



GRADUATE SCHOOL
EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

East Tennessee State University
Digital Commons @ East
Tennessee State University

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Student Works

5-2025

Perception of Parents and Teachers on Discipline Strategies for Preschoolers in Some Selected Schools in Nigeria and the United States of America

Solape Folaranmi
East Tennessee State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.etsu.edu/etd>

 Part of the [Early Childhood Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Folaranmi, Solape, "Perception of Parents and Teachers on Discipline Strategies for Preschoolers in Some Selected Schools in Nigeria and the United States of America" (2025). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. Paper 4486. <https://dc.etsu.edu/etd/4486>

This Thesis - unrestricted is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Works at Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. For more information, please contact digilib@etsu.edu.

Perception of Parents and Teachers on Discipline Strategies for Preschoolers in Some Selected
Schools in Nigeria and the United States of America

A thesis

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Early Childhood Education

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Early Childhood Education

by

Solape Folaranmi

May 2025

Dr. Amy Malkus, Chair

Dr. Pamela Evanshen

Dr. Ruth Facun-Granadozo

Keywords: discipline strategies, behavioral challenges, impact on preschoolers' development

ABSTRACT

Perception of Parents and Teachers on Discipline Strategies for Preschoolers in Some Selected Schools in Nigeria and the United States of America

by

Solape Folaranmi

This study examined the perceptions of parents and teachers on discipline strategies used for preschoolers in Nigeria and the United States. It explored their choice(s) of discipline strategies, similarities and differences, and the perceived impacts on preschoolers' development. The study aimed to identify effective and appropriate strategies.

This qualitative study used semi-structured Zoom interviews with 6 teachers and 6 parents from both countries. Interview data were analyzed using Atlas.ti software to identify key themes and patterns. Findings revealed cross-cultural differences in discipline approaches, with Nigerian participants showing high acceptance of corporal punishment as a discipline strategy while the USA participants emphasized positive reinforcement. However, both groups recognized the need for individualized strategies. The perceived effectiveness also differed, with Nigerian participants focusing on obedience to rules and academic readiness while the USA participants focused mostly on preschoolers' social-emotional development. Recommendations include increased teacher/parent education on positive discipline strategies and home-school collaboration.

Copyright 2025 by Solape Folaranmi

All Rights Reserved

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work first to God almighty for making this possible and seeing me through this journey despite several challenges. Also, to my parents, Dr. and Mrs. Folaranmi, thank you for the constant showers of love, motivation, and prayers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my committee chair, Dr. Amy Malkus, for her invaluable guidance, support, and patience throughout this research journey. Her knowledge and insights have been instrumental in shaping this study and my personal growth as a researcher. I am also immensely grateful to my committee members, Dr. Pamela Evanshen and Dr. Ruth Facun-Granadozo, for their thoughtful feedback, encouragement, and the time dedicated to this research despite their busy schedules. A special thank you also goes to Ms. Clara Puni, whose assistance, advice, and cross-cultural research experience were crucial during various stages of this study. Your willingness to share your knowledge and experience is deeply appreciated.

I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my friends, Peter Michael and Oshuntoki Ibukunola, who have been an incredible support system throughout this process. Your encouragement and understanding are invaluable in helping me persevere through challenges. I am also deeply grateful to Mr. and Dr. Adebayo for their constant prayers and unwavering support. It has been a source of strength and inspiration throughout this journey.

Finally, I am grateful to all the participants who generously shared their time and experiences, making this research possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	2
DEDICATION	4
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	5
LIST OF TABLES	12
LIST OF FIGURES	13
Chapter 1. Introduction	14
Background	16
Purpose of the Study	18
Research Questions	18
Definition of Terms	19
Significance of the Study	20
Chapter 2. Literature Review	21
Theoretical Frameworks	21
Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory	21
Social Learning Theory	24
B. F. Skinner's Theory of Discipline	26
Diana Baumrind’s Theory	27
Discipline Strategies	29
Types of Discipline Strategies	31

Behavioral Challenges.....	46
Aggressiveness	47
Non-Compliance	48
Hyperactivity.....	50
Destructive Behavior.....	51
Hallmarks of Development.....	52
Socio-Emotional Development.....	52
Effective Communication Skills.....	53
Social Interaction.....	55
Positive Relationship Skills.....	56
Self-Awareness.....	58
Discipline Strategies in Nigeria and the United States of America.....	59
Chapter 3. Methods	62
Research Design.....	62
Participant Selection.....	63
Demographic Characteristics of Survey Participants.....	64
Participants’ Demographic Information and Consent	66
Data Collection Protocol and Procedure	67
Data Analysis Procedure	69
Trustworthiness and Credibility	72

Member Checking.....	72
Inter-Coder Reliability	73
Peer Debriefing	76
Ethical Considerations.....	76
Researcher's Role and Positionality.....	78
Chapter 4. Findings.....	80
Thematic Analysis.....	80
RQ1- What Are the Perceptions of Selected Parents and Teachers in Nigeria and the United States on Discipline Strategies for Preschoolers?	81
Theme 1: Varying Views of Parents and Teachers on Discipline.....	81
Category 1.1 Exerting Control	82
Category 1.2 Teaching Appropriate Behavior	83
Category 1.3 Ensuring Rules and Standards	84
Theme 2: Factors Influencing Participants' Choice of Discipline Strategy.....	84
Category 2.1 Education and Training.....	86
Category 2.2 Experience	86
Subcategory 2.21 Personal Experience	86
Subcategory 2.22 Professional Experience.....	87
Category 2.3 Religion	87
Category 2.4 Culture	87

Theme 3: Challenging Behaviors Identified by Participants	88
Category 3.1 Aggression.....	89
Category 3.2 Non-Compliance.....	90
Category 3.3 Destructive Behavior	90
Category 3.4 Reasons Attributed to Challenging Behavior.....	91
Category 3.4.1 Transitional Times	92
Category 3.4.2 Lack of Ability to Regulate Emotions	92
Category 3.4.3 Attachment to Technological Devices	92
Category 3.4.4 Difficulties with Routines	92
Theme 4: Discipline Strategies Identified	93
Category 4.1 Positive/Constructive Discipline.....	94
Category 4.2 Reinforcement (Positive and Negative)	95
Category 4.3 Preventive Discipline.....	96
Category 4.4 Corrective Discipline	96
Category 4.5 Non-Verbal Cues	97
Category 4.6 Corporal Punishment	97
Category 4.7 Modeling.....	98
RQ2 - In What Ways Are These Strategies Similar and Different?	99
Theme 5: Similarities and Differences in Discipline Strategies	99
Views on Corporal Punishment.....	100

Handling Misbehavior.....	100
Application of Positive Discipline.....	100
Multiple Approach	100
RQ3 - How Do Parents and Teachers Perceive That These Various Approaches to Managing Preschooler Behavior Affect Preschoolers’ Conduct and Development in Nigeria and the US?	102
Theme 6: Perceived Effectiveness and Impacts of Discipline Strategy on Preschoolers’ Development.....	102
Category 6.1 Social-Emotional Skills	104
Category 6.2 Academic Readiness	104
Category 6.3 Obedience to Rules.....	105
Chapter 5. Discussion.....	108
Key Findings	108
Implications of the Study.....	111
Limitations	112
Implications for Policy and Practice.....	113
Future Research.....	114
Conclusion.....	114
References	115
APPENDICES.....	128

Appendix A: Interview Questions	128
Appendix B: Prescreening Data Collection Survey and Consent.....	129
Appendix C: Recruitment Email	132
Appendix D: Recruitment Flyer	134
VITA	135

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Demographic Survey	65
Table 2. Radiker and Kuckartz Step One	74
Table 3. Radiker and Kuckartz Step Two	75
Table 4. Varying Views of Parents and Teachers on Discipline	82
Table 5. Factors Influencing Participants' Choice of Discipline Strategy	85
Table 6. Challenging Behaviors	89
Table 7. Reasons Attributed to Challenging Behaviors.....	91
Table 8. Discipline Strategies Identified	93
Table 9. Perceived Effectiveness and Impact on Development.....	103
Table 10. Thematic Definitions	105

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory	23
Figure 2. Social Learning Theory	25
Figure 3. B.F. Skinner Operant Conditioning and Learning	27
Figure 4. Varying Views of Parents and Teachers on Discipline	81
Figure 5. Factors Influencing Participants’ Choice of Discipline Strategy.....	85
Figure 6. Challenging Behavior	88
Figure 7. Reasons Attributed to Challenging Behavior.....	91
Figure 8. Discipline Strategies.....	94
Figure 9. Similarities and Differences in Discipline Strategies.....	99
Figure 10. Impact of Effectiveness on Development	103
Figure 11. Thematic Map	107

Chapter 1. Introduction

The kind of behavior children exhibit, either negative or positive, has been largely attributed to parenting style, family structure, training, discipline, and guidance given to children in school, home, and society. As stated by Purnama (2022), behavioral challenges are a global issue acknowledged among scholars, and these challenges are often linked with parenting styles. As an individual who grew up in Nigeria and later worked as an educator in both Nigeria and the United States, I have observed that behavioral challenge is not limited to a particular race, tribe, culture, or country. It is an issue that transcends beyond geographical boundaries and cultural contexts. Having experienced corporal punishment both at school and home during my formative years, I witnessed firsthand how disciplinary approaches can significantly impact a child's socio-emotional development and self-esteem. My journey of having to actively rebuild my confidence and ability to voice opinions in adulthood has informed my understanding of the profound and long-lasting effects of discipline strategies employed by families and caregivers.

According to a study conducted in Sweden, behavior problems such as aggression, non-compliance, hyperactivity, and destructive behavior are part of normal development in early childhood, but young children who display high levels of these behaviors are at greater risk for continued behavior problems including having a higher risk of engaging in violent behavior, as well as drug and alcohol abuse (Salari et al., 2014).

This means the occurrence of behavioral problems in children is an expected part of their development, but a high level of it is what needs to be studied and considered. I believe this signifies that having children with behavioral challenges is not geographically specific, rather it is a global phenomenon, and the effect of misconduct has a long-term impact on a child's personality. For example, Abdulmalik (2016) states that a high level of physical aggression in

childhood is strongly predictive of future criminality.

Several research studies have established multiple factors as being responsible for child misbehavior. One such factor that may contribute to behavior problems is the lack of adequate discipline. Commonly, children misbehave when they are tired, bored, or hungry. Children often misbehave when they are deprived of adult attention; misbehavior may elicit attention, and parental scolding may unintentionally reinforce the undesired behavior (Banks, 2002). This is why discipline and guidance are largely attributed to how children turn out behavior-wise. Researchers have hence investigated what is most effective when it comes to discipline in young children and have identified 3 essential components of effective discipline: 1) a positive, supportive, loving relationship between the parent(s) and child; 2) the use of positive reinforcement strategies to increase desired behaviors, and 3) removing reinforcement or applying punishment to reduce or eliminate undesired behaviors. All components must function well for discipline to be successful (Guidance for Effective Discipline, 1998).

Discipline is not a factor that has been left in the hands of parents alone; the school and caregivers/teachers are also responsible because children spend a reasonable amount of time in the school environment as much as they do at home or even more. Managing problem behaviors at school is an ongoing reality for many classroom teachers. According to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (2019), not knowing how to manage this deficiency on the part of schools and caregivers has resulted in an increase in the expulsion rates of preschoolers. The department stated that:

Many school-based administrators do not have early childhood development backgrounds and thus, do not understand when a problem behavior may be developmentally normative. Collectively, this has resulted in preschoolers being expelled 3 times more

than the K-12 population according to national data. (p. 2)

However, the approach to child discipline and guidance varies according to country, society, and family.

Background

For this research, two different countries were examined: the United States of America and Nigeria. In Nigeria, children who show signs of behavioral deficiencies are mostly corrected with the use of corporal punishment. Both rural and urban public schools in Nigeria use corporal punishment as a means of correction at the primary school level. The authorities that apply retributive punishment sometimes claim that such punishment will help to curb the excesses of young children in wrongdoing (Aboluwodi, 2015).

In Nigeria, corporal punishment can range from the use of items such as leather belts, wooden spoons, slippers, etc. to the use of birch twigs for lashes across the back or hitting the back of the hand with rulers (Iguh & Nosike, 2011). The use of corporal punishment was quite prevalent and more dominant. The interview data was analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach. This systematic method allows researchers to identify, analyze, and report patterns within qualitative data. The analysis process involved familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. Using ATLAS.ti software (Web version 24), the researcher coded and categorized the interview transcripts to identify key themes that addressed the research questions about perceptions of discipline strategies among parents and teachers in Nigeria and the United States. In total, six major themes emerged from the analysis, providing insights into how discipline strategies are understood, implemented, and

perceived to impact preschoolers' development across these cultural contexts. the 18th century after which “the concept of corporal punishment was attacked by some philosophers and legal reformers. Physical chastisement became less frequent until, in the twentieth century, corporal punishment was either eliminated as a penalty or restricted to beating with a birch rod, cane, whip, or other scourge” (Iguh & Nosike 2011, p.106). Although the use of corporal punishment was discouraged in the Child’s Rights Act (CRA) of 2003, the bamboo cane is still being used to correct misbehavior in learners to this day in Nigeria. Also, acceptance of this ban against corporal punishment differs between educated parents and illiterate ones. Educated parents are more accepting of the idea of discouraging corporal punishment while the illiterate ones believe that banning corporal punishment is “an unheard-of venture and a proposal to strike at the very heart of sensible child rearing” (Iguh & Nosike, 2011, p. 108).

