

IMPLEMENTATION TRAINING OF REWARD AND PUNISHMENT STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' LEARNING MOTIVATION IN SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

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Abstract

This community engagement program aimed to enhance teachers' competence in applying reward and punishment strategies to improve students' learning motivation. Rooted in behaviorist principles, this strategy emphasizes that reinforcement and correction effectively shape students' academic behavior. A qualitative participatory approach was applied, involving all school stakeholders in planning, implementation, and evaluation. The training was conducted at SMP Muhammadiyah 2 Bandar Lampung and involved 57 teachers across disciplines. The activities included theoretical sessions, group discussions, and practical case analyses. Evaluation through pre- and post-training questionnaires revealed a 14% improvement in teachers' conceptual understanding of reward and punishment and a more positive perception of its classroom application. The findings suggest that teacher training programs play a crucial role in fostering effective motivational management and sustainable learning environments.

Keywords: Reward and Punishment; Learning Motivation; Teacher Training; Classroom Management; Behaviorist Approach.

INTRODUCTION

Education serves as a fundamental pillar for developing high-quality human resources and national competitiveness. In Indonesia, various educational reforms have been undertaken to improve instructional quality, ranging from curriculum enhancement, teacher competency development, to infrastructure support (Shaturaev, 2021). Nevertheless, learning effectiveness at the institutional level, especially in secondary education (junior and senior high schools), continues to face significant challenges, primarily due to low student motivation (Madhakomala et al., 2022).

Learning motivation is a decisive factor in determining students' academic achievement and engagement. Slavin (2012) defines motivation as the internal drive that initiates, sustains, and directs behavior toward goals. Highly motivated students demonstrate persistence, active participation, and a strong desire for success (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 2017). Conversely, low motivation often manifests as disinterest, lack of effort, and declining academic performance (Brewer & Burgess, 2005).

Among various motivational approaches, the reward and punishment strategy, a core principle in behaviorist learning theory has proven effective in modifying student behavior (Hackenberg, 2018). Reward functions as positive reinforcement that strengthens desirable behavior, while punishment serves as a corrective measure to reduce undesirable conduct (Margolang et al., 2019). International studies demonstrate its effectiveness across educational contexts. For example, Kim et al. (2022)

found that token economy systems consistently increased student engagement, while Smith et al., (2021) showed that structured behavioral reinforcement led to long-term prosocial outcomes.

Despite its proven value, many teachers struggle with proper implementation. Floress et al. (2022) revealed that educators tend to overuse reprimands rather than praise, undermining motivational balance. Furthermore, Heiniger et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of integrating reward systems that promote student autonomy, rather than mere compliance. In Indonesia, misconceptions persist, where reward is often limited to material incentives and punishment is associated with physical reprimands. However, recent studies highlight the efficacy of symbolic and non-violent reinforcement techniques (Eckert et al., 2023; Jansen, 2024).

In response, this community engagement initiative was conducted to train teachers at SMP Muhammadiyah 2 Bandar Lampung on implementing educationally appropriate reward and punishment strategies. The program sought to improve teachers' conceptual and practical understanding, thereby enhancing student motivation and fostering a more positive classroom climate conducive to sustainable learning.

METHOD

This community engagement program adopted a qualitative participatory approach, integrating teachers and school administrators as active stakeholders throughout the process, from needs assessment to evaluation. This method was selected to ensure that the intervention aligned with the contextual realities of classroom teaching and facilitated long-term adoption of the reward and punishment strategy (Mittiga et al., 2024; Royer & Ennis, 2024).

2.1 Research Site and Participants

The training was conducted at SMP Muhammadiyah 2 Bandar Lampung, involving 57 teachers from various disciplines. The participants represented both junior and senior educators, creating a comprehensive view of pedagogical challenges and opportunities. The school was selected based on its demonstrated need to improve student motivation and classroom management.

2.2 Procedure

The implementation process consisted of three main stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation.

