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## Children and Discipline: Investigating Secondary School Students' Perception of Discipline through Metaphors

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**Abstract:** This is a descriptive study investigating the perception of children about discipline through metaphors developed by them. A total of 445 students participated in the research and the data was collected with the "Discipline Metaphors Survey (DMS)" developed by the researchers. At the end of the study, 143 metaphors, 94 positive and 49 negative, about discipline were gathered. The participating children mostly perceived discipline as a phenomenon guiding their behavior, maintaining the order, and as being necessary for the social life. Learning and development, self-control, protection mechanism, planned and ordered study, as well as collaboration are further positive perceptions of discipline. Negative metaphors, on the other hand, were usually power and control oriented and the discipline committee was described as the ultimate authority entity. Based on the students' views, discipline was provided through classroom rules and for misbehavior the teachers tended to use warnings, shouting/scolding and punishment. School rules, dress code as well as prohibited product checks at the entrance of the school, the Discipline Committee and discipline rules were reported as the most common practices of discipline in school. Most of the students who thought that punishment is necessary for discipline stated that the punishment should not involve physical violence and that it should be reasonable. Further expectations of the students found in the study included warning without shouting, doing enjoyable activities to address individual differences, informing everybody about the rules. Children's perception about discipline was usually affected by their teachers followed by their family and the school administration respectively.

**Keywords:** *Discipline, secondary school, student, metaphor.*

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### Introduction

Discipline problems can be observed at any level of education and cause stress for the educators. The reason is that these problems are very common (Farmer, 1999; Kiptala, Okero & Kipturo, 2011) and that the learning setting gets disturbed through undisciplined students (Arwood, Morrow, Lane & Jolivette, 2005; Moreno, Cervelló, & Martínez Galindo, 2007).

The aim of discipline is to develop responsibility and self-control skills of the students by supporting their mental, emotional and social development (Humphreys, 1999; Weber, 2003; Yavuzer, 1986). From this point of view, the role of the teachers is to develop relationships based on reciprocal respect and trust, to establish self-respect and to behave consistent by teaching the students classroom rules and guidance (Burden 1995). However, discipline is usually perceived as control since traditional disciplinary applications are usually based on punishment and teachers focus on being a dominant character holding the power (Boyaci, 2009; Scarlet, 1997). The related literature shows that teachers mostly tend to warn threat and punish students when they do not behave as expected or when disturbing the teaching process (Farmer, 1999; Karahanci, 2013; Kazu, 2007; Konti, 2011; Sadik, 2008; Sadik & Arslan, 2015; Sahin & Altunay, 2011; Ugurlu, Dogan, Sofortakimci, Ay & Zorlu, 2014).

Punishment is a reaction to remove disruptive behavior. However, it offers only short-time effects. It may also cause the repetition of misbehavior or different behavioral problems (Brophy, 1983; Doyle, 1986; Lewis, 2001). Positive discipline, on the other hand, refers to how to solve a problem and what to do to prevent its repetition. Teachers who tend to use a positive discipline approach focus on the reasons of misbehavior and try to take precautions to avoid them. They help the children to understand how their behavior affects others. Thus, they both discourage misbehavior and encourage establishing positive behavior (Charles, 1998; Pala, 2005). The teachers' instructing and management

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behavior is related to the quality of education. Therefore, the literature mostly investigated the teachers' perception about discipline and how they cope with deviation (Cankaya & Canakci, 2011; Celikkaleli & Inandi, 2012; Cetin, 2013; Ding, Li, Li & Kulm, 2008; Ekici & Ekici, 2014; Hemde, 2010; Johansen, Little & Akin-Little, 2011; Kulinna, 2007-2008; Kyriacou & Martin, 2010; Little 2005; Martin, Linfoot & Stephenson, 1999; Oliver, Wehby & Reschly, 2011; O'Neil & Stephenson, 2013; Sun & Shek, 2012; Yildirim, 2012; Yildiz, 2006).