Contrary to popular opinion, corporal punishment in US homes is not illegal. Throughout the 50 states of the United States of America, corporal punishment is lawful in the home despite some opposition. “Reasonable force” and “non-excessive corporal punishment” are typically allowed by the laws of each state. Bans have been proposed in Massachusetts and California on all corporal punishment of children, including by parents, but these moves were heavily defeated (Iguh & Nosike, 2011). A more recent article by Greene-Santos (2024) states that as of 2024, corporal punishment is allowed in 17 states and practiced in 14. An additional six states have not officially forbidden it. Also, several members of Congress have attempted to ban corporal punishment in schools. Sen. Christopher Murphy (D-CT) presented the “Protecting Our Students Act” in May 2023, which would criminalize corporal punishment in federally funded schools.

In other words, what constitutes legally accepted corporal punishment and what counts as excessive corporal punishment (and arguably illegal discipline) varies widely across countries. In

some countries, physical force against a child by an adult is entirely outlawed. In other countries, corporal punishment is not only lawful but culturally sanctioned (Breger, 2019).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the perception of parents and teachers on discipline strategies being utilized for preschoolers in a small sample size of three parents and three teachers from one school each in both countries (Nigeria and the United States of America) and find if there is a convergence in what will be effective and developmentally appropriate for both parents and teachers of young children. This study is qualitative, exploring categorical variables like approaches and strategies utilized for discipline in both countries. Beginning with the understanding that most people in Nigeria approve of the use of corporal punishment for discipline while a larger number disapprove in the United States, this research seeks to find out what discipline strategies are being used from the perception of parents and teachers, whether these strategies have been effective in both countries and by what means are this effectiveness measured in both countries.

Research Questions

The present study specifically asks the following questions:

RQ1- What are the perceptions of selected parents and teachers in Nigeria and the United States on discipline strategies for preschoolers?

RQ2- In what ways are these strategies similar and different?

RQ3- How do parents and teachers perceive that these various approaches to managing preschooler behavior affect preschoolers' conduct and development in Nigeria and the US?

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are key terms in this study:

- **Discipline Strategies:** This refers to the various methods and means employed by teachers and families in teaching and nurturing children to achieve behavioral competence, self-control, self-direction, and caring for others as well as strategies for strengthening desired behaviors, and strategies for decreasing or eliminating undesired behaviors. According to Gartrell (1994), discipline refers to the system of teaching and nurturing that prepares children to achieve competence, self-control, self-direction, and caring for others. It also encompasses the concepts of upbringing and constitutes a branch of science (Henarath & Opatha, 2017).
- **Corporal Punishment:** The use of physical force with the intention of causing pain or discomfort as a means of correcting or controlling a child's behavior. It usually involves "smacking," "slapping," or "spanking" children with hands or with a variety of implements (Berger et al., 2017).
- **Behavioral Challenges:** This refers to the exhibition of negative, unacceptable, and undesirable behaviors by children that deviate from societal expectations. These behaviors may include aggression, non-compliance, hyperactivity, and destructive tendencies. It is believed by Perrotta (2019) to constitute the outward expressions that define temperament, character, and experiences, thus forming one's personality.
- **Challenging Behavior:** These are persistent or chronic behavioral issues displayed by children that interfere with their social, emotional, and cognitive development, as well as their ability to form positive relationships with others. Challenging behavior in preschoolers refers to extreme temper tantrums, hostility, and persistent noncompliance

that affect how well children are doing and put stress on families (Hacker et al., 2013).

- **Preschoolers:** For the purpose of this research, preschoolers are children between the ages of 3 to 5 years old who are in the early stages of their learning and development in all developmental domains.
- **Socio-emotional Development:** The process by which children acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve goals, show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

These operational definitions provide a framework for understanding the key concepts and variables discussed in the thesis, allowing for a more focused and consistent analysis of the research questions and findings.

Significance of the Study

This study is of great significance because behavioral challenges such as aggression, non-compliance, hyperactivity, and destructive behavior in preschoolers are of global importance, particularly for parents and educators worldwide. When these issues are left unaddressed, they can have long-lasting effects on a child's well-being and future success (Salari et al., 2014).

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Theoretical Frameworks

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

This research is based on different theories from various theorists and how their contributions can impact and guide this study. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory which looks at a child's development within the context of the system of relationships that form their environment is one of them. Bronfenbrenner's theory defines complex "layers" of the environment, each influencing a child's development. This theory has recently been renamed the bioecological systems theory (1994). Ryan (2001) emphasizes that a child's biology is the major environment that drives their growth. The interaction of the child's evolving biology, the immediate family/community environment, and the societal landscape drives and guides the child's development. Any changes or conflicts in one layer will impact the others.

Much of a child's behavior is learned in the microsystem, though as the child ages, the other, more distant, systems have increasing influence. Internal systems also affect behavior. The emotional system and the biology of the child are two internal forces that can have a significant influence on behavior. Any parent can verify that illness modifies (at least temporarily) a child's behavior (Ryan, 2001).

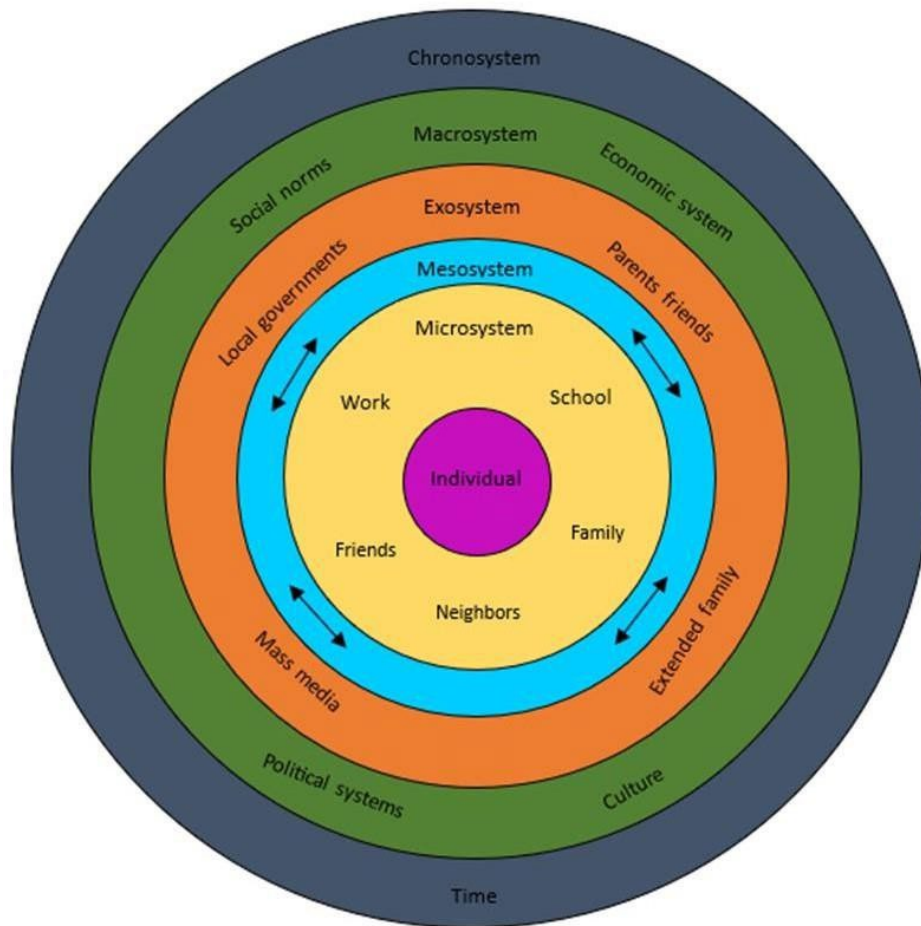
Bronfenbrenner (1979) introduced this model to provide a comprehensive understanding of human development, highlighting the dynamic and reciprocal relationships between individuals and their surroundings. The theory consists of several interconnected systems, each exerting distinct influences on the individual. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the main systems are the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. The

microsystem is a person's local surroundings, which includes their peers, family, school, and other in-person contacts. It signifies the most immediate and influential layer of an individual's environment.

The mesosystem focuses on the interactions among different elements of the microsystem. It examines how various settings within the microsystem (e.g., home and school) mutually influence one another and shape the individual's development. The exosystem encompasses settings that indirectly impact the individual, even when the person is not directly involved in those settings. Examples include a parent's workplace or community services that influence the individual through their effects on the microsystem. The macrosystem involves the broader cultural context, societal values, and ideologies that influence all the other systems. It considers the overarching beliefs and customs that mold the individual's development. The chronosystem, on the other hand, presents the concept of time and how various environmental events and transitions affect development throughout the life course (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory



Maglica et al. (2020) have affirmed that “investigating behavioral problems in the early childhood years is of great importance for early detection and securing timely and appropriate interventions with children and their families” (p. 44). “Detection of behavioral problems in early childhood in preschool children also depends on the assessment method. Thus, scientists suggest assessing the child’s behavior from multiple sources and contexts, especially by parent and another adult” (Maglica et al., 2020, p. 45).

This theory is specifically relevant to this study because it looks at how a child's environment affects their growth. It considers different levels of influence, from family to society. While there are many factors involved, this study focuses on parents and teachers who have the most direct impact on a child's early experiences.

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory is another relevant theory that was developed in the 1950's by Albert Bandura as a direct response to strict behaviorism as a means for explaining how individuals learn about their social worlds (Auf der Heide, 2007). It emphasizes the importance of observational learning, stating that individuals learn behaviors by observing and imitating others in their environment, particularly those they perceive as models. Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions, this coded information serves as a guide for action (Bandura, 1977).

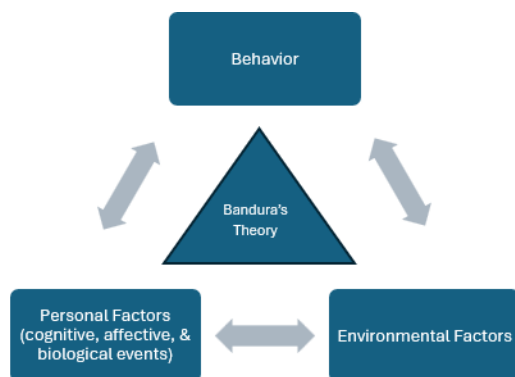
According to Bandura (1977), learning occurs through a combination of direct experience and vicarious learning. Children observe the behaviors of parents, teachers, and peers, and they learn from the consequences of those behaviors. When a behavior is reinforced or rewarded, children are more likely to imitate it. In the social cognitive view, people are neither driven by inner forces nor buffeted helplessly by environmental influences. Rather, psychological functioning is explained in terms of a continuous reciprocal interaction between personal, behavioral, and environmental determinants (Bandura, 1986).

In the context of this research, social learning theory can help explain how different discipline strategies employed by parents and teachers in Nigeria and the United States influence children's behavior and socio-emotional development. For example, if a child observes a parent or teacher using corporal punishment as a means of discipline, they may learn that physical aggression is an acceptable way to resolve conflicts or assert authority (Gershoff, 2002). On the other hand, if a child experiences positive reinforcement and guidance from parents and teachers, they may develop more prosocial behaviors and better emotional regulation skills (Eisenberg et al., 1998).

Moreover, social learning theory emphasizes the role of modeling in shaping behavior. Children are more likely to imitate behaviors demonstrated by individuals they perceive as similar to themselves, such as peers, or those they admire and respect, such as parents and teachers (Bandura, 1986). This highlights the importance of parents and educators being mindful of their behaviors and the discipline strategies they employ, as they serve as crucial role models for young children (Grusec & Davidov, 2007). Figure 2 illustrates social learning theory.

Figure 2

Social Learning Theory



By using Bandura's social learning theory for this study, the development of behavioral patterns and socio-emotional skills in preschoolers can be studied with results informing recommendations for parents and educators, emphasizing the importance of positive, consistent, and developmentally appropriate discipline strategies that promote healthy social learning and overall well-being in young children (Durrant & Ensom, 2012).

