



POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT FOR FUTURE INSERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

Positive behavioral support (positive behavior support) is a comprehensive, research based proactive approach to behavioral support that endeavors to generate comprehensive change for students with challenging behavior. It involves identifying the purpose of challenging behavior, teaching appropriate alternative responses that serve the same purpose as the challenging behavior consistently rewarding positive behaviors and minimizing the physiological, environmental, and curricular elements that trigger challenging behavior. Positive Behavior strategies include altering the classroom environment change in scheduling increasing choice making, adapting the curriculum, appreciating positive behaviors and teaching replacement skills. Positive Behavior Support is a broad term that describes a comprehensive, research based, proactive approach to behavioral support aimed at producing comprehensive change for students with challenging behavior. Positive Behavior Support targets to explore why a student exhibits challenging behavior and certain key Positive Behavior Support strategies teachers can implement in their classrooms.

Keywords: Positive Behavior, Support, inservice, Challenging Behavior, teacher education



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Introduction:

In India now, there is revolutionary concern for improving the educational system and making it realistic and relevant to the life of learners.

Positive behavior Support is a proactive approach to discipline that promotes appropriate student behavior and increased learning. Traditionally, models of school behavior results into punishments. The PBS is a comprehensive system of behavior support tailored to individual school needs. PBS is an empirically validated, function based approach to eliminate challenging behaviors and replace them with prosocial skills. Use of PBS decreases the need for more intrusive or aversive interventions (i.e. punishment or suspension) and can lead to both systematic as well as individualized change.

PBS can target an individual student or an entire school, as it does not focus exclusively on the student, but also inclusive changing environmental variables such as the physical setting, task demands, curriculum, instructional pace and individualized reinforcement. Thus it is successful with a wide range of students, in a wide range of context, with a wide range of behaviors.

Background of the problem :

One aspect of teaching is educators' abilities to effectively manage their students' behaviors. Many teacher education programs expose preservice teachers to numerous strategies for

managing students' behaviours because the most challenging aspect of teaching continues to be classroom management and discipline (Yost & Mosca, 2002). According to Witzel and Mercer (2003), "The area of behavior interventions in classrooms receives more attention than many other aspects of schooling" (p. 89) One of the most common problems facing teachers because disruptive students take up valuable learning time. Students with disruptive, defiant, and disrespectful behaviors often make it difficult for teachers to teach and students to learn. Educators who have students with problematic behaviors in their classrooms become extremely frustrated.

Another area teachers struggle with is whether or not students should be rewarded for behaviors that are expected of them. Some educators believe that it is not their responsibility to provide incentives for students; they feel that this is the job of parents. However, research in the area of behavioural skills training claims that feedback in the form of positive reinforcement is essential to teaching individuals appropriate behaviors and expectations (Miltenberger, 2008). Witzel and Mercer (2003) note that, "The most appropriate use of positive reinforcement and behavior modification are important for success in the classroom, as frequent reprimands, low expectations, and infrequent praise often result in students who exhibit challenging behaviors (Morgan, 2006).

Educators can use strategies of Positive Behaviour Support to end, or at the very least avoid, an increase in problematic behaviors.

Need and Importance of the study

Teachers report that student behavior is their number one difficult. There is increase aggression violence at younger ages ("The Discipline Problem" 1996.) (Sugai & Horner, 1994).

Teacher's lack of planning time, high student to staff ratio, and lack of administrative support to implement behavior changes in general have been cited as problems related to time (Park-Lee 1994) . Faced with an increasing number of students whose behavior impedes their own learning or the learning of others, teachers are left wondering if and how they will find time to provide PBS to the growing number of students who need it. This research explains what PBS is and how all teachers can implement certain key PBS components in their classrooms.

Objectives:

- To understand the concept of Positive Behavior Support
- To compare between Traditional Method of Student Behavior Management and PBS.
- To know the Methods of Initiating PBS.
- To know the strategies of PBS
- To use PBS in Indian context.