There are many quantitative research studies investigating ways to tackle discipline from the point of view of the students (Duman, Cetin & Gelisli, 2004; Infantino & Little, 2005; King, Gullone & Dadds, 1990; Lewis, 2001; Oz & Sadik, 2015; Sadik, 2008; Sahin & Arslan, 2014; Sahin & Altunay, 2011; Tulley & Chiu, 1997, 1998) through questionnaires and scales. While the number of qualitative research studies focusing on how students perceive discipline is limited (Boyaci, 2009; Haroun & O'Hanlon, 1997; Kiptala et al., 2011; McMasters, 2002; Turhan & Yaras, 2013), no study is available addressing the issue by means of metaphors. Actually students are the ones expected to behave properly in class and at school. It is essential to find out how the students perceive this process in terms of evaluating the teachers' behaviour. In this study, the children's perception about discipline and their views about the application of discipline at school were examined. The following questions were aimed to be answered in the study:

1. What are the metaphors developed by the students about discipline and their reasons to develop these metaphors?
2. What are the factors affecting the children's perception about discipline?
3. What are the views and expectations of the children about the application of discipline in the classroom?
4. What are the views and expectations of the children about the application of discipline in schools?

## **Method**

### *The research model*

This is a phenomenological study investigating how children perceive discipline through metaphors developed by them. A phenomenological research study attempts to reveal examples, explanations and cases to help us understand a particular phenomenon (Cropley, 2002). Phenomenological research studies investigate the perceptions of people and their explanations of them. It aims to describe phenomena (Akturan & Esen, 2008). Metaphors are strong cognitive means that people use to understand an abstract and confusing concept and to explain it (Lakoff & Johnson, 2005). They are very useful to reveal how a concept is perceived and to illustrate a concept, case or a phenomenon expressively (Yildirim & Simsek, 2011). Therefore, the researchers decided to perform this study by means of metaphors.

### *Study Group*

A total of 445 students enrolled in the 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade from 12 secondary schools in the city of Adana participated in the study on a voluntary basis. For the 12 schools of the study group, three schools were chosen randomly from the four central districts of Adana respectively. 210 students were girls and 235 were boys. The mothers of these children aged 11-14 were usually graduates of primary schools (24.5%) and secondary schools (22.9%) while the fathers were university graduates (31.7%) and high school graduates (23.1%). 8.3 % of the children were in the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade, 18.4% in the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade, 59.3% in the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade and 13.9% were 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students.

### *Data collection tool*

The data of the research study was collected through the "Discipline Metaphor Survey" with six questions developed by the researcher. The children were first asked to complete a sentence "In my opinion, discipline is like ... because ...". Then four open-ended questions regarding how discipline is provided in the classroom and at school and how it should be employed followed. The last question was for the purpose of determining the factors affecting their view about discipline. The survey was conducted during a class hour in the students' own classrooms.

### *Data Analysis*

The statistical software SPSS was used to analyze the data gained through the Discipline Metaphors Questionnaire, calculating the mean and standard deviation. The content analysis technique was used for analyzing the qualitative data from the open-ended questions in the questionnaire. First the questionnaires were reviewed; 78 questionnaires with no metaphors, with metaphors but no explanations and with no relation between the metaphor and the explanation

were eliminated. Then the metaphors from 226 questionnaires as well as the explanations of discipline from 141 questionnaires, despite including no metaphors, were electronically saved. The raw data material was viewed a couple of times to determine the codes, the metaphors with similar features and codes to be grouped under the same theme. The explanations of the participating children as well as the related literature were taken into consideration for naming the themes. Thus the complicated data had been ordered and patterns in the data could be described. Finally, the data was ordered in a table to compare the themes and the codes. To present the finding, it was important to be complementary and to involve quotes from the views of the participants. Codes such as S271 or S21 were used to describe the students' quotes.

## Findings

### *Metaphors Developed by Children about Discipline*

The children have developed 143 valid metaphors (94 positive and 49 negative) about the discipline concept and they were sorted in eight main themes. Table 3.1 shows the frequency and the percentage distribution of these themes.

*Table1. Metaphors developed by children about discipline and the determined themes*