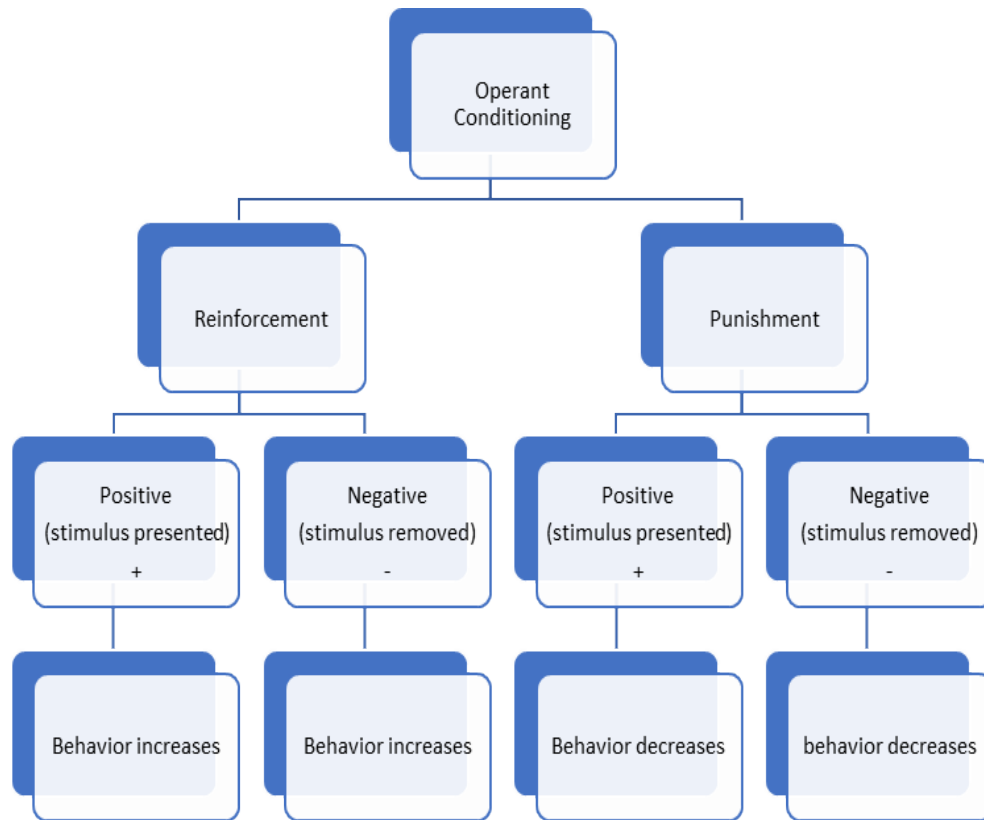
B. F. Skinner's Theory of Discipline

B. F. Skinner's theory of discipline is a theory rooted in a broader concept of operant conditioning. Skinner's (1953) theory emphasizes the role of consequences in shaping and maintaining behavior. According to Skinner (1974), in dealing with human behavior, a positive reinforcer is a stimulus that, when added, increases the probability that the behavior it follows will be repeated. A negative reinforcer is a stimulus that, when removed or avoided, also increases the probability of repetition of the behavior it follows. Skinner (1971) argued that the most effective form of discipline is the use of positive reinforcement, as it encourages the repetition of desired behaviors without the negative side effects associated with punishment.

In the context of this research, a study by Leijten et al. (2021) found that parenting programs that incorporated positive reinforcement techniques, such as praise and rewards, were more effective in reducing disruptive child behavior compared to those that relied on harsh discipline or punishment. Skinner's theory is further explained in Figure 3.

Figure 3

B.F Skinner Operant Conditioning and Learning



Applying Skinner's theory of discipline to this research will help to investigate particularly those discipline strategies involving positive reinforcement and controlled punishment, which contribute to the development of behavioral patterns and socio-emotional skills in preschoolers.

Diana Baumrind's Theory

Baumrind's pillar theory focused on parenting styles and how they shape the attitudes of children. Baumrind (1966) emphasizes that a child's behavior is associated with parenting styles as they grow and interact with new people. Her research was based on the four defining characteristics that could shape successful parenting that were paired in contrasting styles:

responsiveness vs. unresponsiveness and demanding vs undemanding. Parent responsiveness refers to the level of support and acceptance with which a parent responds to their child's needs. Parent demandingness refers to the structure put in place to guide the child's behavior, the projection of compliance from the child, and what deterrents are in place for an erring child.

Baumrind (1966) focused on 3 main parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive.

Authoritative: The parent is responsive and demanding. This style involves setting the rules for the child, evaluating how they cope with them, and also grants a degree of freedom to the child, so they develop a sense of independence. Punishments for erring behavior are not common but the child is made to see what they did wrong and how to prevent future occurrences.

Authoritarian: The parent is demanding but not responsive. This style places more pressure on the child as it does not involve guidance but focuses heavily on punishment if they go against the structure set in place by the parent. This parenting style is aimed at preparing the child for the harsh reality of the world.

Permissive: The parent is responsive but not demanding. There are low to little expectations of the child's behavior, and almost all the needs are met by the parents. This parenting style takes a lenient or relaxed approach to parenting and chooses to be a "friendly" figure rather than a figure of authority.

Bassett et al. (2013) conducted two studies examining the ways college teachers interact with their students, using the same categories typically used by developmental psychologists to categorize parents' interactions with children. Their findings suggested that "Baumrind's (1966) scheme for classifying parenting styles can be meaningfully applied to individual differences in

the teaching styles of university professors" (p. 9). This supports the idea that the PSDQ can be adapted to measure classroom management styles that parallel Baumrind's parenting styles.

Discipline Strategies

The word discipline comes from the root word “disciplinare” (to teach or instruct) which refers to the system of teaching and nurturing that prepares children to achieve competence, self-control, self-direction, and caring for others. Gartrell (1994) stated that an effective discipline system must contain 3 vital elements: “1) a learning environment characterized by positive, supportive parent-child relationships; 2) a strategy for systematic teaching and strengthening of desired behaviors (proactive); and 3) a strategy for decreasing or eliminating undesired or ineffective behaviors (reactive)” (p. 15). The French origin of the word discipline aligns with notions of strictness, method, education, submission, self-regulation, and conformity to laws, rules, and societal order. It encompasses the concepts of upbringing and constitutes a branch of science (Henarath & Opatha, 2017). People interpret discipline in various ways. For some, it is perceived as a form of punishment that instills fear when one deviates from the right path, while others view it as adherence to rules and regulations (Idris & Alegbeleye, 2015). While sanctions and punishments are often associated with discipline, their true essence goes beyond merely addressing anti-social behavior. Instead, it serves as an educational approach rooted in the concepts of path, procedure, method, and science (Ergişi & Dağlı, 2014). Discipline, in its genuine sense, implies self-control, adherence to rules, and obedience as stated by Rad and Ya’gobi (2015).

The primary objective of discipline within an educational context is to establish performance standards for children and motivate them to act responsibly in their academic pursuits. Discipline involves elements of self-control, self-sacrifice, and the promotion of

consistent behavior among children (Rivai, 2017). The concept of discipline varies depending on the issue, the individual, and the situation (Ergişi & Dağlı, 2014). Rivai (2017) has primarily focused on 3 distinct definitions when it comes to discipline. The initial aspect revolves around self-repair, adaptation, and the autonomous regulation of one's actions, forming the basis of self-discipline. The second aspect focuses on the motivation and mechanisms that influence an individual's control when functioning within a group, referred to as team discipline. The third aspect relates to the application of punitive measures as a response to undesirable behavior, encompassing both legal and educational contexts. The cultivation of disciplinary behavior is a complex and gradual process, demanding sustained and thorough endeavors (Rivai, 2017).

Exploring the historical origins of discipline reveals its emergence as an "art" dedicated to training both the physical and mental aspects of humans (Razak et al., 2018). This practice aims to cultivate submissive skills and foster interpersonal connections. In the context of establishing relational mechanisms, discipline propels our bodies towards exhibiting more submissive characteristics and becoming a more useful person.

Considering how important child discipline is, numerous researchers have investigated its application specifically within school settings. A study by Ajpru et al. (2014) focused on enhancing discipline through a series of activities designed to train a child. The findings demonstrated that these discipline activities effectively elevated the child's leadership skills and instilled a sense of military tradition.

Particularly crucial are studies that delve into child discipline, given the prevalence of schools grappling with high cases of child behavioral issues. Consequently, it becomes important for schools to adopt proactive management strategies aimed at instilling a sense of discipline

among children. Beyond the principal's influence, teachers also hold a pivotal role in the discipline landscape, as highlighted by Etyang and Okoth (2018).

It is apparent that maintaining discipline is imperative for children. To achieve the objective of children's discipline, school leaders should institute effective discipline management through the implementation of various methods. These include the skillful arrangement of resources, supervision of activities, organization of structures, and coordination of efforts. In addition to these disciplinary methods, equal attention should be devoted to discipline management in terms of the disciplinary environment, incorporating hierarchical observation, normative judgment, and assessment techniques.

Types of Discipline Strategies

When it comes to addressing challenging behaviors in preschoolers, teachers and parents have various discipline strategies at their disposal. These strategies range from preventive approaches that aim to avoid misbehavior, to more reactive strategies that address challenging behaviors after they had already occurred. Each strategy serves different purposes and may be more or less effective depending on the specific situation or misbehavior that is being addressed. This section examines several key discipline strategies that are commonly used by parents and teachers. Preventive discipline, particularly in the context of education, aims to establish a system where children willingly adhere to the organization's rules and regulations with the goal of proactively fostering development and preventing infractions. In formulating rules under this discipline strategy, the learner's input is taken into consideration, and the rules are crafted to be clear and straightforward. These regulations are then communicated to all children and individually explained when necessary (Idris & Alegbeleye, 2015).

There is also corrective discipline which is a system centered on administering punishments in response to an offense. The primary objective of this strategy is to act as a deterrent, preventing future unintended behaviors, and imposing sanctions to instill a sense of intimidation (Idris & Alegbeleye, 2015). This form of discipline strategy seeks to address the primary source of misbehavior to prevent future occurrences.

Gradual discipline on the other hand is a form of disciplinary approach designed to afford individuals who commit a first-time offense an opportunity for self-correction and a warning to rectify their behavior (Apalia, 2017). It is otherwise known as “progressive discipline”.

Also, positive or constructive discipline is a big contrast to traditional/ punishment-oriented discipline which is no longer as relevant due to changes like a greater knowledge of people's psychosocial needs, advancements in education and wellbeing, and a growing focus on management strategies that emphasize the value of human relations.

In response to these changes, positive discipline has emerged as a viable alternative (Nwinyokpugi, 2015). Positive discipline represents a model that concentrates on reinforcing positive behavioral aspects, rooted in the belief that there are no inherently bad individuals, only behaviors that can be categorized as either good or bad. This discipline approach, a relatively recent development, minimizes the use of punishment. Instead, it focuses on correcting undesired behavior through consulting services. This approach aims to teach and reinforce positive conduct, eliminating negative behaviors without resorting to verbal or physical interventions. Positive discipline prioritizes suggestions and recommendations over the fear and intimidation that come with punitive discipline, placing an emphasis on the honor and dignity of each individual. The way that positive (nonpunitive) and negative (punitive) punishment are applied is another way that they differ from one another. Negative punishment is usually meted out to those

who break the law and try to disturb the peace. Instead of using punitive methods, positive discipline is used as an inclusive strategy that involves all children (Aparia, 2017).

A big contrast to that is what is known as corporal punishment which has to do with applying physical force with the goal of inflicting pain or suffering, no matter how slight. This custom usually involves "smacking," "slapping," or "spanking" children with hands or with a variety of implements, such as whips, rods, belts, shoes, or wooden spoons. Punitive discipline whose roots can be traced to back to ancient times and sometimes referred to as the traditional form of discipline is grounded in the belief that imposing punishment serves as a deterrent against negative behaviors. This method primarily relies on threats and intimidation (Eren, 2015). This is slightly different from corrective discipline because it addresses the immediate/present action of misbehavior and is more temporal in nature.

Regarding the issue of parents punishing children, early laws gave parents almost free reign to discipline as they saw fit. Yet, the laws have slowly been shifting away from unfettered parental rights in the category of discipline. To date, a great variance exists cross-nationally about whether, when, and how parents can use physical force in the home in the name of discipline (Berger et al., 2017). The use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure has been a major bone of contention when it comes to guiding or correcting misbehavior in children in different countries of the world. Researchers like Breger et al. (2019) have extensively examined cross-national laws and trends in homes around the globe on corporal punishment, social norms, and norm cascades. This research examined 192 countries spanning a period of 46 years and further highlights new patterns that are now forthcoming by looking into different countries' alignment with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The research also explored different efforts made from 2017-2019 to curb corporal punishment,

including new legislation in Japan and policy statements from medical associations like the 2018 American Association for Pediatricians. Using Sweden and Ethiopia as case studies, Breger et al.'s (2019) study examined how outright legal bans and public education campaigns can shift societal norms away from acceptance of physically disciplining children. Ultimately, the findings of this research have been able to affirm that social norms theories can help reduce the use and approval of corporal punishment in homes worldwide.