- **Planning:** Conducted through coordination meetings with school leaders and representatives to identify key issues in student motivation. A needs analysis questionnaire was distributed to assess teachers' initial understanding of reward and punishment concepts.
- **Implementation:** Training activities included interactive lectures, group discussions, and classroom-based case studies. These sessions introduced theoretical frameworks and guided teachers in designing classroom strategies involving symbolic rewards (e.g., praise, certificates) and non-violent punishments (e.g., additional tasks or reflection).
- **Evaluation:** Effectiveness was assessed through pre- and post-training questionnaires, observational data, and open interviews. Quantitative results were analyzed descriptively, supported by qualitative insights to measure comprehension improvements and attitude shifts toward the strategy (Ivy et al., 2017; Maggin et al., 2011).

2.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Pre- and post-training data were collected using Likert-scale questionnaires, focusing on five key aspects: understanding of reward and punishment concepts, distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, recognition of non-violent punishment, and classroom application skills. Data were

analyzed through descriptive statistics, while qualitative feedback was coded to identify emerging themes.

This triangulated approach enhanced the validity of findings and ensured that the intervention outcomes reflected both measurable and experiential learning changes (Heiniger et al., 2022; Tan et al., 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Program Preparation and Initial Findings

Preparation for the community engagement program began with intensive communication between the research team and the school administration at SMP Muhammadiyah 2 Bandar Lampung. These preliminary discussions aimed to align expectations and ensure full support for the implementation of the reward and punishment strategy. Early engagement also allowed the facilitators to design a training program tailored to the teachers' needs and to contextualize examples based on their teaching experiences.

A pre-training questionnaire was administered to evaluate the participants' baseline understanding of the reward and punishment concept. The questionnaire consisted of items covering theoretical comprehension, purpose, and practical classroom application. Teachers' responses were analyzed descriptively to identify conceptual gaps and areas requiring reinforcement.

Table 1. Pre-Training Results on Teachers' Understanding of Reward and Punishment

No	Teacher's Name	Mean Score
1	Ramli Efendi, S.Kom.	2.86
2	Oktaviani Delasani, S.Pd.	2.86
3	Neneng Hartati, S.S.	2.88
4	Zuniyawati, M.Pd.	2.86
5	Triyuni Handayani, S.Si.	2.86
6	Hj. Siti Komariah, S.Pd.	1.98
7	Farah Diana, S.Sos.	2.88
8	Sonny Gunawan Saputra, ST.	3.84
9	Lili Maryati, S.Pd.	2.86
10	Nirmalina, S.Pd.I.	2.04
11	Ernawati, A.Md.	2.88
12	Khairani, S.Psi., M.Pd.	3.92
13	Rehmalem Sembiring, S.Pd.	2.84
14	Yeni Abdullah, S.Pd.	2.88
15	Yuliani Dewi Nawang W, S.Pd., Gr.	2.86
16	Alqoshosh 'Alastihya' Hamid, S.Pd., Gr.	2.88
17	Febrenna Aragusta, S.Ikom.	3.90