Objective wise Description:

What Is Positive Behavior Support ?

Did you ever hear the phrase, "Treat the symptom, and ignore the disease"? Many people handle discipline that way. They try to eliminate challenging behavior (usually with punishment) without looking into why the behavior occurred. PBS is different even revolutionary because it is based on determining not only what, where when and how challenging behavior occurs, but also why. PBS operates under the premise that behavior is not random but that any persistent challenging behavior "works" for the student.

for eg Why Can't Yash remain seated during History period?

Why does Ashwin hits others repeatedly?

Why is Anushka off- task so much?

And what purposes (functions) do these behaviors serve for Yash, Ashwin and Anushka.

Challenging behaviors such as these do meet some basic needs for a student students who act out do get more attention, higher level of physical contact or escape from work. But while meeting their immediate needs disruptive behavior (such as aggression) interferes with others, especially in inclusive settings. It can also endanger the person exhibiting it and others, upset staff, and contribute to a negative attitude towards people with disabilities. Thus it does not meet anyone's long term needs - the teacher's need to have a functional classroom, other students need to be safe, and the need of students with challenging behavior to learn socially appropriate ways to meet their needs and become more independent.

PBS broadens intervention from one approach- reducing challenging behavior to multiple approaches, changing systems, altering environments, teaching skills, and appreciating positive behavior.

The goal of PBS is not to eliminate behavior rather it is to understand the behavior's purpose so that the student can replace it with new, prosocial behaviors that achieve the same purpose (Carr et al, 1994, Horner et al,1992) .

PBS helps students learn better way's to make their feelings and needs known . Everyone shares responsibility for the behavior.

To compare between Traditional Method of Student Behavior Management and PBS.

Sr. No	Traditional behavior	Positive Behavior Support
1	Views individual as 'the problem'	Views systems settings and skill deficiencies as the problem.
2	Attempts to 'fix' individual Extinguishes behaviour	Attempts to 'fix' systems, settings and skills Create new contacts, experiences, relationships and skills
3	Sanctions aversive	Sanctions positive approaches.
4	Takes days or weeks to Fix a single behavior	Takes years to create responsive systems, personalized settings.
5	Implemented by a Behavior specialist often in typical settings	Implemented by a collaborative team in typical settings.
6	Often resorted to When systems are inflexible.	Flourishes when system are flexible.

To know the Methods of Initiating PBS.

Before initiating Positive Behavior Support plan teachers should include establishment of a collaborative team composed of persons who support a student, regarding his behavior and ensuring that both parents and teacher view a positive proposed plan as desirable and feasible.

Gathering enough information to identify challenging behavior (eg off task) and then checking to make sure you are on target about the probable purpose of behavior (eg. escape doing a task). Constitutes corner stone known as "functional assessment" .

More serious, long-standing behaviors requires trained support. Dangerous behavior require an emergency plan. This can be accomplished in four steps.

- Define the challenging behavior - The definition must be observable and highly descriptive of the behavior's appearance. for eg Yash leave class or activity often damaging others material as he goes. He hits, pull hair, and kicks.
- Identify the circumstances under which the behavior is both likely and unlikely to occur. The process of identifying these key circumstances may be straight forward or involve deep detective work and investigate further.

Challenging behaviors often do not follow orderly patterns. A student may do very well for many days and then under usual condition may display extreme challenging behaviors. Challenging behavior may result from an occurrence or set of circumstances (setting event) that the teacher is unable to directly observe.

Allergy, fluctuation in dosages of medication, disturbed sleep patterns, etc may trigger Challenging behavior.

A teacher can prepare a checklist to gather and evaluate information with help of parents, former teacher and other school staff (counselor).

- Determine the potential purpose of the Challenging Behavior Interviews and discussions followed by direct observation of Challenging Behavior and the events happening before (triggering events or circumstances) and after the Challenging Behavior occurs (what student achieves by the behavior) . Should help teachers determine a behavior purpose. Remember, Challenging Behavior do not happens repeatedly unless individuals periodically get something they want or avoid something they do not want. These purposes or consequences influence the Challenging Behavior.
- Evaluate the information and develop hypothesis or best guess statement describing the relationship between the behavior and the students environment .