Despite this, in some countries, adults and children alike frequently view the use of physical punishment in schools as a successful strategy for discipline that promotes respect and helps children grow into responsible adults. On the contrary, as stated by Morrow and Singh (2014) multiple studies reflect negative outcomes associated with corporal punishment in schools and at home. These consequences include subpar academic performance, decreased class participation, children avoiding school or opting to drop out due to fear of punishment, diminished self-worth or self-esteem, and a heightened sense of apprehension toward teachers and the school environment. Despite these findings, research has shown that some teachers, parents, and, at times, even children themselves assert that the application of corporal punishment in schools leads to improved academic performance and the correction of undesirable behavior (Nguyen & Tran, 2013). Nevertheless, research by Morrow and Singh (2014) involving children has also emphasized that a substantial number of them do not perceive corporal punishment as beneficial for their learning or behavior; instead, they express feelings of fear, confusion, and sadness.

Additionally, there's a concern that using physical punishment to discipline children could normalize violence and perhaps encourage the emergence of violent tendencies (Morrow & Singh, 2014). Research on the use of physical punishment in both home and educational

contexts comes primarily from wealthy nations, the United States being one of them, and is based in psychology. In order to further investigate this and to be sure the results are not one dimensional nor are they limited to certain countries/nations, a broader view was needed which led to a study conducted with urban primary school children in Jamaica by Cueto and Leon (2012). Children who reported having their teachers physically chastise them did far worse on reading, spelling, and math assessments. Cueto and Leon (2012) could not, however, ascertain which way the link ran: if a child's lower exam scores led to corporal punishment, or whether the child's worse test performance was the consequence of receiving corporal punishment.

The usefulness of physical punishment in changing and managing children's conduct is still a heavily contested and much discussed topic in society. There is a clear division in the issue between those who support its usage in schools and those who are in favor of abolishing it. Regretfully, there has not been much work done to properly investigate the nature of physical punishment and balance its benefits and drawbacks to improve or develop it. Regulations that can stop corporal punishment from becoming physical abuse are desperately needed because it has negative consequences. Rather, the focus should be on changing it into a more effective and positive method of child discipline.

According to Ajaja's (2012) research on child guidance and discipline, using physical punishment as a form of child discipline is detrimental and ineffectual. According to Ogando and Pells (2014), physical punishment teaches children that using physical aggressiveness to solve problems is a valid way to deal with them, which could result in more disciplinary difficulties in the classroom. Essentially, employing physical harm as a form of punishment for wrongdoing sends the message that using violence to settle disputes or address issues is acceptable. Children are taught by this method that it is okay to hurt someone if they disagree with their behavior. It

leads to contradictions, particularly when a youngster is disciplined for hurting another child. In these situations, the child is given contradictory messages on the legitimacy of violence, which could lead to the internalization and repetition of violent behavior.

According to Pells and Woodhead (2014), physical punishment may lead to instant violence against other children, staff, or school property. Long-term data show that many criminals were physically chastised as children, linking early aggression to criminal activity. This supports the idea that violence causes aggression. A study conducted by Bassey (2016) in Nigeria examined how cultural beliefs affect whether Nigerian parents approve of physically punishing their kids. The researcher surveyed 269 randomly chosen parents in Akwa Ibom state of Nigeria where four cultural factors were measured as independent variables: conflict tactics, nurturance behaviors, alcohol consumption, and child value. Then parents gave their views on the harsh physical punishment of children and the Dimension of Disciplinary Inventory (DDI) was used to measure parents' perception of physical punishment.

From the study, a statistical analysis showed all four cultural areas predicted whether parents approve of physical punishment. Bassey (2016) also stated that understanding these cultural views can shape the public and reduce how often Nigerian parents physically punish children. It has also been able to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on child abuse. The study found out that all four examined cultural variables (conflict tactics, nurturance, drinking, and valuing children) predicted parental attitudes toward physical punishment of children in Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria. It also affirms that every child has the right to live without suffering abuse because harsh physical punishment can be a contributing factor in some forms of abuse, and children must be protected from it. Therefore, parents must use an alternate method when it comes to correcting their children for misbehaving.

A review of the study by Iguh and Nosike (2011) on child rights protection and corporal punishment in Nigeria also found that prohibiting corporal punishment aligns with the "best interest of the child" a guiding legal principle for protecting children's rights. Noting the societal responsibility to nurture children into productive citizens, the authors highlight an apparent tension between correcting youthful wrongdoing and upholding bans on physical discipline encoded in Nigeria's Child Rights Act. Their analysis weighs the biblical justification of sparing the "rod of correction" against evidence that corporal punishment harms more than helps vulnerable young people. While children requiring state intervention are often labeled criminals, the essence of juvenile justice is to rehabilitate, not punish. Iguh and Nosike (2011) critically assess the adequacy of legal instruments available for correcting children's behavior without violating their dignity or psychological well-being. Given the saying "children are the future," the review grapples with how best to discipline young people while also developing them into socially conscious leaders. It calls for greater debate regarding whether physical punishment bans truly serve the best interests of the child and society.

Reinforcement, however, is a stimulus that follows and is contingent upon a behavior and increases the probability of a behavior being repeated. Positive reinforcement can increase the probability of not only desirable behavior but also undesirable behavior. Positive reinforcement is giving a reinforcer to strengthen the targeted behavior (Martin & Pear, 2015; Miltenberger, 2016). Some research has found that positive reinforcement provides internal motivation and clear expectations for children's behavior (Ma, 2010; Wilder, 2005). Applying positive reinforcement helps children comprehend adult expectations and behave appropriately in an environment (Salsabila & Wahyu, 2019). The study by Salsabila & Wahyu (2019) investigated a caregiver's implementation of positive reinforcement to improve discipline behavior with a 4-

year-old kindergartener exhibiting behavioral challenges. Using a single case AB design and multiple baselines for eating and playing situations, the home intervention included baseline, positive reinforcement, and evaluation phases for a period of 18 days. This was aimed at increasing compliance with rules during eating and play situations through caregiver delivery of praise and rewards contingent on expected behaviors. The result of this research shows that positive reinforcement successfully increased desired behaviors for both eating (60%-100%) and playing (70%-100%) when consistently applied by the trained caregiver, and a follow-up also confirmed generalization to other situations. Findings of this research also affirmed that caregiver-led positive reinforcement interventions in the home environment are feasible and effective in enhancing discipline in young children at a critical developmental stage that determines their readiness for school. The findings highlight the implications for caregiver education/training in positive strategies on a large scale and suggest future research should explore impacts on school adjustment and long-term outcomes (Salsabila & Wahyu, 2019).

Positive reinforcement involves rewarding desired behaviors, which helps children associate positive outcomes with their actions, fostering a more positive learning environment (Gartrell, 2012). It is crucial to focus on positive reinforcement, encouragement, and setting clear expectations to promote a healthy and supportive learning environment for preschoolers. Positive reinforcement, which uses rewards and constructive consequences to encourage the development of desired behaviors in preschoolers, is a crucial component of behavior control. It also entails rewarding or stimulating a desired action after it has occurred, which makes it more likely that the behavior will reoccur.

Positive reinforcement plays a critical role in the development of preschoolers' social-emotional skills, pleasant learning environments, and behavior shaping. Positive reinforcement

in preschool settings can take the form of verbal praise, prize boxes, special privileges, reward charts, behavior punch cards, and positive notes. These elements all help young children acquire social skills, encourage desired behavior, boost confidence, decrease time wasting in classroom environments, make children feel safe, and improve teachers' motivation and well-being (Brightwheel, 2024). It is therefore imperative that educators/caregivers use developmentally appropriate positive reinforcement techniques that will consider the unique requirements of each child.

Behavior modification is one tactic used for behavior shaping; it has been shown in the literature to be effective and is regarded as a useful intervention for changing children's conduct. The methodical application of strategies to strengthen and shape desired behaviors in a controlled setting is known as behavior modification (Miltenberger, 2016). Scholars have investigated the use of behavior modification to promote positive behaviors, like compliance (Kusumah & Pudjiati, 2017) and on-task behavior (Nasa et al., 2017) in individuals with and without disorders. According to these studies, children's behavior may be clearly expected when they receive positive reinforcement, which also provides internal motivation. Positive reinforcement helps children comprehend what adults want of them and motivates them to act appropriately in a particular setting.

The foundation of positive reinforcement is the idea that when a specific behavior occurs, it is followed by a reinforcer, which strengthens the behavior (Martin & Pear, 2015). In this sense, everything that has the power to affect someone's behavior is referred to as a reinforcer. The reinforcer must be applied immediately after the desired behavior is demonstrated for it to be successful, and the type of reinforcer must be appropriate for the behavior being reinforced. A variety of stimuli, such as enjoyable, worthwhile, and desirable things that people would find

appealing to acquire, might be considered positive reinforcers. The choice of the particular behavior to be improved must be carefully considered to apply positive reinforcement effectively (Martin & Pear 2015). This selected behavior should have quantifiable signs and be manageable with a natural reinforcer in the specified environment. Furthermore, when universally successful procedures are implemented but the child still shows signs of troublesome behavior, positive reinforcement is used individually for that child.

On the other hand, negative reinforcement is a concept commonly discussed in behavioral psychology; its application in the context of preschoolers is limited and often not recommended due to potential negative consequences. Preschoolers, typically aged 3 to 5 years, are at a crucial stage of development where positive reinforcement, guidance, and nurturing play essential roles in shaping their behavior (Gartrell, 2012). The process of eliminating an unpleasant input to make a behavior more likely to repeat is known as negative reinforcement. Aversive stimuli, however, can have unfavorable effects on young children, including heightened tension and anxiety as well as possible damage to their emotional health. However, as much as the concept of negative reinforcement can be applied in a variety of settings, I believe it is important to note that exposing children to aversive stimuli is not recommended because it may harm their emotional and psychological well-being.

In all, reinforcement serves to encourage the repetition of certain behaviors, and in the case of negative reinforcement, it refers to the absence of a negative experience contributing to this encouragement. Research has revealed that negative reinforcement is not less effective than positive reinforcement. Their effectiveness varies depending on the situation, context, and the individual involved. Both can be powerful behavior modification methods that work in different ways (Sugai et al., 2000). Negative reinforcement is a concept within behavioral psychology, and

its application in preschool settings is generally discouraged. Positive reinforcement and supportive guidance strategies are more effective and developmentally appropriate for fostering a positive and nurturing learning environment for preschoolers.

Modeling plays a vital role in how children acquire new skills, beliefs, vocabulary/language development, and behaviors. Children tend to pick up behaviors of significant people around them which includes their families, teachers, peers, and their community at large. Often, through the process of observational learning, known as modeling behavior, children learn how to behave by watching others. The development of attitudes, abilities, information, methods, beliefs, ideas, and feelings is greatly aided by this type of learning. A range of behaviors, such as attitudes, speech patterns, mannerisms, and prejudices, are unknowingly picked up by watching "significant others" engage in these activities (Parsonson, 2012). The learning process for children extends beyond the school environment and encompasses the home as well. Parents play a vital role in shaping children's regulations and self-control within the home setting. This can be achieved through providing guidance, establishing regulations, offering warmth, and stimulating activities that contribute to their development at home (Santrock, 2012). The parenting style and treatment received at home significantly impact children's attitudes toward learning at school. When parents instill effective regulations and self-control at home, children are better equipped to adapt and behave appropriately in the school setting. On the contrary, a lack of regulation and control at home may adversely affect their self-adjustment behavior and discipline at school (Nasa et al., 2017). Families, teachers, and peers serve as influential models, but peers can be especially impactful because of their similarity in age, sex, competence, and other factors. Peer modeling affects diverse aspects of childhood development. The influence of models depends on various attributes

like age, competence, attitudes, and status. A study by Harris (2012) critically examines modeling among children, synthesizing current research on how this developmental mechanism works and is affected by different model characteristics. The goal is to further illuminate the processes and outcomes of modeling in childhood to inform our understanding of children's social, cognitive, and behavioral development. Harris (2012) found that young children become very observant by their preschool years and can divide adults into categories based on those who give them reliable information and those who do not, and this is a result of their reliance on the knowledge they gain from adults. In the classroom, peers demonstrate and transmit normative ability (an ability level that is generally acceptable in the group) and effort beliefs (believing their effort is an obligation or a tool for improvement), goal orientations, and problem-solving approaches that serve to socialize academic performance (Ryan, 2000). Thus, peer modeling is a major mechanism shaping achievement values, motivations, and behaviors in school-age children.

