils obtained scores significantly lower in Adaptation and Self/ Hetero Assertiveness than not punished pupils. These results show that we can improve the "antisocial behaviour" in classrooms increasing the student's Adaptation to their nearest environment and Assertiveness.

KEY WORDS: disruptive behaviours, School sanction, Adaptation, Assertiveness.

INTRODUCTION

In our Educational Centers, discipline, order, begin to be the great absentee. The so-called "anti-social behaviour" has acquired a growing curve in recent years. Some years teachers knew that school maladjustment was obvious in the last two courses of EGB (General Basic Education). Nowadays, the problems have been multiplied exponentially according with the acceptance of kids from 12 to 16 years in the Secondary Education Centers. Elementary Education Centers begin to have in some cases very serious problems in sixth course. This is a very dangerous phenomenon because antisocial behaviours detected in the early stages (even in school children), predicts a more serious and antisocial violent behaviours in adolescence (Ialongo et al., 1998) with a biggest academic failure.

Different surveys reveal that violent behaviours are related to "school adaptation". To be involved in fights, to carry arms and juvenile delinquency are factors related to a poor academic performance, to repeat course, to be expelled. The relationship between academic skills and violence is influenced by other variables, such as poverty (Buka and Earls, 1993), which can cause parental maladjustment (McCord, 1986; Patterson, 1986; Monge, 1992), to have a low sense of belonging to the educational center (Battistich et al., 1995). Many researchers provide data confirming that the attitudes showed by socially maladjusted students when they are dealing with teachers, authority



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figures and institutions, are largely influenced by the relations established with their parents (Coleman and Coleman, 1984). These relationships also impact on their self-concept, self-esteem and personal adjustment (Coleman and consultations, 1990; Steinberg, 1990; Whitbeck et al. 1992). On the other hand, the student's behaviours breaking the rules are in turn risk conditions in order to be rejected by their peers (Coie and others, 1990). Positive relations between intimacy relations with friends and positive attitudes/ behaviours towards the school environment have been founded.

Some personal and social variables could explain the student's disruptive behaviours. Different researches show that when the pupils acquire certain emotional, instrumental and cognitive skills, they are increasing and improving their social competence. As consequence these disruptive behaviours disappear, or are greatly reduced. Adaptation and assertiveness are constructs strongly related to social-emotional competence.

Nowadays, the word "adaptation" has been used in various contexts, Davidoff (1979) performs an extensive review about this concept. He concluded that human adaptation consists of a dual process: i) the adjustment of the individual's behaviour to his own wishes, tastes, preferences and needs and ii) the adjustment of the individual's behaviour to the environmental circumstances in which he lives (rules, desires, tastes, preferences and the people's needs with whom he interacts occasionally or habitually). Taking into account this perspective "adaptation" is a type of behaviour and an emotional state linked with the environment.

The concept of "assertiveness" was initially used by Wolpe (1958). It was considered as an ability to make fulfilled to other interlocutors reinforcing them. Alberti and Emmons (1970), defined the construct "assertiveness" as a behaviour that promotes equality in human relations, allowing us to act in defence of our own interests, defend ourselves without unjustified anxiety, expressing sincerely and pleasantly our feelings and implementing our personal rights respecting the other's rights.

The definitions provided by Alberti & Emmons (1970) and Vallés & Vallés (1996), entails the establishment of two constructs: Self-Assertiveness and Hetero- Assertiveness (García y Magaz, 1994). Assertive behaviour is characterized by both qualities. Inappropriate attitudes and behaviours showed by some students are associated with a scarce self and hetero assertiveness level.

Analysing the serious and/or mild "written warnings" provided by teachers to pupils along a course, we detected the main situations of indiscipline and its evolution in a Secondary Education Center. On the other hand a research involving pupils from ESO was carried out. The main objective is to identify if the sanctioned pupils have worse adaptation and lower self and hetero assertiveness than not punished ones. In this sense, we will establish a link between the scores obtained by the students in adaptation (to father, mother, teachers, colleagues, generic, and staff) and self/hetero assertiveness with the number and type of sanction (disciplinary proceedings, serious and/or mild "written warnings") imposed to these pupils along a course.