Themes	Metaphors	f	%
Social life and order	Life (f:7), teacher (f:4), home (f:5), military service (f:4), the backbone of school (f:3), cleaning (f:2), candle light (f:2), justice (f:2), brain (f:2), a nice life (f:2), speaking (f:2), a clean environment (f:2), parents (f:2), eating (f:2), tree (f:1), military (f:1), wind (f:1), tire (f:1), comb (f:1), program (f:1), school (f:1), peace (f:1), happiness (f:1), beauty (f:1), pencil case (f:1), army (f:1), Ataturk (f:1), light (f:1), task (f:1), traffic (f:1), law (f:1), lesson (f:1), game (f:1), chess (f:1), tap that must always be flowing (f:1), world (f:1), iron (f:1), computer game (f:1), seriousness (f:1), success (f:1), living (f:1), detail (f:1), silence (f:1), communication (f:1), trust (f:1), water (f:1), rate (f:1), substructure of a house (f:1)	75	33.6
Applying pressure/forcing	Military service (f:3), teacher (f:3), jail (f:2), torture (f:2), tree (f:2), key (f:1), quarantine (f:1), chocolate ice cream (f:1), father (f:1), parents (f:1), bread (f:1), death (f:1), stepping on gum thrown on the street (f:1), bird (f:1), sugar (f:1), eating (f:1), taking sweets from a child's hand (f:1), pencil (f:1), a withering flower (f:1), family (f:1), mother (f:1), a hard stone (f:1), salt on the dinner table (f:1), a wild bird (f:1), chain (f:1), being sentenced (f:1), glass (f:1), a bird wing (f:1), training an eagle (f:1), justice (f:1), crow (f:1), serious people (f:1), an angry person (f:1), order (f:1), a vice-principle (f:1), life issues (f:1)	43	19
Learning / developing	Education (f:5), lesson (f:3), teacher (f:3), favour (f:2), building (f:2), parents (f:2), gift (f:1), child (f:1), tree (f:1), lion (f:1), family (f:1), my family (f:1), chain (f:1), notebook (f:1), a blooming flower (f:1), military service (f:1), flower (f:1), growing flower (f:1)	29	12.8
Self-control	Reward (f:2), steering wheel (f:1), book (f:1), habit (f:1), mirror (f:1), cleaning (f:1), mother (f:1), freedom (f:1), success (f:1), humming top (f:1), balanced diet (f:1), crew (f:1), home (f:1), deep sea (f:1), get blood out of a stone (f:1), a sweet fruit on a tree (f:1), a piece of rope (f:1), a handful of sand (f:1), a bird in the cage (f:1), deposit (f:1), a key for all doors (f:1)	22	9.8
Authority	blame (f:2), lesson (f:2), crime (f:1), criminal (f:1), education (f:1), needle (f:1), nightmare (f:1), darkness (f:1), second teacher (f:1), bitter medication (f:1), jail (f:1), dream on the dessert (f:1), military service (f:1), giving lesson (f:1), danger (f:1), truth (f:1), order (f:1), disregarding the border (f:1), trap (f:1), catapult (f:1)	22	9.8
Protecting mechanism	Dictionary (f:1), a well-behaved child (f:1), dam (f:1), wall (f:1), manila rope (f:1), season (f:1), courthouse (f:1), justice (f:1), electricity circuit (f:1), teacher (f:1), electricity bulb (f:1), freedom (f:1), doing a favour (f:1), smiling face (f:1), machine (f:1)	15	6.6
Well-planned and regular studying	Success (f:4), ant (f:2), sailing on running water (f:1), rose thorn (f:1), education (f:1), chess board (f:1), doctors at the hospital (f:1), hard-working (f:1), program (f:1)	13	5.8
Collaboration	Harmony (f:1), birds in the sky (f:1), set (f:1), lions hunting an elephant (f:1), gearwheel (f:1), sheep herd (f:1)	6	2.6

N=	226	100.0
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As can be seen, the metaphors were mostly grouped under the theme “social life and order” (33.6%) followed by applying pressure/forcing (19.0%), learning-development (12.8%), self-control (9.8%), authority (9.8%), protecting mechanism (6.6%), planned and regular studying (5.8%) and collaboration (2.6%) respectively. Samples of the children’s reasons to use these metaphors are given subsequently according to the themes.