According to Goss Sonnemann and Griffiths (2017), learners are more likely to emulate a teacher who shows respect for the dignity of both them and another child. Being inclusive by nature, observational learning encourages everyone in the classroom to pick up new skills and adopt constructive habits. Teachers and other staff members have an obligation to set an example of attitudes and behaviors that promote a safe and caring school climate since they have frequent interactions with children. This entails continuously appreciating and treating every child with respect (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2017). As a result, environmental stimuli, such as modeling, instruction, and social persuasion, have an effect on the learner, causing different reactions depending on the learner's personality.

The learner's behavior shapes the aspects of the environment they encounter, and in turn,

the environment modifies their behavior (Edirisingha, 2012). It becomes the responsibility of the teacher to establish an environment where everyone comprehends the principles of discipline, the benefits of positive behavior, and the consequences of unacceptable conduct, fostering effective and inclusive learning (Goss et al., 2017). The observation highlights the fact that teachers may occasionally use detention or report disobedient children to the head of the school as a form of punishment without first considering whether their own actions may be a contributing factor. According to Bilaty (2012) instructors have an obligation to model the behavior that is required of them because children pick up behavior from their role models. Teachers must therefore act appropriately since children pick up behavioral clues from watching others around them. Learners' conduct can be greatly impacted by the ways in which others use antisocial but efficient means to satisfy their wants. For instance, children are more prone to imitate violent behavior if they witness adults modeling it.

Children also often express themselves in a similarly irritating and intolerant way when they witness their teachers acting in an intolerant and frustrating manner. On the other hand, children are more likely to imitate positive behaviors from teachers who display traits like compassion, patience, strong ethical principles, and a gentle approach. Thus, it is essential to model self-regulation and give learners focused, helpful feedback as they grow in their ability to control their behavior (Rohan, 2017). Educators are essential in providing appropriate behavioral role models. This entails showing respect to both adults and children, cultivating a good rapport with them, and establishing an atmosphere that supports learning.

However, Mugabe and Maposa's (2013) study found that some educators behave in a way that is socially inappropriate when they are among children, making them less than ideal role models. Salifu and Agbenyega (2012) reported similar findings in schools in Ghana and Kenya,

where instructors were charged with fueling disciplinary problems by acting impolitely in front of children. Additionally, research suggests that by failing to set an example of proper social relations, parents and communities contribute to the development of severe types of antisocial conduct (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). According to Rohan (2017), behavior is shaped by the feedback and modeling that children experience outside of the classroom. Social learning at home and in the community has a big influence on how children handle stress, frustration, and difficulties in establishing and sustaining connections. When there aren't strong disciplinary principles in place at home, it's difficult for instructors to deal with unacceptable behavior, which makes it harder to create a welcoming learning environment.

The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2018) highlights that learners are deprived of the chance to learn appropriate behaviors when there are no suitable role models. Lapperts (2012) emphasizes how important it is for parents to set an example of appropriate behavior. Nonetheless, Mugabe and Maposa (2013) found that some parents, relatives, and community people included their children in activities like sending children to get smokes and alcoholic beverages, selling beer to customers at home, and selling marijuana to other children at school. Remarkably, children even go so far as to pay community members to pretend to be their parents or guardians when they are facing disciplinary action at school. These behaviors by parents, relatives, and community people present learners with an example of inappropriate behavior, which makes it difficult for teachers to create an inclusive learning environment. Furthermore, peer pressure has a big impact on how learners behave, both favorably and unfavorably. According to research, peer modeling helps people learn on their own by watching others exhibit acceptable forms of conduct (McNiff, 2015).

Non-verbal cueing is another discipline strategy. Abdullahi (2014) highlights the value of

nonverbal cueing in the classroom and offers a variety of viewpoints for analyzing classroom events. This method enables people to investigate nonverbal cues to understand how various nonverbal expressions are interpreted in educational settings. Researchers have examined how the presence or lack of clear, consistent messages impacts teacher-child exchanges by recording nonverbal aspects of interactions. Studies show that children's interactions with classmates, teachers, and family have a significant impact on their social and academic development. Nonverbal cues consist of 3 elements: a sender who purposefully employs a common code to communicate, a recipient who consciously decodes or understands the message, and a shared code. Nonverbal cueing is sometimes referred to as silent or invisible language, especially when it comes to actions that control the direction of a conversation.

However, it is crucial to remember that these nonverbal cues can occasionally be difficult to understand. Because of this, those who use body language and gestures should make sure they fully comprehend the message they are trying to convey as well as the reaction they want the other person to have. Nonverbal cueing is expanded in the following order according to Abdullahi (2014):

1. Haptics: it entails the act of touching. It is most essential when a communicator intends to express affection, to calm, or to interrupt depending upon the content
2. Kinesics: Kinesics is the study of all body motions, including gestures and hand signals.
3. Vocalics and Chronemics: Vocalics include things like voice tone, timbre, loudness, and speech tempo, whereas chronemics deals with timing and pauses. When children react to queries verbally in a classroom context, these nonverbal clues are frequently apparent.
4. Proxemics: Proxemics refers to the amount of personal space needed when interacting with another, it can signify familiarity or being uncomfortable depending on the distance.

Children might decide to stand away from an adult who they do not feel comfortable with.

Behavioral Challenges

According to Perrotta (2019), behavior encompasses the array of actions that characterize how an individual engages and responds to their surroundings, as well as the individuals within them. It constitutes the outward expressions that define temperament (comprising innate, genetically determined reactions to environmental stimuli), character (a unified and organized psychological complex directly linked to the environment), and experiences (the emotions stored in memory from interactions), thus forming one's personality. In preschoolers, behavioral deficiencies can present substantial obstacles to their social, emotional, and cognitive development. Given that preschoolers are in a pivotal stage of development, their early encounters play a profound role in shaping their behavior. Adverse childhood experiences, such as exposure to trauma, neglect, or inconsistent caregiving, can contribute to behavioral deficiencies in preschool-aged children (Perrotta, 2019).

The quality of parenting and caregiving practices significantly influences the behavior of preschoolers. Positive and consistent parenting, along with a supportive caregiving environment, contributes to the development of healthy behaviors. Conversely, inconsistent discipline and lack of emotional support can contribute to behavioral deficiencies (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Early intervention is crucial for addressing behavioral deficiencies in preschoolers. Evidence-based interventions may include parent training programs, play therapy, and early childhood education programs that focus on social-emotional development. Understanding the background of behavioral deficiencies in preschoolers requires a holistic approach that considers the interplay of biological, environmental, and relational factors. Early

identification and intervention can significantly improve outcomes for preschool-aged children experiencing behavioral challenges. Ongoing research and development of effective interventions contribute to the evolving understanding of behavioral deficiencies in this crucial developmental period (Perrotta, 2019).

Aggressiveness

A person's manifestation of aggression might be physical, verbal, passive, or logical. Belligerence, verbal abuse, insolent resistance to authority, and property damage are characteristics of physical aggression. Intentional physical or verbal threats, together with actual physical harm from shoving and punching, are all part of this type of aggressiveness (Hollingsworth & Winter, 2013). Compared to relational aggression, physical violence is frequently seen as more insulting and intimidating, and it can have more serious negative effects. While relational aggression uses strategies like social exclusion, public humiliation, and personal rejection to target psychological injury in children, physical violence injures children physically. Verbal aggressiveness is a form of communication meant to inflict harm on another person, just like relational and passive aggression. This can include things like yelling names, saying hurtful things, slamming doors, or using strategies like pouting and remaining silent. Relational violence manifests itself in various forms, such as making others detest a peer, spreading false rumors that lead to peer rejection, social exclusion, silent treatment, and threatening to unfriend someone. This kind of aggressiveness, which frequently involves threats, damages peer relationships by externalizing a peer. Compared to relational aggression, physical violence is typically viewed by educators and parents as more disrespectful and carrying more serious negative repercussions. (Archer et al., 2005)

Teachers play a crucial role in both preventing aggression in schools and intervening

when aggressive behaviors occur. They are responsible for averting unwanted behaviors in their children, effectively addressing conflicts between children, and cultivating a classroom environment that fosters peaceful learning. Teachers hold the power to shape the beliefs and behaviors of children (Coplan et al., 2015). School-related factors linked to aggressive behavior in children include unclear rules, inconsistent staff support from administration, and a lack of accommodations for individual differences among children (Gornik et al., 2018). These factors contribute to situations that may trigger aggressive behavior. Moreover, when schools fail to control aggressive behavior, including bullying, it creates an environment that may inadvertently encourage or reward violent conduct (Gornik et al., 2018). While physical aggression is common in most preschoolers, it typically diminishes with age. However, certain preschoolers may persist or even escalate their aggressive behavior over time. Hence, it is crucial for parents to closely monitor their children's aggression and actively engage in teaching them alternative ways to handle conflicts. Harsh parenting styles, especially spanking, may contribute to a child's aggression. I'm of the opinion that preschoolers' aggressive behavior can be reduced by offering warmth and support while setting boundaries. In this phase, children imitate adults in real life to learn and perform diverse acts. Children learn new habits, skills, and information by watching their parents, teachers, and classmates.

Non-Compliance

Forehand et al. (2013) defined non-compliance, in the context of preschool education, as a child doing anything other than what a teacher or another adult authority figure has requested within a specific time frame. Kavurma et al. (2018) characterized non-compliance as a low level of following instructions that should not be part of a child's lifestyle. During the second and third years of life, children's ability to regulate their behavior and adhere to the

teacher's instruction tends to increase. This developmental period may also see changes in the behavioral expression of noncompliance, with children exhibiting it in various ways. As children develop a sense of autonomy, they may go through phases of negativity or increased resistance to parental control. The relationship between respect for authority and resistance to outside control is persistent in teacher-child interactions, even though it is believed that negativity tends to decrease after the third year.

It is normal for all children to display noncompliant behavior at times. However, researchers and teachers are particularly concerned about persistent or chronic noncompliance, as identified by Lee et al. (2012), which has been correlated with various psychiatric diagnoses later in life. Addressing and understanding these dynamics in the preschool setting is crucial for fostering positive behavior and long-term well-being. Noncompliance was characterized as a low level of following instructions that should not be part of the individual's response reserve. Persistent noncompliance in preschool-aged children is frequently identified as a key factor leading teachers to seek outpatient behavioral or mental health services (Menting et al., 2013). This behavior also poses challenges in child-adult relationships contributing to maternal depression, heightened stress levels for foster parents, and even leading to foster care displacement (White et al., 2019).

Research also indicates that noncompliance often begins early in a child's development, predominantly in the home environment (Taffel, 2012). Families dealing with noncompliant children often exhibit inappropriate and inconsistent discipline coupled with inadequate monitoring of the child's behavior (Menting et al., 2013). Unfortunately, these parenting practices inadvertently model and encourage antisocial behaviors. It's important to recognize that noncompliant behaviors can manifest in various styles, highlighting the need for effective

strategies in preschool settings to address and manage these challenges. Noncompliant behaviors manifest in various styles, categorizable into four types:

1. *passive noncompliance*, where the child ignores the teacher's instructions or requests;
2. *simple refusal*, where the child declines to comply with the teacher's requests without displaying anger or hostility;
3. *negotiation*, involving the child attempting to compromise, suggest alternatives, or bargain with parental or teacher's requests; and
4. *direct defiance*, characterized by overt resistance, anger, hostility, or aggression displayed by the child (Pederson & Fite, 2014).

Hyperactivity

Preschoolers with hyperactive conditions might be difficult to diagnose due to developmental considerations. According to the American Psychiatric Association (2013), distinct developmental stages may cause distinct symptoms, and young children, school-aged children, and teenagers may perceive these symptoms differently in different contexts. Compared to older children, young children tend to be more impulsive and active in smaller spaces, thus caregivers may expect higher levels of activity from them. Despite these difficulties, it is essential to diagnose hyperactivity disorder early to put treatments in place that can lessen the disorder's negative social and functional consequences. According to the standards set forth by the American Academy of Pediatrics (1998), children who display behavioral issues or signs of inattention, hyperactivity, or impulsivity as early as 4 years old should be evaluated. Various behavioral tactics, such as parent education, classroom management, and peer interventions, are used in interventions for patients with hyperactive conditions and/or their caregivers.

Destructive Behavior

Approximately 9% to 15% of preschool-aged children struggle with behavioral issues, which include extreme temper tantrums, hostility, and persistent noncompliance (Hacker et al., 2013). These behaviors not only affect how well children are doing right now and put stress on families, but they also put people at risk for developing several neurodevelopmental and mental health illnesses. Many preschoolers persist in disruptive behaviors into the early primary school years, both at the clinical and subclinical levels (Bufferd et al., 2012).