The following hypothesis were established:

First hypothesis: to be sanctioned, the number and type of received sanctions are related with low scores in adaptation.

In this hypothesis two different issues will be contrasted 1) type of sanction (initiate disciplinary proceedings) is related with low results obtained in Adaptation, specially to father, mother, teachers, partners, educational center, generic, staff and personal 2) the number of received sanctions is related with low results obtained in adaptation. In this case only three studied index, specifically teachers, partners and generic will be considered.

Second hypothesis: to be sanctioned with starting one or more disciplinary proceedings are related with low results in assertiveness.



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In this hypothesis two different issues will be contrasted 1) type of sanction (initiate disciplinary proceedings) is related with low results obtained in Assertiveness, specifically in self and hetero assertiveness.

METHOD

Sample

The sample is formed by 1050 pupils divided into two groups:

First group:

The first group is a focal sample belonging to the "Humanejos" IES. It was formed by all of pupils enrolled in ESO during the school year in which is conducted the research. There are 554 teenagers from each and every one of 25 classrooms in Secondary Compulsory Education. The age is ranging between 12 and 18 years (287 boys and 267 girls). Taking into account the variables sex, age and course, the distribution of the sample is presented in the Table1.

Sex	Age		ESO Level			
	12-14	15-18	1°	2°	3°	4°
Boys	182	105	58	88	87	54
Girls	171	96	49	80	81	57

Table 1: Distribution of the sample according to sex, age, and course

Second group:

The second group was considered as a control group. It is composed by 496 teenagers enrolled in 35 representative IES of the Autonomous Community of Madrid. The students were distributed in 140 classrooms, 35 of them from each ESO course. A special care was taken in the selection of the institutes in order to choose interesting pupils. Ten centers were elected by non-probability sampling. Schools that would be desirable to be included in our study due their characteristics and could not have been elected in a random lottery.

In addition the sample is formed by other 25 Institutes more. They were elected in a random sampling without replacement in a stratified finite population and by proportional affixation in regard to the five Territorial Areas of the Autonomous Community of Madrid.

The pupils ages belonging to the 35 IES of the Autonomous Community of Madrid, ranged from 12 to 18 years (302 boys and 194 girls, which amounted to a 60.88% and to a 39.12% respectively). The distribution of the sample, taking into account the variables sex, age and course, is presented in the Table 2.

Sex	Age		ESO Level			
	12-14	15-18	1°	2°	3°	4°
Boys	129	173	73	77	72	80
Girls	83	111	42	50	59	43

Table 2: Distribution of the sample referred to the 35 IES of Autonomous C. of Madrid depending on sex, age, and course.

This group was formed according with the following selection criteria:

- The four pupils elected from each level should belong to the same group.
- Two pupils are directly elected. They should have initiated a disciplinary proceedings (or at least one pupil), or they should be punished for serious misconduct official warnings.



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-The rest of the pupils until completing the 4 by level, shall be elected randomly among the rest of pupils of their classroom. No pupils with Special Needs Education (NEE) were elected.

-In case that in a certain level there were no problematic pupil, we will elect four through a random process.

-Each tutor, teacher or educational counsellor will mark a signal in those scales that have been filled by a "problematic" pupil, to identify him.

Instruments

Instruments used are: Magallanes Adaptation Scale (EMA) (García E. M. and Magaz A., 1998), Questionnaire of attitudes and values in social interactions ADCA-1 (García E. M. and Magaz A., 1994) and Self-report Scale of Assertive Habits AIHA (García E. M. and Magaz A., 2000). The scale EMA measures adaptation to father, mother, teachers, colleagues, generic to school world, and staff. The scales ADCA-1 and AIHA measure self and heterogeneous Assertiveness, although the scale ADCA-1, establishes an attitudinal perspective and the scale AIHA a more instrumental perspective.

Procedure

Collectively assessment in the classroom:

The instruments were applied to all of ESO pupils from "Humanejos" IES (Parla). The implementation of written form was conducted by the teacher, during guardianship time. The size of groups was ranged between 12 and 30 pupils. This collective enforcement was developed in 2 meetings.

First meeting:

Implementation of the three aforementioned questionnaires.