### *Theme 1: Social life and order*

The children who developed metaphors in this theme perceived discipline as a phenomenon required for the social life’s guiding behavior as well as regulating the environment and the life. The following statements are samples of the children’s metaphors:

“Discipline is like a comb. The comb regulates our hair so does discipline regulate our life” Student 22

“Discipline is like home. If our home is not organized, we cannot live comfortably. If there is no discipline at school then we cannot receive education comfortably.” Student 166

“Discipline is like a pencil case. When the pencil case is not closed, the pens fall apart, each of them goes somewhere else.” Student 11

“Discipline is like water. Because water is a necessity for our life. We cannot live without water. We cannot live in a certain order if there is no discipline.” Student 347

“Discipline is like the substructure of a house. The substructure holds the house together and discipline keeps people and the society together.” Student 271

### *Theme 2: Applying pressure/forcing*

Discipline is perceived as power and control by the children in the negative metaphors of this theme and they describe themselves as creatures forced to obey and to suffer. For example:

“Discipline is like glass, if you hold it too tight, it breaks; if you pressure the students too much, they cannot go on with their pace.” Student 251

“Discipline is like training an eagle. An eagle is a wild animal and it is difficult to train it. If you domesticate an eagle instead of training it, then an eagle is no longer an eagle.” Student 258

“Disciple is like a chain because it ties our hands and arms. We cannot do whatever we want.” Student 205

“Disciple is like torture because they shout at students or kick them off the school. We are just children.” Student 101

“Discipline is like a jail because there are always prohibitions; cut your hair, wear your uniform, or no talking.” Student 341

### *Theme 3: Learning-development*

Children presenting metaphors under this theme perceived discipline as a tool supporting personal development. The children who described the aim of discipline as teaching correctly and educating good people, showed parents, teachers and others as people teaching discipline. For example:

“We learned discipline and the rules of discipline through our education as we learned the letters with our education.” Student 54

“Discipline is like my family, because what caused me to be disciplined and what raised me respectful is my family.” Student 125

“Discipline is like a carving tool. When it is good, it carves the sharp and tingly parts off people.” Student 169

“When lions have baby lions, they educate them based on the rules of the nature. For humans, there is discipline to educate people.” Student 174

“Growing flowers is like a child’s start at school. The more you water the flowers, the more they grow. The more children are disciplined, the better they become.” Student 164

#### *Theme 4: Self-control*

Children who developed metaphors under this theme perceived discipline as a skill which is necessary to have but difficult to develop and showed themselves as persons who need to know their responsibilities. The following are some examples from the participating children’s own explanations:

“Discipline is like a steering wheel. If you do not control it, there might be bad consequences.” Student 19

“Discipline is like a piece of rope. It is in our hands to hold it tight and we need to show efforts not to let it break.” Student 183

“Discipline is like a rose thorn. A person must be as much disciplined as possible if s/he want to be successful. Success is a rose and discipline is its thorns.” Student 132

“Discipline is like home, it is difficult to reach but you become very happy when you reach it.” Student 104

“Discipline is a handful of sand. It is difficult to hold it; if you cannot hold it tight it fades away.” Student 189

#### *Theme 5: Authority*

Children perceived discipline as a super authority in the metaphors of this theme. Discipline was shown as a scary and miserable place in most of the negative metaphors while positive metaphors were used to state those discipline committees punish misbehaving students to civilize them. For example:

“Discipline is like a needle. When you misbehave and do not obey the rules, you are sent to the discipline committee and receive your punishment. I think it is stinging like a needle.” Student 34

“Discipline is like bitter medication. When we take medication we get well and when we are sent to the discipline committee we correct our mistakes.” Student 223

“Discipline is like a second teacher. Students who do not care about the teacher grow into adulthood when they are sent to discipline.” Student 180

“Discipline is like a trap. Children are interrogated about the wrong things they did at the committee and sometimes they are spanked or kicked off from school.” Student 142

#### *Theme 6: Protection mechanism*

By the metaphors in this theme group, discipline was perceived as a system/structure preventing discipline problems and harmful behavior, providing justice and protecting the people. For instance:

“Discipline is like a dam. If the gates of a dam are opened, the water flows away but when the doors are closed, it cannot cause harm.” Student 51

“Discipline is like a dictionary. Dictionaries give the right meaning of all words. Discipline also aims to understand the right things and it includes regulations.” Student 12

“Discipline is like a courthouse. It tries to understand and find out the faults and sorts the people with and without faults.” Student 277

#### *Theme 7: Planned and regular studying*

Discipline is perceived as the key to success in the metaphors of this theme and children show themselves as people required to undertake efforts. For example:

“Discipline is like a program. If we do everything on time, planned and regularly, then we can reach success.” Student 247

"Discipline is like a chessboard. If you put the chessman to the right place on time, then you will be the winner."  
Student 207

"Discipline is like sailing on flowing water. If you can do the right moves at the right time you can advance, otherwise you will get slower and fail." Student 6