To know the strategies of PBS

Positive Behavior Support Strategies

Teacher favour strategies that work for other teachers.

- Strategy 1 - Alter the classroom Environment
- Teachers can remove or modify environmental conditions within their classrooms that trigger challenging behaviors in a number of ways.
- Accommodate Individual Student Environmental needs Individual student behavior is linked to environmental triggers. for eg students who are easily distracted can be placed in work areas that are clearly defined. Deaf students are placed in front of class highly to bells, other loud noise, must be placed in silence cohere.
- Consider Room Arrangement:

Learning centers need to have adequate space and be placed for enough apart so that activity and noise levels in one center are not disruptive to students in a neighboring center.

- Consider Traffic Patterns

Too much or too little space may be problematic. Too much space may encourage young students to run. Whereas too less can lead to disruptive bumping and knocking.

- Strategy 2 : Increase Predictability and Scheduling

Uncertainty increases anxiety levels in most people. Consider our frustration for the lesson you prepared is interrupted by a mass drill. Predictability of classroom routines is their 'security blanket'. According to strain and Hemmetter (1997) 'A classroom schedule that is well designed and is implemented consistently may be the single most important factor in preventing challenging behaviors.

- Teachers can develop or modify their routines to increase predictability will lesson anxieties and challenging behavior for the students. There are ways to do this

- **Schedules**

Create a routine daily schedule and make sure that students are aware of it. a weekly planner is useful for high school students. When students know what to do and when to do it, challenging behaviors are less likely to occurs.

Teachers may need to establish separate individualized routines for students whose attention spans are limited or who are unable to sit for longer blocks. Students with challenging behavior may leave their seats for some activity (eg collecting homework, distributing materials, taking attendance to office)

- **Changes**

Planned and unplanned changes in daily schedules occur in every school for eg Assemblies, drills may shorten learning periods in classrooms, absent teachers, burs may be late or early. Preparing students about how these changes will affect their day lessens anxiety. Students updated with particular changes feel confident as they know what to do.

- **Transitions**

Alerting students before transitions from one activity to another can increase the likelihood of appropriate behavior .These signals give students the opportunity to finish what they are doing before having it put it away .

- Teachers can use auditory, tactile or visual signals. Minizing waiting periods or providing other activities for early finishers also promotes appropriate behavior. When students are engaged with people or materials they are likely to exhibit challenging behaviors.

Strategy 3 : Increase choice making

- Many people with disabilities (students with limited motor skills, verbal skills, or Challenging Behavior) are not provided with opportunities to make significant choices in their daily lives. They are often told what tasks the must perform with whom they may interact and what rewards they may have (Brown &Snell,1993)
- Providing students with challenging behavior with opportunities to make choices is a good way to lessen Challenging Behavior. Providing choices does not mean allowing students to do anything they want. By empowering students to make choices teachers can help lessen students feelings of power lessens.
- Students are allowed to make final choices.
- Teachers may consider checklist.
- Identify types and extent of choices available
- Provide opportunities for choice whenever appropriate and feasible.
- Create options that are related to factors controlling Challenging Behavior
- Allow persons to choose one of the available options and honor that choice.

- Embodied choice into activity or task when possible .
- Monitor for success.

Strategy 4 : Make curricular Adaptations

Curricular adaptations are modifications made to enhance a student's performance in completing activities and to reduce the likelihood of Challenging Behavior

Consider the following elements.