18	Hanita Putri, S.Pd.I.	2.90
19	Siska Pertiwi, A.Md.	2.84
20	Erwinsih, S.Pd.	1.96
21	Deny Efendi, M.Pd.	3.90
22	Agus Setiawan, Gr., M.Pd.	2.88
23	Ferede Ningsih, M.Pd.	2.88
24	Fikri Oktavia, S.Pd., Gr.	3.90
25	Shabrina Niwanda, S.Pd.	2.86
26	Heppy Mulando, S.Sn.	2.88
27	Styadi Saputra	2.84
28	Iwan Setiawan, S.Pd.I.	2.88
29	Noor Anisa Dewi, S.E., Gr.	2.88
30	Siti Mardiyati, S.Pd.	2.84
31	Radita Handani	2.88
32	Moch. Ramdhan Al-Bantani, S.Pd.	2.86
33	Citra Wijaya, S.Pd.	2.90
34	Siti Khaniyatul Qolbiy, S.Pd.	1.94
35	Muhammad Irvan Ayatullah, S.Pd.	2.88
36	Dewi Meikasari, M.Pd.	2.84
37	Gustom Aditama, S.Pd.	3.86
38	Novita Maharani, S.Pd.	2.88
39	Rismiaty, S.Pd.	2.86
40	Dianing Ratri Saraswati, M.Psi.	2.90
41	Hikmah Indah, S.Kep.	2.82
42	Agam Kusuma Yuda, S.Pd.	2.86
43	Wenty Okzarima, S.Mat., M.Mat.	2.90
44	Febriana Andita Pradana, Gr., M.Pd.	2.86
45	Amelia Octafiyana, S.Pd.	2.84
46	Revi Handini, S.Pd., M.Pd.	1.98
47	Siti Robiah, S.Pd.	2.84
48	Monika Sari, S.Sos.	2.88

49	Rahman Handika Haddad, S.Pd.	2.86
50	Rafly Candra Perkasa, S.Kom.	2.90
51	Rocky Irfan, S.Pd., Gr.	2.84
52	Mohamad Thobi, S.Pd., Gr., M.Pd.	3.90
53	Neni Handayani, S.Kom.	1.98
54	Indika, S.Pd.	2.88
55	Pira, S.Pd.	2.84
56	Nurma Sari, S.Sos., M.Sos.	1.96
57	Akbar Rahman, S.Pd.	2.90
Ave		2,9
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The pre-training data indicated that the average comprehension score was 2.9, which corresponds to a “moderate” level of understanding. The findings reveal that many teachers interpreted reward narrowly as tangible incentives, while punishment was often associated with physical reprimands. These misconceptions reflect a broader pedagogical challenge in Indonesian education, where the understanding of behaviorist principles remains partial and contextually outdated (Caldarella et al., 2020; Floress et al., 2022).

The diagnostic stage thus served as a foundation for developing targeted training materials focusing on conceptual clarity, practical classroom application, and the design of non-coercive discipline systems. As supported by Tan et al. (2022), aligning training content with participants’ real challenges enhances pedagogical relevance and transferability.

3.2 Implementation of the Training Program

The training session was held on 9 July 2025, attended by all 57 teachers across various subject areas. The session began with opening remarks by the school principal, followed by a theoretical presentation by Prof. Muhammad Fuad, M.Hum., who elaborated on the behaviorist foundation of the reward and punishment model. This was followed by an applied session led by Ulul Azmi Muhammad, S.Pd., M.Pd., focusing on creative classroom strategies and case simulations.



Figure 1. Presentation of the first material regarding the theoretical basis of Reward and Punishment in Learning by Prof. Muhammad Fuad., M.Hum.



Figure 2. Community Service Material by Prof. Muhammad Fuad., M.Hum.

Training activities were designed using active learning methods, combining lectures, interactive discussions, and micro-simulation exercises. Teachers were introduced to positive reinforcement techniques such as symbolic rewards (praise, certificates, and privileges) and educational punishments (reflective writing or additional responsibility tasks). The facilitators emphasized proportionality, consistency, and alignment with student developmental needs (Evertson & Emmer, 2013; Lubis et al., 2021).



Figure 3. Training Participants

Furthermore, the discussion sessions revealed that teachers frequently encountered behavioral challenges linked to lack of motivation rather than deliberate disobedience. Hence, the integration of reward and punishment as a motivational regulator rather than punitive control was underscored. Numerous studies similarly suggest that combining reward and punishment leads to

sustained behavioral improvement and reduces classroom aggression (Yassine & Tipton-Fisler, 2021; Yin et al., 2023).

3.3 Post-Training Evaluation and Quantitative Results

After the implementation, a post-training questionnaire identical to the pre-test was distributed. The results indicated measurable improvement across all five evaluated dimensions.