#### *Theme 8: Collaboration*

The participating students perceived discipline as team work where everybody should take part in the metaphors of this theme. Some of the examples from their explanations:

"Discipline is like birds in the sky because the birds in the sky fly in a triangle shape and provide an order like this."  
Student 148

"Discipline is like lions hunting an elephant. An elephant is much stronger than a lion. It is required to work as team to hunt the elephant. Team work needs discipline and if there is no discipline then there will be chaos." Student 255

"Discipline is like gearwheel. If one of the wheels stops turning then the others have to stop, too. Discipline is also like this. If one student misbehaves, then the others might also go astray." Student 282

"Discipline is like a herd of sheep. If one sheep leaves the herd the others follow and the harmony gets broken." Student 349

When the explanations of the 141 children who did not develop metaphors about discipline were analyzed, it was detected that discipline was perceived synonymous with punishment (f:29), order (f:27), respect / being respectful (f:24), regulations (f:23), being well-behaved (f:16), beating and violence (f:13), responsibility (f:6), and justice (f:3). Some example explanations are given below:

"Discipline and punishment are the same because when you do something small but bad, they immediately punish you."  
Student 407

"Discipline is something people deserve. People get punishment according to their faults." Student 65

"Discipline means being respectful. People show respect to each other because they value each other. Thus, discipline is set." Student 129

"Discipline is violence. Because they solve all problems with violence, which frustrates me." Student 165

"Discipline, nurture, respect, and order are all related to each other. Because if one is missing, the others cannot exist."  
Student 209

#### *The Children's Views about the Factors Affecting Their Perception of Discipline*

Another question in the questionnaire asked the children to answer what related to the factors affecting the children's point of view about discipline. A descriptive statistics of the answers to this question are shown in Table 2.

*Table 2. The factors affecting the children's point of view about discipline (N=367)*

Factors	Mean	Standard dev.
Teachers	4.24	1.15
Family	4.20	1.19
School administration	3.93	1.36
Grandparents and other relatives	3.35	1.46
Friends	3.28	1.32
Television programs	2.63	1.40
News on the news paper	2.59	1.39
Series	2.29	1.44

As can be seen in Table 2, teachers ( $X=4.24$ ), family ( $X=4.20$ ) and school administration ( $X=3.90$ ) were found to be more effective towards the children's perception about discipline while series were found least effective. Some children also stated that the environment (f:30), magazines/cartoons/books (f:19), games (f:11) and practices in the school settings (f:8) were effective for their perception of discipline.

*The Children's Point Of View about Discipline Practices in the Classroom and Their Expectations*

The explanations about the children's point of view about discipline practices in the classroom and their expectations are summarized in Table 3.

*Table3. The children's views and expectations about the application of discipline in the classroom (N=367)*

Teachers' behaviors	f	%	Expectations from teachers	f	%
Punishment	140	38.1	Punishment without physical violence, reasonable and aversive punishment	78	21.2
Elect a class leader	83	22.6	A fair class leader who is nice to his/her friends	35	9.5
Setting up classroom rules	73	19.9	Enabling everybody to obey the classroom rules and to apply the rules consistently	30	8.2
Warning	64	17.4	Warning without shouting and offending anybody	55	15.0
Shouting-Scolding	48	13.0		-	-
Referring to discipline committee	29	8.0	Suspending misbehaving students from school	8	2.2
Giving explanations (about the discipline and regulations)	21	5.7	Convincingly informing the students about the educational activities without forcing	17	4.6
Writing minutes	19	5.2	-	-	-
Referring the student to the school principle / Calling the school principle	17	4.6	-	-	-
Face-to-face interaction with the student	12	3.3	Demonstrating care about the problem and the reasons, giving a second chance, etc.	24	6.5
Using rewards	10	2.7	Praising	16	4.3
Referring the student to the educational counselor / Calling the	9	2.4		1	0.2
Checking the students' prohibited objects	8	2.2	More often and regularly	1	0.2
Threat /challenge	8	2.2	Not threatening students, be smiling	12	3.3
Meeting the parents	8	2.2	Informing the parents about the regulations	14	3.8
Behavior contract – observing behavior	7	2.0	Observing the students' behavior more regularly and carefully	2	0.5
Isolating (changing the seat of the student, taking the student out of the classroom)	6	1.6	Putting the misbehaving students in another part of the classroom, sending them to a different classroom	10	2.7
Making the teaching materials more effective (using more enjoyable materials, organizing tutoring)	6	1.6	Taking personal differences into account, behaving with care, arranging group work, encouraging the students to succeed	44	12.0
Making changes in the physical setting (rearranging the location of the furniture)	5	1.4	Clean classrooms, smaller-sized classrooms, setting cameras, offering a wish-box	8	2.2
Collaborating with the students (holding class meetings, electing class)	5	1.4	Setting the classroom rules together, receiving feedback about the lessons, giving	10	2.7
Assigning tasks	4	1.1	Taking more care of the students	2	0.5

