

## TEACHERS AS BUILDERS OF CHARACTER, NOT CHASTISERS

*by:*

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Teachers are often seen as symbols of discipline and guidance. Many people think that teachers are mainly responsible for correcting students' behavior, and while this is part of the job, it is not the main reason why we teach. More than delivering lessons and explaining concepts, teachers help shape the attitudes, values, and character of their learners. Education is not only about academic success; it is also about teaching respect, responsibility, and proper conduct (Hasanov & Brandišauskienė, 2025).

In maintaining discipline inside the classroom, patience is very important. Teachers encounter different kinds of learners, and sometimes students may test our patience through misbehavior during discussions or class activities. These situations can interrupt the learning process and challenge classroom management. Because of this, teachers use different disciplinary strategies to guide students and remind them of proper behavior (Eliseo, 2024).

However, when these strategies do not immediately work, it can be frustrating. Still, this does not mean that teachers should resort to physical punishment. As educators, we are not allowed to harm students physically, whether by hitting, grabbing, or throwing objects like chalk or erasers. According to DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012, also known as the Child Protection Policy, corporal punishment and any act that humiliates or degrades learners are strictly prohibited. This reminds us that discipline should always respect the dignity and rights of every child. Studies also show that positive discipline is more effective in helping students develop better behavior over time.

When dealing with classroom problems, it is important for teachers to stay calm and composed. Simple verbal reminders given in a respectful tone can already make a difference. Setting clear classroom rules and explaining the consequences of actions can also help students understand expectations. In cases where behavior continues to be a concern, working together with parents can provide better support for the learner.

Discipline does not always mean punishment. In fact, students respond better when teachers encourage them, recognize their efforts, and model respect in the classroom. Creating a positive and welcoming learning environment helps students feel safe and motivated, which also improves their academic performance and emotional growth.

At the end of the day, teachers are here to educate, guide, and build character. Our role is not to chastise but to help our students grow into responsible, respectful, and morally grounded individuals.

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