Due to their perseverance, these children run a greater chance of having worse outcomes in their scholastic, physical, and mental lives as adolescents and adults (Charach et al., 2013). In comparison to typically developing children, children with disruptive disorders and their families have lower quality of life and more societal expenses for educational, social support, healthcare, and criminal justice services (Furlong et al., 2013). According to a Canadian study by Perrinet et al. (2014), between 25% and 30% of children don't feel ready for school when they start junior kindergarten (Hansford et al., 2015). Children who struggle with behavioral and emotional self-regulation may find it difficult to engage in school activities successfully. These differences may show up as disruptive behaviors in this age group, thus early detection may be helpful for prompt intervention.

Due to their developmental stage, unique contextual factors, and caregiver situations, children's social, emotional, and behavioral functioning can vary greatly between the ages of two and five. Around age 3, aggression and temper tantrums typically reach their pinnacle, and for many children, they are more likely to be a passing developmental stage than a serious health concern (Perrinet et al., 2014). By the time a child is five years old, behaviors that are deemed normal at 3 years old may point to a clinically serious issue or disorder. Most children learn

prosocial skills and learn to manage their violent impulses because of parental supervision, caregiver expectations, and natural development (Rourke et al., 2014).

When certain requirements are satisfied, a cluster of disruptive behaviors is classified as a disorder; these include actions that are judged abnormal for the child's developmental stage and that continue for six months or more. These habits show up in a variety of contexts and hinder functioning. Furthermore, the child and family experience significant discomfort as a result of the behaviors (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Dealing with serious destructive behaviors can be quite challenging for parents and caregivers and even preschoolers themselves. It affects all parties in ways like limiting connections between parent-child, teacher-pupil, and even compromising peer relationships/friendships. In all, this hinders a child's overall growth and functioning.

Hallmarks of Development

These are the various areas by which children's development and response to discipline strategies are being evaluated in terms of development. These section consists of the different intricate areas of the socio-emotional development of a child such as effective communication skills, social interaction, positive relationships, and self-awareness.

Socio-Emotional Development

Socio-emotional development refers to the intricate interplay between social and emotional aspects of an individual's growth and maturation. This multifaceted process encompasses the development of interpersonal skills, self-awareness, emotional regulation, and the ability to form and maintain relationships with others. The crucial developmental stage lays the foundation for a child's overall well-being, mental health, and future social competence.

Coinciding with Erikson's initiative versus guilt stage in the 8 stages of psychosocial development, during this stage, preschoolers engage in learning to take initiative and making independent decisions, marking a crucial phase for understanding and defining emotions (Denham, 2014). The inclination to take charge becomes apparent in preschoolers aged 3-4 (Molina et al., 2014). Nurturing preschoolers' adherence to social norms poses a significant challenge in personality development. The accumulation of social experiences, both independently and guided by adults, contributes to potential exploitation, school readiness skills, and lifelong abilities essential for adult life (Garner & Parker, 2018).

Preschoolers begin to develop emotional regulation skills, learning to understand and manage their own emotions. This involves recognizing, expressing, and coping with a range of feelings (Eisenberg et al., 2012). Preschoolers engage in peer interactions that contribute to the development of social skills such as cooperation, sharing, and conflict resolution. Cognitive development is intertwined with emotional understanding. Preschoolers gradually grasp the perspectives and emotions of others, enhancing their ability to navigate social situations (Eisenberg et al., 2012). The socio-emotional development of preschoolers is profoundly influenced by parenting styles and the overall caregiving environment. Positive, supportive, and consistent caregiving contributes to healthy emotional development (Eisenberg et al., 2012). Understanding and supporting the socio-emotional development of preschoolers is essential for educators, parents, and caregivers. Creating a nurturing environment that promotes positive relationships, emotional expression, and social interactions lays the groundwork for the well-rounded development of young children.

Effective Communication Skills. Effective communication skills according to Oruç (2015) are a critical aspect of life. Healthy communication skills during the early stages of pre-

school education can have a positive impact on children's social, emotional, cognitive, and moral development. Despite being the same age, children in pre-school classrooms demonstrate a variety of abilities. These varieties/differences are caused by numerous factors, including parenting styles, personality traits, past experiences, and prejudices from various families.

Preschool teachers play a pivotal role in managing differences among children and stimulating them in alignment with educational goals. As active participants in the education and training process, preschool teachers must recognize that both verbal and nonverbal aspects of their communication are perceived by children, influencing them positively or negatively (Oruç, 2015). In any interpersonal communication, there are two key elements: the sender, who initiates communication, and the receiver, the individual receiving the message. Messages result from encodings, encompassing verbal, nonverbal, or written forms of communication. Given that preschool teachers often initiate communication, it is crucial for them to employ effective communication skills. To maintain this position effectively, teachers should possess self-awareness; maintain inner peace; be open to criticism; attend to their physical appearance; and exhibit energy, patience, gentleness, and tolerance. Additionally, they should modulate their voice tone appropriately and have good diction and a rich vocabulary (Ergin, 2014).

Effective communication holds immense significance not only in the lives of adults but also wields magical effects on children. Children discern the meanings behind conveyed words and the authenticity of the emotions and thoughts embedded in those words. Consequently, the communication skills employed by teachers, especially in preschool education, play a vital role throughout the educational journey. Positive and supportive teacher-child relationships possess the potential to diminish or even eradicate negative communication experiences for children from diverse family backgrounds. Moreover, teachers' adept communication skills wield

significant influence on the educational process and outcomes by curbing undesirable behaviors in children and dismantling prejudices they may harbor against school (Oruç, 2015). The observed changes in children's learning levels are directly linked to active participation and engagement. To facilitate learning, teachers must organize conducive learning environments and foster meaningful connections. Teachers' communication skills significantly impact children's developmental levels, attitudes, emotions, and self-perceptions.

Given this, teachers must recognize that each child is an individual, and they should consciously make efforts to preserve the child's self-respect during interactions. Non-verbal communication holds equal importance with verbal communication between children and teachers. Therefore, maintaining consistency between teachers' words and actions is crucial. Teachers should communicate with children in a manner that reflects respect, affinity, and trust, fostering healthy development for both parties. Effective listening to children is also essential. However, it's not necessary for teachers to view every behavior displayed by children with positive interest. Teachers should openly address and articulate disapproving behaviors when necessary (Kauffman & Landrum, 2014).

Social Interaction. The value of including young children in everyday activities has been recognized, as it plays a crucial role in their growth, learning, and general well-being (Searle et al., 2013). According to Carpenter et al. (2015), the degree of involvement, which reflects the attentional focus, is recognized as a critical determinant of successful learning outcomes, with implications for both ordinarily developing children and those in need of special support. Many children first interact with their formal peer group in preschool, therefore there are increased expectations for participation related to social and cognitive self-regulation (Allan et al., 2015). Preschool classrooms serve as dynamic environments where children engage with both peers and

teachers for extended periods throughout weeks and months. These social interactions vary, encompassing both positive and negative aspects. Positive peer interactions involve cooperative play, sharing, creative play, and shared positive affect (Altman et al., 2020).

Bulotsky-Shearer et al. (2012) state that positive social interactions with teachers include shared positive affect and mutual engagement, while negative interactions may manifest as aggressive, disruptive, or disconnected behaviors, often accompanied by negative effects like conflicts, noncompliance, and inappropriate behaviors like interrupting. It is worth noting that interactions with peers and teachers in these settings can involve verbal communication but are not limited to talking alone; nonverbal interactions are also considered important to defining the nature of the interaction. Fostering peer relationships stands as a crucial developmental milestone for preschool children (Bichay-Awadalla et al., 2020) Within the classroom, peer relationships and interactions offer young children valuable opportunities to hone social skills and communicate with others. However, variations in children's language abilities are closely linked to disparities in their social interactions. Those with higher language assessment scores tend to partake in more positive peer interactions, whereas children with lower language abilities are inclined to engage in a higher frequency of negative interactions with peers (McCabe et al., 2006).

Positive Relationship Skills. Children learn, grow, and prosper best when they are surrounded by supportive and caring interactions with important people in their lives. Children's general well-being is greatly influenced by the nature of their connections with peers, teachers, family, caretakers, and the larger community. Children's social and emotional development is greatly aided by the close bonds and interactions they have with these important people, which in turn nurtures their general well-being (Bendayan et al., 2013). So, the question that needs to be

answered is: How can we establish the conditions that are required to support and improve interactions that are vital for children's well-being, both inside and outside of the family, during and after the typical school day? Building warm and receptive relationships with compassionate adults in safe, encouraging, and welcoming situations is the answer. Children in this age group require these relationships as the cornerstone of their healthy growth. Empirical evidence highlights that children's engagement, especially their emotional involvement, is positively impacted by feeling connected to supportive adults, peers, and the community (Bendayan et al., 2013).

Developing these relationships is also linked to higher levels of engagement, happier emotions, and lower levels of negative emotions for adults who work with children (Klassen et al., 2012). Studies by Bendayan et al. (2013) and Klassen et al. (2012) have emphasized the links between a range of aspects of children's well-being and the quality of peer relationships, social competency, social acceptance, and pleasant interactions with peers both within and outside of school. According to Bendayan et al. (2013), these categories include factors that are physical, social, and emotional in addition to overall life satisfaction.

Adults can create safe and nurturing settings by showing empathy, developing positive and supportive relationships with children, and providing for their needs. Children's social and emotional abilities are subsequently developed as a result of nourishing traits like empathy and prosocial conduct, such as inclusivity and kindness. Adults must set a good example for constructive behavior. Positive interactions among peers and more acceptance of those deemed different, such as those with special needs and mental health issues, result from adults instilling these positive traits in youngsters. This enhances a child's sense of belonging, which is important because healthy peer interactions are directly linked to children's well-being. The connection

between empathy and prosocial behavior and the link between increased prosocial behavior and decreased aggression and bullying underscore the significance of fostering empathy. Empathy enables children to comprehend and resolve interpersonal issues potentially reducing conflicts and positively shaping the quality of children's peer experiences (Klassen et al., 2012).

According to Eisenberg et al. (2015), even though empathy cannot be taught, it may be demonstrated. Adults can foster empathy in children and strengthen their interpersonal relationships by modeling sympathetic conduct. Modeling has an impact that extends beyond simple guidance or instruction; it actively fosters the growth of empathy.

Self-Awareness. The phase of early childhood education is considered a unique and crucial time in life, occurring only once. The child's potential is significantly influenced by education, stimulation, counseling, maintenance, and care during this golden period. In early childhood, fostering self-awareness is imperative. Formal education at the primary level, including the preschool stage, extends beyond imparting formal lessons; it involves instilling self-awareness through language, cognitive, psychomotor, and creative activities. Self-awareness in early education encompasses physical challenges and specific activities that contribute to moral development. Children draw inspiration for their ideals from the material world around them, and their identities are intricately shaped by their social and psychological environment (Clark, 2020).

Contemporary society recognizes self-awareness as a vital aspect of children's development that demands careful attention. The process of knowledge transfer is acknowledged as a significant contributor to this developmental aspect. Self-awareness is the concept through which children perceive themselves from different perspectives and understand how to behave in accordance with their beliefs and societal norms (Brown et al., 2001). According to Catron

(2007), stable emotions are essential for self-awareness during early ages, complementing physical growth. The concept of self-awareness encompasses the internalization of various aspects, including self-reliance, awareness of one's gender and sexuality, understanding gender roles, tolerance, and personal healthcare. As a fundamental component of lifelong learning, social and emotional learning is essential for academic achievement and for getting people ready for college and the workforce (Clark, 2020).

According to Sutton (2016), self-awareness serves as a means for people to recognize their own emotions as well as their interactions with others on the outside. Self-awareness is frequently regarded as a fundamental quality, even if all five competencies (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making) are crucial for a child's development (Darling & Lippman, 2016). Given its dual significance as both a tool and a goal in the learning and personal growth process, it is often the first competency addressed (Ennis et al., 2018). Children with higher levels of self-awareness are better able to recognize their feelings, grow in self-assurance, and cultivate self-efficacy. Children who have a strong sense of self are better able to recognize their own strengths, discover who they are, and reach their full potential. By practicing mindfulness, children are better able to understand that they are social creatures, which increases their involvement in the classroom and enhances their reading comprehension (Ennis et al., 2018)

Discipline Strategies in Nigeria and the United States of America

There are cultural differences in African contexts of children's punishment techniques compared to American and European contexts. According to Ijaz et al. (2012), cultural norms and values are thought of as the typical behavioral patterns that influence people's motivational factors and cognitive processes. According to Nduka et al. (2012) culture is an integrated pattern

of human knowledge, belief, and conduct. As such, cultural beliefs may support the use of punishment in raising children. Scholars acknowledge the significance of discipline in human conduct and maintain that an organization cannot effectively pursue its objectives without it. Within the framework of an educational system, a student who complies with the established rules and regulations of the school is considered disciplined in the context of the educational system (Ali et al., 2014).