As can be seen in Table 3, the students reported that teachers usually apply discipline through punishment (f:140), by electing a class leader (f:83), setting up of classroom rules (f:73), warnings (f:64), shouting/scolding (f:48) and referring to the discipline committee. Face-to-face interaction with the student, using rewards, changing the flow of the lesson, collaborating with the students, and giving problematic students responsibilities were rarely reported as behaviors of the teachers. Exemplary sentences of the participating students follow below:

“When there is too much noise in the classroom, the teacher gave us negative points and sometimes the vice-principle comes to the classroom, shouts at us and pulls our ears.” Student 41

“When we misbehave, they usually warn us and if we continue with our misbehavior, they say we would be sent to the discipline committee. One student swore in the class. The teacher took the student to the principle’s room and its parents were called. When the student swore again, the student was sent to the discipline committee.” Student 368

“The classroom-rules list was prepared. If a student receives five minus scores, then s/he will be punished and asked to promise to behave more carefully.” Student 217

“The students whose names are written on the board at the back have to pay a fine. The money will be collected and then some food will be bought with this money and we will eat it. There is also shouting and beating.” Student 406

“It is difficult to follow the lesson during the last lessons as we are all tired by then. Our teachers employ entertaining activities in the last 10 minutes.” Student 17

As can be seen in Table 3, most of the children expected the teachers to apply punishment without physical violence (f:78), and to give their warnings without scolding (f:55). Other noticeable expectations of the children were the teachers’ use of more enjoyable materials in the classroom (f:44), enabling everybody to understand the rules (f:30), and understanding the students’ behavior during student meetings (f:20). Besides that, 32 students reported that they expected their peers to perform their responsibilities and 16 students reported that the teachers should be much more strict while applying in-class discipline. Some of the explanations of the children are given below:

“Instead of punishing somebody, they should invite the parents to the school. Teachers sometimes should hold their lessons in the school yard instead of continually doing the lessons in class. Then students would be smiling more.” Student 70

“There should be punishment and the parents should be invited when students do not do their homework. However, good students should be rewarded.” Student 190

“Teachers should talk to the students about problems instead of always trying to apply discipline. This causes the child to feel being stuck.” Student 220

“Teachers should be stricter. They should shout aloud. Our teacher loves us and does not want to hurt our hearts but we do not appreciate it.” Student 132

“While providing discipline in class, they should consider individual differences. They fail because they try to do it in general.” Student 5

#### *The children’s Views and Expectations about the Application of Discipline at School*

Table 4 summarizes the views and expectations of the students about the application of discipline at school.

*Table4. The children’s views and expectations about the application of discipline at school (N=367)*

Applications	f	%	Expectations	f	%
Referring to discipline committee	68	18.5	-	-	-
Applying the rules of the school	59	16.0	Being fair while applying the rules and not discriminating the students	30	8.2
Disciplinary punishment (warning, censure, suspending from school etc.)	54	14.7	Giving deterrent punishment, suspending misbehaving students or expelling if needed	82	22.3
Checking the students’ dress code, prohibited objects/materials	54	14.7	-		
Physical violence	52	14.1	Some students should receive beating	6	1.6