- Think about the nature of assigned task/activity (too long/short, too easy/difficult , too fast or slow)
- Adjust the nature of the task/activity (eg auditory, visual, tactile) for eg learning tables can be done by using computer for a students who is motivated by computer.
- Adjust the method of presentation/monitoring- ways - Direct instruction and self monitoring.
- Direct Instruction - Include group discussion having following characteristics'
- Well scripted and preplanned teacher presentations
- Fast paced presentation
- Use of small groups to maximize student responding
- Oral group responding to monitor learning of all students
- Student motivation maintained by teacher praise /reinforcement/ encouragement
- Self monitoring
- Immediate error correction
- Provide peer support
- Peer tutoring instruction of one student by another for academic or social support has the great advantage of allowing students to respond frequently and demonstrate whether they have acquired important information and skills. Pairing Typical learners approach Teacher can arrange a number of play areas, with different activity for different child behaviors.

- Strategy 5 Appreciate Positive Behaviors

Students will do the 'right' thing in the 'right' way with the 'right' attitude. Their reward is the activity or behavior itself.

Take advantage of positive reinforcement :-

Rewarding students with their correct behavior as students repeat the behavior for they are awarded. To encourage positive behavior , figure out the exact behavior that would benefit the student and the people around the student. Start with easier skills and break down more complex tasks into achievable steps .

Determine the Right Reward :-

Make sure you have the right rewards. Training will have little effect without a good reinforces.

- Typical reward include food, item listening to music, preferred activity with a special friend and privileges (extra free time, new seating arrangement). A good way to start is to ask the student what would be a reward for him or her.
- Praise too must be used correctly. Use words of encouragement appreciation and affection as well as physical expressions such as hugs, pats and smiles.
- Reduce Rewards overtime

- At first rewards should be given immediately and frequently when the person exhibits proper behavior. Later rewards should be given less frequently as the behavior becomes learned. Rewards too are a form of control.
- Keep Reward Interesting and the student confident:-
- To encourage good behavior always indicate your confidence in the students' abilities. This lets the student know you recognize his or her good intentions and that you believe he or she can learn and grow.
- To use PBS in Indian context

The Positive Behavior Support Strategy can be used to acknowledge positive behavior of students effectively reducing their behavior problems and reinforcing alternative expected behavior thus achieving a positive change in students behavior and academic performance. The secondary school teachers who deal with heterogeneous groups in the classrooms are required to cater the needs in every child. The management, administrators, teachers can effectively use this Positive Behavior Support Strategy that will not only create meaningful experiences to students to achieve aims but will also create an appropriate school climate.

While the results gain from the application of Positive Behavior Support will pave the way for the researchers, education policy makers and designers, management of secondary schools to consider these practices. It is also significant to bridge the gap between a secondary school student with challenging behavior and a secondary school student with positive behavior. In India students are well groomed, alert, attentive, follow instructions, etc. The Positive behavior is recognized, acknowledged and rewarded in the form of blessings, praise, rewards, felicitations etc.

Analysis and Interpretation of data

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT bears consideration for three reasons. First we know that simply suppressing a behavior by punishing a student is counterproductive. It may have the short-term effect of reducing behavior, but studies show that punishment leads to increased aggression, vandalism, tenacity, tardiness and dropout (Mayer & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1996; Walker, Colvin & Ramsey 1995). Further, reactive approaches using punishment do not teach the student a skill to use in the future.

Secondary once teachers know why a student's behavior is occurring, they are in a much better position to teach a more appropriate way of responding, a way that will serve the long-term interests of both student and teacher.

It shifts the focus from "fixing" the student to 'fixing' skill deficiencies, settings, and systems.

Lastly POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT works and works well on reducing the incidence of challenging behavior. (Carr & his colleague 1997)

Summary and conclusion

Positive Behavior Support involves four main steps

Identifying the purpose of challenging behavior.

Teaching appropriate alternative responses that serve the same purpose as the challenging behavior

Consistently rewarding positive behaviors and minimizing the rewards for challenging behavior

Minimizing the physiological, environmental and curricular factors that trigger challenging behavior

Positive Behavior Support does not mean that teachers must become behavioral experts. Rather positive behavior support provides a means by which they may be able to become more clear, more predictable, more responsive, and more creative.

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