For many, it is unimaginable that a child would be permitted to grow up without physical discipline, especially in Nigerian schools where corporal punishments are so often accepted (Azeeza, 2020). In many cultures, an adult may reprimand a child for acting inappropriately in public, and then, when the child is returned to the parents along with a detailed account of the incident, the parents are welcomed back (community parenting). Notably, Shari'a criminal codes in the northern states of Nigeria uphold parents' and educators' rights to use physical force to "correct" their kids (Azeeza, 2020). However, while we think about what is socially and culturally acceptable in a region, it's crucial to remember that we are living in an increasingly global and connected society. Because of this, any discussion about punishing young learners in Nigerian schools must take into account the bigger picture of international practice. It is crucial to clarify, nevertheless, that the goal of considering what is possible in other societies is not to draw comparisons. As of right now, physical punishment is prohibited in all contexts throughout Europe and a large portion of South America (Wilson & Scarpa, 2013). Interestingly, physical punishment was permitted on every continent in their pre-historic past. While some regions have moved to ban it in certain contexts, it remains legal in many countries including Nigeria, where it is still practiced in both domestic and educational settings (Uwaoma et al., 2012).

For example, the subject of corporal punishment in schools was frequently viewed in the

UK during the last century as conflicting with Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Wilson and Scarpa (2013) noted that Nigeria cannot be seen to follow Western practices if doing so would not be in the best interests of the child and the community because it is a culturally distinct country from the West. But even as these doubts linger, the government keeps signing international agreements and ratifying accords that could eventually outlaw physical punishment altogether.

In summary, this body of literature has reflected various aspects of preschool discipline strategies, including theoretical frameworks such as Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, Bandura's social learning theory, Baumrind's theory on parenting styles, and Skinner's theory of discipline.

The review of literature has also emphasized the significance of socio-emotional development in preschoolers and how different discipline strategies mentioned can influence this development. Also discussed are the cultural circumstances, notably in Nigeria and the United States, and how they might alter how these discipline strategies are being used and perceived.

These different ideas gathered from numerous sources and scholars have guided the topic of research, which is the investigation of parents' and teachers' perspectives on discipline strategies being utilized for preschoolers across the two unique cultural contexts of both nations.

Chapter 3. Methods

This chapter describes in full detail the step-by-step processes and procedures employed in carrying out this study. This includes the research questions that serve as the foundation of the study, the research design that determines how the study was carried out, the participants who were chosen for the study and the criteria for choosing them, the data collection protocols and procedure that explains the process of obtaining a valid data, the various steps taken for analysis, and the process of establishing credibility and trustworthiness for the study. The ethical considerations as well as the researcher's role and positionality are accurately described.

This study aimed to find out teachers' and parents' perceptions on discipline strategies being used for preschoolers and their impact on children's behaviors and development. It was guided by the following research questions: What are the perceptions of selected parents and teachers in Nigeria and the United States on discipline strategies for preschoolers? In what ways are these strategies similar and different?, How do parents and teachers perceive that these various approaches to managing preschooler behavior affect preschoolers' conduct and development in Nigeria and the US?

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative research design through semi-structured Zoom interviews (see Appendix A) to gather data from participants. According to Subject and Course Guides at the University of Texas at Arlington (2024) qualitative research is defined as a naturalistic investigation that seeks a thorough knowledge of social phenomena in their natural setting. It focuses on the "why" rather than the "what" of social phenomena and is based on humans' firsthand experiences as meaning-making agents in their daily lives. Rather than relying on

logical and statistical techniques, qualitative researchers explore human phenomena through a variety of inquiry systems. This research approach is relevant to this study because it allowed the researcher to gain an in-depth knowledge of parents' and teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding discipline strategies for preschool children in both Nigeria and the United States.

The use of semi-structured interviews also aligns with this study because it is an exploratory form of interview mostly used in social sciences for qualitative research purposes or to gather clinical data. Magaldi and Berler (2020) state that while it generally follows a guide or protocol that is devised before the interview and is focused on a core topic to provide a general structure, the semi-structured interview also allows for discovery, with space to follow topical trajectories as the conversation unfolds. By using semi-structured interviews, there was enough flexibility in finding out the study participants' perceptions related to the study's research questions. Using Zoom for interviews also allowed easy data collection from both countries. This choice to use Zoom for the data collection was made due to its relevance as a well-known media app for communication, accessibility, and easy operation. The participants at the time of the interview were in different places and in different countries. Using Zoom made it possible to access all the participants and its use also enhanced easy transcription of the interview sessions which provided the researcher with the raw data needed. The use of the research design was able to show how Nigerian and American methods of discipline were alike and different by drawing thematic conclusions from both the parents' and teachers' responses.

Participant Selection

The study utilized purposeful sampling of participants who met the following criteria: adults over 18 years old; teachers with at least 2 years of teaching experience or parents aged 20-35; English language proficiency; and is from any of these racial/ethnic groups: Yoruba, Igbo,

Hausa, Caucasian, African American, or Hispanic. According to Bisht (2024), purposive sampling, also known as judgmental or expert sampling, is the intentional selection of participants based on the researcher's competence. Participants are selected purposefully, not at random, to align with specific study objectives. This strategy is appropriate for small populations with a clear research goal, as it allows the researcher to target individuals with certain characteristics relevant to the study. This sampling method directly aligns with the need of this study as the study has a small number of participants and the research study is linked to a specific age group which requires that the participants have certain characteristics to be able to give the needed response, hence the choice of this sampling method.

Demographic Characteristics of Survey Participants

The pre-screening survey (see Appendix B) that was used to gather participants for this study recorded a total of 20 responses out of which 12 participants who met the requirement were randomly selected to participate in the 30-minute Zoom interview. Out of the 20 responses, there are 8 (40%) teacher participants and 12 (60%) parent participants. All participants are above 18 with a gender distribution of 85% female and 15% male. The ethnicity/race of participants' responses was fairly even with 20% Yoruba, 20% Igbo, and 20% Hausa in Nigeria and 15% African American, 10% Caucasian, 10% Hispanic, and 1% Kenyan in the United States of America. Most of the children who were the focus of the survey fell within the 3-5 years age bracket with 80% which is the required age needed for the study while 0-2 and above 5 are 15% and 5% respectively. All participants also confirmed their ability to speak and comprehend in English.

For analysis, parents and teachers were grouped as participants from each country because the main comparison is between the countries and not the category. Therefore, they were analyzed in

groups of 6 participants from each country. This resulted in 6 participants from Nigeria (3 teachers, 3 parents, 2 males, 4 females) and 6 participants from the United States (3 teachers, 3 parents, all female). See Table 1 for details.

Table 1

Demographic Survey

Question	Response Options	N=20	Percentage
Category of Participant	Teacher	8	40%
	Parent	12	60%
Age	Above 18	20	100%
Sex	Male	3	15%
	Female	17	85%
Ethnicity/Race	Caucasian	2	10%
	African American	3	15%
	Hispanic	2	10%
	Yoruba	4	20%
	Igbo	4	20%
	Hausa	4	20%
	Other (African: Kenyan)	1	5%
Classroom Age-Bracket/Child's Age	0-2	3	15%
	3 -5	16	80%
	Above 5	1	5%
Nationality	Nigeria	12	63 .16%

	United States of America	7	3 6.84%
Do you speak and understand the English Language	Yes	20	100%
	No	0	0

Participants’ Demographic Information and Consent

The participants for this study consisted of 3 teachers and 3 parents from two schools in Ibadan City, Ido local government area of Oyo State, Southwest Nigeria, and another school in Johnson City, Tennessee, United States of America. A total of 6 preschool teachers and 6 parents of preschoolers ($N = 12$) were interviewed. For the two schools that were identified, permission and necessary consent were secured. Both schools were selected based on the criteria of having a well-diversified staff and parent body in terms of race/tribe. For the center in the United States, the participants included a teacher and parent each from different ethnicities namely Caucasian, African American, and a minority culture (e.g., Hispanic, Asian, Native American, etc.). For the preschool in Nigeria, the 3 major ethnic groups (Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa) were represented by a parent and a teacher from each tribe. Both teachers and parents of children from each country had to teach or have kids between the age of 3 -5 years.

A letter of request for consent/permission to conduct research from the appropriate school administrator/director was distributed (see Appendix C). After gaining approval from IRB, a flier to recruit participants was sent to the schools’ administrators, who distributed the flier with a link to a Qualtrics prescreening survey to teachers and parents (see Appendix D). The prescreening survey was used to gather the needed demographic information to confirm the participant's eligibility. The survey contained sections that helped to gather information on participant's age, sex, ethnicity/race, age of their child, language(s) spoken, years of work experience, and

nationality. This provided a basic description of the study participants and was collected at the time of consent so that a diverse sample could be chosen.

Another Qualtrics link was made for the consent form that was sent to all preschool teachers and parents who were shortlisted for meeting the needed criteria and showing interest in participating in the study. Twelve participants (parents and teachers) from the following races/tribes: Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa, participated in the study. These participants were selected purposely using the inclusion criteria that participants are at least 18 years old, can speak and understand the English language, are a parent/teacher to a child(ren) between 3 -5 years, have at least 2 years of teaching experience as a teacher, parent participant is between 20-35 years of age, belongs to any of the stated race/tribes, must reside in either of the countries (Nigeria or United States) willing to volunteer and participate in a 30-minute Zoom interview while the exclusion criteria are any participant that does not meet the stated inclusion criteria. The final sample included 12 participants, 6 from each country. The Nigerian participants included three teachers (one male, two females) and three parents (one male, two females, average age 35) from Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa tribe. The US participants, all female, included three teachers and three parents (average age 30) representing Caucasian, African American, and Hispanic backgrounds. All of these participants have children aged three to five years in their care.

Data Collection Protocol and Procedure

This study utilized semi-structured interview questions which were adapted from the PSDQ instrument in order to answer the study's research questions. The Parenting Styles and

Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ) was determined to be a suitable instrument for guiding the study's interview questions. The PSDQ, developed by Robinson et al. (1995), had been originally designed to measure Baumrind's parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive, which had been widely used to hypothesize approaches to classroom management (Egeberg et al., 2016). The 32-item questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale and consisted of 3 subscales: authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. The interview questions were adapted with a specific focus on questions that answer this study's research questions and that speak to discipline strategies used by both teachers and parents. The questions were designed to explore the use of different discipline strategies that align with authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting/teaching styles.

Using a validated instrument such as the PSDQ provided a basis for the interview questions. For credibility purposes, the interview questions were reviewed alongside a professor in the department who is very knowledgeable in carrying out qualitative studies and is also part of the research committee. An email was then sent to each of the selected participants, requesting the most comfortable time for the 30-minute interview session to be carried out. After a time was agreed upon for each participant, a Zoom link was provided and sent out prior to the date of the interview to each of the selected participants. Each of the interview sessions was recorded by utilizing the Zoom recording feature while field notes were taken concurrently during the interview session. A written transcript was obtained thereafter from the Zoom recording platform thereby providing necessary data for the study. The semi-structured interview questions used contain 5 core questions each for parents and teachers. The questions were similar but adapted for each group. Question 4 included two sub-questions (a & b) asking for specific examples of discipline methods used. For example, teachers were asked about challenging

behaviors in their classroom, while parents were asked about behaviors at home. Both groups were asked to define discipline, describe how they handle difficult behaviors, and explain if their approaches were working. See the Appendix for the complete list of interview questions.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected from the interviews were analyzed using ATLAS.ti (Web version 24), a qualitative data analysis software. To aid the researcher during the analysis process, a step-by-step procedure identified by Braun and Clarke's (2006) was utilized. The steps include:

Step 1: Becoming Familiar with the Data - In this phase, a thorough reading and editing of the Zoom-generated transcripts was first completed. Corrections to the transcripts were made where necessary by watching the interview videos while reading through each transcript. In addition, the transcripts were compared to the notes the researcher took during the interviews to ensure that there were no discrepancies. Further justification for the content of each transcript was done through member checking. Each of the transcripts was sent back to each participant in a document format for the participants to proofread and approve the content of the transcript.

This process of editing, reading, and re-reading the transcript made it possible for the researcher to become conversant with the content of each of the transcripts (data) gathered.

Step 2: Generating Initial Codes - This phase is what Maguire & Delahunt (2017) referred to as organizing data in a meaningful and systematic way thereby reducing lots of data into small chunks of meaning. Once the edited transcripts had been de-identified and input into the software, the researcher used the inductive coding approach with open coding (i.e., there were no pre-set codes, but codes were developed and modified as we worked through the coding process) (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). The initial codes were generated by doing a thorough

reading of each transcript, identifying and highlighting keywords, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs that relate to the research questions of the study. These statements and sentences were coded based on the words used and their contextual meaning. Initial codes were thoroughly reviewed to ensure that they were clear and comprehensible. The review produced some preliminary ideas about code grouping including discipline strategies, effectiveness, socio-emotional development, positive and negative reinforcement, and impacts on child development.