Table 4. Continued

Applications	f	%	Expectations	f	%
Educational counseling (informing and counseling)	51	13.9	Doing presentations about the disciplinary and school rules to inform everybody, giving special care to	49	13.5
Warning	50	13.6	Warning clearly without shouting or beating	40	10.9
Providing security at school (security staff and cameras, etc.)	22	6.0	Tightening security at school (security staff, cameras, x-ray scanners)	10	2.7
Observing student's behavior (guarding teachers in the corridors, in the yard, on the floors)	20	5.4	Improving the number of guarding teachers in the yard, having the school principle walking around in the school	14	3.8
Informing the family (about leaving school without a permission, fighting, bringing prohibited materials or objects)	19	5.2	Meeting the parents, providing information to them and informing them about taking better care of their	18	4.9
Shouting and scolding	16	4.3			
Referring students to the school principle	12	3.2			
Talking face-to-face with the student (advising, explaining)	8	2.2	Effective communication, listening to the students, understanding their problems, using proper language	42	11.4
Threatening	7	2.0	Threatening students who disregard warnings	4	1.1
Awarding (clean and successful classrooms)	6	1.6	Displaying the successful classrooms and students at the corner of honor	4	1.1
			No idle classes, using technology in the class, informing students about social and sports activities	12	3.2
			Clean school and classrooms, offering various spots for students in the school yard	11	3.0
			Involving students for decision-making processes, electing student representatives	11	3.0

As can be seen in Table 4, students reported that discipline at school is provided through the discipline committee (f:68) and school rules (f:59) and that misbehaving students are disciplinary punished (f:54). Students who stated that those who do not wear the school uniform and who have prohibited objects/materials are not allowed to enter the school premises reported that methods such as physical violence, warning, sending the student to the counseling center were applied for disciplinary problems. For instance;

"Students who leave the school without permission are reported to their parents and they are punished. Announcements about the importance of the knowledge of and the school rules were hung on the walls to encourage the students." Student 18

"Students are punished but first they were warned to secure discipline at our school. The reason for that is to give the students time to think about their misbehavior." Student 11

"There are school rules and they check the dress code and prohibited objects every day. Phones are collected. They talked to the students and provided counseling at the theatre hall of the school." Student 253

"Iron fences were built to avoid students leaning out of the windows and there is security staff at the gate. Guarding teachers walk around the school yard during the break times." Student 7

"When students are involved in a fight, they will be sent to the discipline committee and they beat us there." Student 70

The students' expectations about discipline focuses around punishing misbehaving students (f:82). Educational counseling support about the school rules, effective communication with the students and fairly applying the school rules were other expectations of the students. Here are some sample explanations by the participating students:

"Two friends had a fight and official complaint letters were written to send them to the discipline committee but they were not issued. There should be certain punishments and rewards. Everybody does what they want and they even do not apologize. There should be justice." Student 221

"Every class should have its own place on the school's notice board and photos of the best-behaving students from each class should be displayed. Students whose photos were displayed the most should get rewarded." Student 243

"There is no security staff at the school. There is no punishment for those who do not wear the school uniform. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade students smoke after the end of the school time. These matters should be discussed." Student 329

"There should be punishments for every misbehavior and these should be put on the notice boards in the classes. Thus, students could know about the punishment for misbehavior." Student 314

"Everybody should be aware of their responsibilities. If a student makes the same mistake more than once, the punishment should not only be for the sake of punishing but to help to understand the mistake." Student 269

### **Discussion**

At the end of the study, it was discovered that the participating students' perceived discipline mostly positive and that they described discipline as a phenomenon determining their behavior and organizing the social life. The children who stated that the aim of discipline is to furnish rights to children described adults as people teaching discipline. This result can imply that children are aware of discipline being an essential part of the school life and that a lack of discipline may cause negative outcomes. Besides that, the number of students, who described discipline as people dealing with their responsibilities, being in a struggle and collaborating, is very low. In this respect, it can be said that children regard the teachers as responsible for providing and maintaining discipline in the classroom and at school and they perceive their own roles as passive.