Second meeting:

Two weeks after the same questionnaires were applied again in order to obtain an average rating, ultimately a more reliable direct score.

b) Assessment of pupils from other IES:

The three scales were applied by educational counsellors or tutors/teachers in two meetings (with an interval of at least 15 days) following the same order: first the AIHA scale, afterwards the ADCA-1 scale, and finally, the EMA scale. The AIHA, ADCA-1 and EMA scales. They were applied to 4 pupils by level, from the 35 selected Centers.

Disciplinary proceeding and disciplinary official warnings by minor and serious misconducts:

The official warnings by minor or/and serious offences, and disciplinary cases delivered during the course by different teachers from "Humanejos" IES will be related to the marks obtained at the beginning of the course by these same pupils in the Adaptation Scale EMA, Self and Hetero Assertiveness ADCA-1 Scale and AIHA.

RESULTS

First hypothesis: to be sanctioned or the number and type of received sanctions are related with low scores in adaptation.

The hypothesis was divided into two trends:

Taking into account the quantitative and qualitative nature of data obtained, the statistical analysis chosen were difference of averages and ANOVAS (one or two factors).

Hypothesis (trend 1)

In table 3, data related with impact of the type of sanction on adaptation to father, mother, teachers, peers, generic and staff are presented.



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Adpt.	1st ESO gl (1, 77)	2nd ESO gl (1, 83)	3rd ESO gl (1, 95)	4th ESO gl (1, 77)
	F	F	F	F
AP	7,16**	6,15**	,11	2,42
AM	10,52**	7,53**	,02	,46
APr	30,17***	36,83***	14,10***	4,77*
AC	4,68*	,06	,01	1,54
AG	84,65**	58,38***	12,48***	1,85
APs	,003	1,50	0,28	5,95*

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

Table 3: Results relating to the Adaptation to six figures of interest in the type of sanction (initiation of disciplinary proceedings). "Humanejos" IES.

The results founded in the control group are the following:

Sanctioned pupils, qualified by their teachers and/or tutor as "very problematic within the classroom" were compared with not qualified students as such. In the Table 4, data related with impact of the type of punishment for father, mother, teachers, peers, generic and staff are showed. The Table show the results by level.

Adpt.	1st ESO gl (1, 113)	2nd ESO gl (1, 125)	3rd ESO gl (1, 129)	4th ESO gl (1, 121)
	F	F	F	F
AP	5,31*	22,56***	10,45**	,90
AM	4,46*	19,45***	21,34***	5,16*
APr	57,98***	97,79***	129,31***	54,91***
AC	1,71	15,10***	12,18**	3,09
AG	68,84***	130,91***	128,15***	103,21***
APs	6,21**	1,16	1,74	3,05

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

Table 4: Results relating to the Adaptation to six figures of interest in the type of sanction (initiation of disciplinary proceedings).

In the "Humanejos" IES, the students who have initiated a disciplinary proceedings present less adaptation than non-sanctioned in 13 indexes of 24 possible. In the rest of Institutes the difference is situated in 18 indexes. The difference in adaptation of pupils from IES "Humanejos" compared to their not sanctioned colleagues is a 54.16%, those differences in the rest of Institutes participants rises to 75 %. It also notes that the average ratings obtained in each and every one of the indexes by "very problematic within the classroom" students are lower than the average ratings obtained by students from the same level, not listed as such, although not reach the statistical significance.

Hypothesis (trend 2)

In this case only "Humanejos" IES pupils participated because we knew the number and type of sanctions that each pupil was submitted to, meanwhile about pupils from other IES, we only knew if they have been punished or not. In the Table 5, are presented data about the impact of the number of sanctions on the Adaptation to father, mother, teachers, peers, generic and staff. The table shows the results obtained by the pupils from each level of ESO.



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Adpt.	1st ESO gl (1, 82)	2nd ESO gl (1, 104)	3rd ESO gl (1, 127)	4th ESO gl (1, 89)
	F	F	F	F
AP	1,57	9,33**	1,01	1,15
AM	1,43	4,35*	,54	,39
APr	6,84**	69,99***	17,70***	10,01**
AC	,14	,13	,58	1,30
AG	11,08***	81,97***	29,40**	7,98**
APs	,01	,005	,23	,31

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

Table 5: Results relating to the Adaptation to six figures of interest in the type of sanctions received.