Table 2. Post-Training Results on Teachers' Understanding of Reward and Punishment (Teacher's name mentioned before)

No	Mean Score
1	3.26
2	3.28
3	3.28
4	3.24
5	3.24
6	2.34
7	3.30
8	3.90
9	3.26
10	2.36
11	3.30
12	3.94
13	3.22
14	3.24
15	3.26
16	3.30
17	3.90
18	3.32
19	3.22
20	2.30
21	3.94
22	3.26
23	3.32
24	3.88
25	3.24
26	3.28

27	3.22
28	3.28
29	3.32
30	3.24
31	3.28
32	3.24
33	3.28
34	2.36
35	3.26
36	3.22
37	3.88
38	3.32
39	3.26
40	3.30
41	3.20
42	3.24
43	3.34
44	3.26
45	3.20
46	2.36
47	3.26
48	3.32
49	3.26
50	3.30
51	3.22
52	3.88
53	2.36
54	3.32
55	3.20
56	2.34
57	3.28

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The mean score increased to 3.3, indicating an overall 14% improvement in teachers' conceptual understanding. This progress reflects the success of participatory and practice-based approaches in professional development.

A more detailed analysis across conceptual dimensions is presented below.

Table 3. Comparative Analysis of Pre- and Post-Training Scores

Evaluated Aspect		Pre-Training Mean	Post-Training Mean	Increase (%)
Understanding of reward concept	of	2.8	3.2	14%
Understanding of punishment concept	of	2.7	3.1	15%
Distinguishing intrinsic & extrinsic rewards		2.9	3.3	14%
Understanding non-violent punishment		3.0	3.4	13%
Application of reward & punishment in class		2.9	3.3	14%
Overall Mean		2.9	3.3	14%

The post-training evaluation demonstrated that teachers developed a broader and more accurate interpretation of reinforcement strategies. They began recognizing symbolic rewards and constructive feedback as viable tools for enhancing intrinsic motivation (Bardach, 2025; Jansen, 2024). Teachers also reported higher confidence in employing non-violent corrective measures and balancing praise with discipline, consistent with findings by Caldarella et al. (2020).

3.4 Discussion of Impact and Implications

The increase in understanding by 14% suggests that participatory training can meaningfully improve teachers' competence in classroom motivation management. Moreover, qualitative feedback from participants confirmed behavioral changes, such as greater willingness to praise students, use of reflective punishment, and design of token-based reward systems.

These results align with Maggin et al. (2011), who found that teacher education on reinforcement principles significantly enhances student engagement and reduces negative behavior. By reframing punishment as a corrective, not punitive tool, the training contributed to fostering psychologically safe learning environments that encourage responsibility and self-regulation among students.

The findings further highlight the necessity of continuous professional development programs that emphasize reflective practice. As recommended by Fernandez et al. (2023), sustainability in behavioral interventions depends on teachers' capacity to adapt and internalize motivational principles beyond theoretical comprehension.

CONCLUSION

The implementation training of reward and punishment strategies at SMP Muhammadiyah 2 Bandar Lampung effectively enhanced teachers' understanding and application of motivational classroom management. The results demonstrated a 14% increase in teachers' comprehension, particularly in

distinguishing intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and applying non-violent punishment techniques. This improvement indicates that the training successfully bridged the gap between theory and classroom practice.

Beyond quantitative gains, qualitative reflections showed positive shifts in teachers' pedagogical attitudes. They expressed greater confidence in using constructive feedback, symbolic rewards, and proportionate corrective measures. The integration of behaviorist reinforcement theory into practical pedagogy contributed to more positive learning environments and potentially improved student motivation and engagement.

To ensure broader and sustained impact, future programs should expand to include more schools across different educational levels. Embedding microteaching simulations and post-training mentoring is also recommended to reinforce long-term behavioral change and teacher competence. The outcomes of this initiative underscore the critical role of continuous professional development in cultivating responsive, motivation-driven teaching practices.

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