The results of the study show that the children's negative perception about discipline derives from the methods used to deal with discipline problems. According to the views of the participants, discipline in the classroom is provided through the classroom rules and the teachers usually apply warning, shouting/scolding, and punishment (giving a minus, sending the student to the school administration, or physical violence) for misbehavior. School rules, checking the students at the entrance, discipline rules, and disciplinary penalties are the most used methods in school discipline. The students, who viewed these regulations as domineering/compelling, described themselves as suffering living creatures. The findings show that disciplinary regulations do not change to a large extent, ignore the students' individual development and emotional needs but focus on behavior control. Discipline is an entire concept enabling the realization of learning/teaching activities and to provide in-classroom interaction. It is necessary to have classroom and school rules for creating learning settings and providing community order due to oversized student groups. However, the existence of rules/standards does not necessarily mean that students behave well-disciplined (Moreno et.al. 2007). Discipline means gaining a sense of responsibility and learning how to develop to control one's behavior (Yavuzer, 2003). Punishments, which are not appropriate to the age of the student, their physical and intellectual conditions or the misbehavior itself, do not help the students to understand or to correct their behavior. Shouting, scolding, and condemning are rather pushing the limits and do not inspire the students towards good behavior (Mensah, 2009). These applications with an external focus are not sufficient for the students to develop their abilities of controlling their behavior and to internalize moral values (Edwards, 1993). Besides that, they may also affect the students' perception about discipline. The results of research studies performed on different educational levels, revealing the fact that students perceive discipline as punishment and getting dismissed from the school as well as the school administration's absolute power; support this view (Boyaci, 2009; Turhan & Yaras, 2013, Yalcin & Erginer, 2017).

Despite its negative connotations, the continuing trend of punishment in discipline might be associated with the rising rates of misbehavior at schools. (Astor, Behre, Fravil & Wallace, 1997; Casella, 2003; Skiba, 2014; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace & Bachman, 2008). State schools especially in city centers enroll too many students. The more students are enrolled in a school, the more difficult it is to provide safety and order at the schools and in the classrooms, to observe the daily routines of the students and to find out the reasons behind their behavior (Wolfgang, 1995). Therefore, worries about discipline might lead teachers and school administrations towards a policy of zero tolerance and punishment. Misbehaving students not only cause the teachers' but also the other students' decreasing motivation or experiencing negative feelings (worry, fear, sadness, stress, etc.). In this regard, it has been identified that the students have similar worries, as the students view punishment, although stating that it should not involve physical violence, as

necessary for discipline and they request to dismiss or suspend misbehaving students from school. Additionally, the reason why students assess punishment as justified could be a characteristic of their development period. According to Kohlberg (1981), children aged 11-14 years have a rules-and-order tendency with regard to their moral development. The appropriate behavior for children in this age group is to obey the rules and misbehaving children are not accepted. (Kohlberg, 1981; in Senemoglu, 2013, p.68). Further expectations of the children with regard to discipline are that warnings should be done without scolding, rules should be communicated, its application should be consistent, learning activities should be more enjoyable, and that students should be interviewed about their behavior. Although shared only limited, some students focused on the regulations for the physical settings of the school and stated that they would like to have the right to comment the decisions regarding the school life. These findings could be paraphrased that the children trust the adults with regard to provide discipline and that they need a reasonable guidance helping them to understand their mistakes and to improve the settings forcing them into misbehavior. The perception of discipline is shaped by the social environment, the shared values of this environment, culture, and the relationship of teachers and students (Levis, Shlamo, Yaacov & Xing, 2008; Neff & Helwing, 2002). The students stated that their perception of discipline is mostly affected by their teachers, their families and the school administration. Therefore, the differences among the students' perception of and expectations towards discipline could be the product of the social environment of their schools as well as the adopted discipline approaches of their teachers and the school administration.

### Results and Suggestions

This study reveals that the children's perceptions about the nature of discipline are usually positive and that they are aware of the necessity of discipline. Negative perceptions of the students are usually about the application of discipline. Discipline in the classroom and at schools continues to be provided through authoritarian methods and practices as well as guidance towards a meeting of the needs of the children are usually ignored. The students regarded rules and punishment as necessary for discipline but they questioned the fairness and the reasoning of its application. The students' expectations towards discipline are that everybody should be informed about the rules, teaching should address their interests and needs, the reasons behind problematic behavior should be analyzed and that it creates an effective interaction with the students. In this respect, the following suggestions have been developed:

- The rules should be adopted and the students should be involved in the process of setting the classroom rules to motivate them to take responsibilities about their behavior.
- School administrations should develop reasonable discipline policies and procedures and the teachers, students and parents should be informed about them to prevent and to deal with discipline problems (through meetings, seminars, posters, pictures, brochures, etc.).
- Lessons should be taught through more effective methods, educational guidance and physical regulations (space for social, sportive, or cultural activities, games) should be given more importance to encourage the students to make sound decisions and to develop a positive behavior.
- Changing the negative attitude towards discipline should be on the schools' agenda and teachers should be supported to improve their knowledge and skills about preventing and improving discipline through in-service teacher training programs.

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