Another objective was to compare the difference between the average ratings obtained (in each of the index) by not punished students, and the average ratings obtained by punished students with at least one "warning". In Table 6 are presented the data related with the impact of the number of sanctions, even a single one and by "mild" bad behaviour on the Adaptation to six figures of interest to us (father, mother, teachers, peers, generic and staff).

Adpt.	1st ESO gl (1, 107)	2nd ESO gl (1, 158)	3rd ESO gl (1, 159)	4th ESO gl (1, 106)
	F	F	F	F
AP	,77	13,58***	1,60	2,07
AM	,01	9,64**	,63	1,18
APr	19,36***	78,67***	29,91***	8,27**
AC	,02	1,58	1,20	2,49
AG	21,95***	70,98***	40,75***	6,31*
APs	,01	,03	,01	,34

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

Table 6: Results relating to the Adaptation to six figures of interest in the number of sanctions received (even only one for "mild bad behaviour").

Taking into account the previous data, it is noted that among punished and not punished pupils in the 4 courses of ESO, there are differences in Adaptation in two of the index of interest (teachers and generic). Moreover, with regard to pupils of 2nd course there are differences in adaptation to father and mother.

Second hypothesis: to be sanctioned with starting one or more disciplinary proceedings are related with low results in assertiveness.

Hypothesis (trend 1)

In the Table 7, are presented data from "Humanejos" IES related with the impact of the type of sanction on the Assertiveness, specifically two constructs (Self Assertiveness and Hetero Assertiveness).



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Asert	1st ESO gl (1, 77)	2nd ESO gl (1, 83)	3rd ESO gl (1, 95)	4th ESO gl (1, 77)
	F	F	F	F
AA	4,63*	4,88*	,25	,96
HA	8,39**	18,66***	13,81***	,53
HAA	19,74***	8,94**	,46	2,78
HHA	11,62***	24,80***	2,26	2,07

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

Table 7: Results relating to the Assertiveness, two constructs of interest, depending on the type of sanction. "Humanejos"IES.

In the rest of the IES were compared sanctioned pupils, qualified by their teachers and/or educational counsellors as "very problematic within the classroom" pupils, with students not qualified as such. In the Table 8, are presented data related with the impact of the type of sanction on the Assertiveness, specifically two constructs that concern us (Self Assertiveness and Hetero Assertiveness).

Asert	1st ESO gl (1, 113)	2nd ESO gl (1, 125)	3rd ESO gl (1, 129)	4th ESO gl (1, 121)
	F	F	F	F
AA	11,02***	,01	3,59	4,22*
HA	15,26***	1,85	4,88*	3,27
HAA	30,62***	33,40***	5,43*	11,65**
HHA	26,47***	18,03***	10,18**	14,75***

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

Table 8: Results relating to the Assertiveness, two constructs of interest, depending on the type of sanction. Other IES.

Hypothesis (trend 2).

In the table 9, are presented data from "Humanejos" IES related with the impact of the number of sanctions on the Assertiveness, specifically two constructs that concern us (Self Assertiveness and Hetero Assertiveness).

Asert	1st ESO gl (1, 82)	2nd ESO gl (1, 104)	3rd ESO gl (1, 127)	4th ESO gl (1, 89)
	F	F	F	F
AA	,84	7,86**	,66	,27
HA	1,72	11,08***	4,49*	2,00
HAA	10,51**	19,38***	,16	2,12
HHA	10,08**	19,39***	,28	9,75*

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

Table 9: Results relating to the Assertiveness, two constructs of interest, depending on the number of sanctions received. Humanejos". IES.



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Given that one of the objectives is to check if there are significant differences in self and hetero assertiveness among punished and not sanctioned students, it is interesting the comparison in both constructs between punished students with at least a warning (even due to "mild" bad behaviour), with not punished students. In the Table 10 are presented data related with impact of the number of sanctions, even a single and "mild" bad behaviour on the Assertiveness, specifically two constructs that concern us (Self Assertiveness and Hetero Assertiveness).

	1st ESO gl (1, 107)	2nd ESO gl (1, 158)	3rd ESO gl (1, 159)	4th ESO gl (1, 106)
Asert	F	F	F	F
AA	1,74	6,47**	,16	,04
HA	1,70	9,61**	15,78***	1,78
HAA	11,68***	17,94***	1,51	,87
HHA	6,77**	22,20***	7,60**	6,23**

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

Table 10: Results relating to the Assertiveness, the two constructs of interest, depending on the type of sanctions received (even just one and a lack "mild"). "Humanejos" IES.

DISCUSSION

Following to Cole (1986), we should not consider the student's behavioural problems and a low academic performance as dysfunctional symptoms. Instead these factors should be seen as consequence of a poor interaction between people and environment. There is an important relationship between the type and the number of sanctions that pupils receive for performing inadequate behaviours during the lessons, and their adaptation to the closest environment (their parents, teachers, partners, school life in general, and even their own personal adaptation). Pupils, who are receiving several sanctions such as warnings for important bad behaviours, starting of one or more disciplinary proceedings, present a worse adaptation than not sanctioned pupils. They obtain average results significantly lower in several of the studied index. So, low academic scores and bad interpersonal relationships in the classroom make pupils candidates for several and important sanctions. This is related with a poor interaction of these pupils with their closest environment. As consequence, low Adaptation can be considered as important predictor of future disruptive behaviours, developed in the classroom.

From the obtained data concerning adaptation and its relation with the type and number of received sanctions, we can conclude that courses like 1st (12-13 years old), 2nd (13-14 years old) and 3rd (14-15 years old) from ESO are the most problematic ones. The greater density of conflicts is given in the 1st cycle of ESO.

In the 2nd course of ESO there are many students with low adaptation. This course is the most confrontational and problematic of the four courses in ESO and not only about to disruptive behaviours, but also in regard to bullying. No wonder then, as it is evidenced by the Ombudsman Report (2000), that students from 1st tend to be victims, and those from 2nd, aggressors.

All punished candidates, even with a warning by mild bad behaviour, show low adaptation to their teachers and low generic adaptation (to the school world). It is also remarkable that, regardless of the type and number of sanctions received, pupils from 4th of ESO are those who present a greater adaptation. That is, the age plays an important role in improving the adaptation. These results



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would be in line with Weinstein (1969) and Selman et al. (1986), who found that as children increase their ages, they acquire progressively new, better and more sophisticated negotiating strategies, that they cease to be immediate, impulsive, physical and without verbal elaboration, to be increasingly sophisticated. They progress in recognizing the wishes, needs and interests of the other (Smollar and Youniss, 1982), collaborating and cooperating more with them. This fact enhances their relationship with others and improves their adaptation to the nearest environment.

With regard to the second hypothesis, there is an important relation between the type and number of sanctions received and the Assertiveness. The variable Assertiveness is also related to the type and number of received sanctions, and it plays a crucial role in the interpersonal relations (daily life) into the classroom, because the students who obtain low scores in Assertiveness, show in general, a more disruptive and antisocial behaviour in the classroom.

Disruptive students, in many case "aggressor pupils", not only are aggressive with their peers, but also with their parents and teachers. They do not like the school or their teachers (Cerezo, 1997; Olweus, 1999). They feel low empathy (Miller and Eisenberg, 1988). Thus, inappropriate attitudes and behaviours showed by some students during classes are related to a scarce self and hetero assertiveness. The above results clearly show the close relationship between the disruptive behaviours and the Assertiveness. Several researchers (Young, 1992; Dykeman et al. 1996) find that empathy, impulsiveness, gender and locus of control are displayed as powerful predictors of the aggressive and violent behaviour. They are significantly more related with violence than with age. The inappropriate behaviour that some students perform in the classroom when they are dealing with their teachers, denote, impulsiveness, external locus control and major lack of empathy.

The obtained results show a clear relationship between inadequate behaviours and low marks obtained by students in adaptation to the nearest environment and assertiveness (self and hetero assertiveness). As consequence if we are able to empower and enlarge these constructs in High school students, we will improve the daily life in the classroom and finally the learning-teaching process.

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