Step 3: Search for Themes - As stated by Braun and Clarke (2006), there are no hard and fast rules about what makes a theme, but a theme is characterized by its significance. After creating the initial codes, the researcher was able to use the ATLAS.ti's code manager to organize, merge, and group codes systematically to identify emerging themes in qualitative data.

The researcher also utilized analytic memos. Analytic memos, according to Saldaña (2016), are comparable to journals, lab notebooks, and blogs, which allow researchers to reflect on coding processes, inquiry progress, and emerging patterns, themes, and concepts in data, potentially leading to theory. The writing of these memos helped the researcher to reflect on the codes to see which ones fit together and are relevant to create a theme that answers each of the study's research questions. This process involves merging codes with similar meanings and grouping codes together in a coherent and appropriate pattern responsive to the research questions. For example, initial codes like "redirecting attention" and "refocusing" were merged as "re-direction" for their similar meaning. Another example is "understanding reasons for reprimand" and "reasons for correction" codes were merged as "Reasons Attributed to Challenging Behaviors" for better description. Grouping was used to organize codes into broader themes e.g., codes that identify challenging behavior such as "not following instruction", "hitting", etc., were grouped together; and codes like "encouragement", and "giving incentives"

that described a known approach were moved under a broader umbrella of “reinforcement”.

The themes generated for this study are descriptive because they describe patterns in the data relevant to the research question (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

Step 4: Review Themes - A lot of deliberation and peer debriefing went into this stage of the analysis. In reviewing the themes generated, the researcher aimed to find answers to these questions identified by Maguire and Delahunt (2017): Do the themes make sense? Does the data support the themes? Am I trying to fit too much into a theme? If themes overlap, are they separate themes? Are there themes within themes (subthemes)? Are there other themes within the data? The researcher examined the generated themes and data associated with them with these questions. Necessary adjustments were made such as creating subcategories where there were subthemes e.g., “professional experience” was identified as a subcategory of “experience” aside from “personal experience” as a factor influencing approach to challenging behaviors. The process of debriefing also brought about a re-evaluation of the choice of words used in capturing certain ideas such as the replacement of “perceptions on discipline” with “varying views on discipline” for a better understanding.

In addition, during one of the peer debriefing sessions with a professor, the subcategories under varying views on discipline were re-examined, and “Boundary Setting” which was initially coded as a sub-category under varying views on discipline was dropped because there was no reoccurring pattern for this definition; it was only mentioned by one of the participants.

Step 5: Define Themes - This final step involves understanding the comprehensive meaning of each theme, i.e., the essence and the relationship among the themes. A thematic map

was developed to visualize how the themes and subthemes interact and relate to each other in the context of this research. This helped the researcher to gain insight into the perspectives of teachers and parents in Nigeria and the United States regarding discipline strategies. The underlying data (codes and quotes) for each theme was also reviewed thoroughly and ATLAS.ti “views” feature was used to produce reports with information used to identify patterns, similarities, and differences in the data.

This analysis explored the interconnections between various concepts and identified frequently occurring ones while researching the reasons behind individuals' statements. Finally, the knowledge acquired was reviewed and summarized in a way that addressed the research questions and aligned with the findings of other scholars on discipline and its impact on the behavior and emotions of young children.

This helped to add to the body of knowledge and better understand teachers and parents of preschoolers' choice of discipline strategy that was culturally appropriate and developmentally suitable for preschoolers in different cultural contexts.

Trustworthiness and Credibility

Member Checking

One of the strategies utilized by the researcher was member checking to establish trustworthiness and credibility. Member checking, as defined by Stahl and King (2020), is a process whereby research participants are provided with a pre-publication copy of research write-ups to solicit their feedback regarding the accuracy of data. This was done by sending the edited transcript in MS Word format to participants via email requesting that they vet the content of the transcript to ensure data accuracy. After which all participants confirmed the authenticity

of the content of the document sent.

Inter-Coder Reliability

To establish the credibility and trustworthiness of the study's findings, inter-coder agreement and reliability were established. One-third of the data collected, i.e., 4 of the 12 participants' transcripts, were selected for coding by a second coder who is an IRB-approved researcher. The four transcripts were purposely selected to represent the participants and included a parent and a teacher from each of the countries, Nigeria and the United States. This selection aligns with O'Connor and Joffe's (2020) statement that, depending on the size of the data set, 10-25% of data units are acceptable and to ensure the representativeness of the overall data set, the subsample should be chosen at random or using other reasonable criteria (e.g., selecting a member from each group in a stratified sample).

The selected four de-identified and edited transcripts were sent to the second coder via email to be coded independently. This also aligns with O'Connor and Joffe (2020) emphasis that while double coding should be done independently, there are varying views on how much coders should interact before beginning the coding process. Therefore, the researcher and second coder met to discuss an overview of the research work, including discussions related to the research questions, interview questions, and participants' backgrounds and experiences, before the start of the second coder's work. The meeting was held to familiarize the second coder with the research and ensure they had a better understanding of the interview transcript. During the meeting, the second coder acknowledged their lack of experience with ATLAS.ti and their preference for manual coding. Therefore, the second coder's work was completed manually. Hence, the intercoder agreement calculation was also completed manually to reduce duplication of effort. Silverman (2005) identified that what is important in inter-coder agreement calculation is not

whether it is done manually or by computer programs but that the data of the same text, coded independently, is consistent. According to Nili et al. (2017), match percentage is the most common manual method of assessing inter-coder reliability. O'Connor and Joffe (2020) stated that although the use of match percentage has been criticized because percentage points can be inflated by chance agreement, the approach continues to appeal to researchers due to its straightforward manual calculation since other methods of calculating intercoder reliability cannot be easily computed without relying on sophisticated algorithms embedded in qualitative analysis software. The formula proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994) focused on simplicity and conceptualized percentage agreement as intercoder reliability, i.e., (Matches)/ (Matches + Non-Matches). The formula proposed by Rädiker and Kuckartz (2019) focused on flexibility and suggested agreement at the maximum level without ignoring the not agreed upon (Sevilmis & Yildiz, 2021). The Rädiker and Kuckartz (2019) formula was utilized for this study (see Table 2).

Table 2

Radiker and Kuckartz Step One

		Coder 1	
		Codes or variables that are the same	Codes or variables that are not the same
Coder 2	Codes or variables that are the same	A	B
	Codes or variables that are not the same	C	D

Note: Formula: $(2A+D) / (2A+B+C+D)$; A: Codes Coder-1 and Coder-2 accepted as the same; D: Codes Coder -1 and Coder -2 rejected; B and C: Codes only one coder accepted.

After the second coding had been completed, the researcher and second coder met in person to review and discuss codes that are the same and codes with opposing views. The results of the first (researcher) and second-coder are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Radiker and Kuckartz Step Two

		Coder 1	
		Codes that are the same	Codes that are not the same
Coder 2	Codes that are the same	51	11
	Codes that are not the same	6	2
Formula: $(2*51 + 2)/(2*51 + 11 + 6 + 2) = 104/121 = 0.8595$ or 86%			

The match percentage is 86%. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggested a standard of 80% agreement on 95% of codes is acceptable reliability. O’Connor & Joffe (2020) further suggested that the researcher must judge what represents an acceptable agreement for a particular study. Although we concluded that the intercoder reliability result was acceptable, a discussion was also held between the researcher and the second coder that revealed consistent agreement in the finalized coding and theme development process. Aside from the consistent agreement in codes and themes, this process brought about the discovery of certain recommendations made by participants consistently through the transcripts which were coded by Coder 2 but ignored by Coder 1. These recommendations include consistency and persistence, home-school collaboration, showing love and physical comfort, and the use of multiple discipline strategies. The neglected codes were relevant to the research question but ignored due to their lack of consistency. The codes are “boundary setting” and “conflict with siblings” as explanations for

the perception of discipline strategy and reasons for challenging behaviors respectively.

Peer Debriefing

In addition to member checking and inter-coder reliability, another strategy utilized for trustworthiness and credibility was peer debriefing. This strategy for establishing trustworthiness was also mentioned by Stahl & King (2020); it was described as conferring with co-researchers and colleagues to provide field-based researchers with noninvolved or even detached reactions to initial research procedures and, subsequently, to findings. This strategy was utilized for this study by reviewing first the interview question to be used to gather data with a professor in order to get it refined in a way that captures every detail and nuance of the study's research questions. Peer debriefing was also done with both a professor and a second coder. After coding the data independently, both coders met to review similarities and differences in their codes, and what needed to be merged, removed/neglected, or better still rephrased. This peer debriefing process enabled the researcher and second coder to reach a consensus on the number of similar codes, appropriate quotations to represent the identified theme, and relevant themes that answer each research question. Examples from the codebook include changing the term "mixed method approach" to "multiple approaches", "technological devices/ screen time management" to "attachment to technological devices", and merging "self-regulation" and "socio-emotional skills." These are a few of the changes made as a result of peer debriefing.

Ethical Considerations

This research study was conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines and approval from East Tennessee State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Key ethical considerations were addressed throughout the research process to ensure the protection and rights of all participants. Informed consent was an important part of the consideration as all potential

participants received detailed information about the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights as participants. The consent form clearly outlined that participation was voluntary, and participants could choose not to answer any questions or discontinue the interview at any time without consequences. Additionally, participants were informed that they must be at least 18 years old alongside other criteria to participate in the study.

Confidentiality and data protection measures were also adhered to. Participants' information was de-identified and replaced with pseudonyms. They were also informed that while their confidentiality would be protected, research records might be reviewed by individuals with legal right to access, including the ETSU IRB and university officials responsible for research compliance. The consent form also explicitly addressed the possibility of data being stored for future research studies, ensuring transparency about data usage.

The consent form also provided/ options for participants to authorize or decline the use of direct quotations of their words. Participants were given one week to decide whether to participate, ensuring they had ample time to consider their involvement in the study. Participants were also provided with multiple contact details that included the researcher's contact information, the advisor's details, and the ETSU IRB contact information, should they have any questions or concerns about their rights as research participants.

Before data collection, proper institutional permissions were obtained through formal letters of request to the school director and headmaster. This letter stated the purpose of research, data collection procedures, and assurances of participant confidentiality. This step ensured transparency and ethical conduct at the institutional level while protecting both the participants and their affiliated organizations. Throughout the research process, particular attention was paid to cultural sensitivity, given the cross-cultural nature of the study. The research design and

interview protocols were developed to respect and acknowledge cultural differences while maintaining scientific rigor. All interview questions were carefully structured to avoid cultural bias or prejudice.

Researcher's Role and Positionality

The researcher's background as a caregiver and educator who has worked with preschool-aged children in both countries makes the researcher suitable to conduct this cross-cultural study. Having direct teaching experience in both countries allows the researcher to understand the perspectives of the participants in context, i.e., participants' understanding of behavioral challenges, factors that influence their choice of discipline strategies, as well as the impact of the strategies on child development are put into proper perspective for these countries. This dual cultural competency was particularly valuable during the interview process, as the researcher was able to relate to and understand cultural references and inferences especially non-verbal cues, and contextual meanings that might be lost to someone without this background and experience. This has also helped to provide valuable insight and extensive interpretation of the study. However, this also called for careful reflection throughout the study to maintain objectivity and avoid bias.

In order to maintain research credibility, the researcher employed strategies that included: consistent interview questions for all participants, field notes taken during the interview session, reiterating participants' responses during the interview to avoid misinterpretation, and conducting member checking by having participants review their interview transcripts.

Additionally, during the data analysis phase, the researcher continuously engaged in reflexive journaling and analytic memos to examine assumptions and interpretations of

statements. This strategy was mostly utilized at the stage of searching for themes which required categorization, merging of codes, and categorization of codes under appropriate themes. Peer debriefing is another strategy used. This was done with one of the committee members and a second coder to validate interpretations of statements in the transcripts. All these strategies, combined with the use of Atlas.ti software, have helped minimize the influence of personal experiences and preconceptions thereby giving the study credibility and authenticity in representing participants' perspectives from both countries.

Chapter 4. Findings

This comparative qualitative study examined the perceptions of parents and teachers on discipline strategies being utilized for preschool-aged children between three to five years in selected schools in Nigeria and the United States. This research, from the perception of the interviewed participants, sought to identify the most used strategies, explore similarities and differences between strategies, and understand how these strategies are perceived to impact preschoolers' behavior and development in the two countries. This chapter reports the findings of the current study and the research questions guiding this study are:

RQ1- What are the perceptions of selected parents and teachers in Nigeria and the United States on discipline strategies for preschoolers?

RQ2- In what ways are these strategies similar and different?

RQ3 - How do parents and teachers perceive that these various approaches to managing preschooler behavior affect preschoolers' conduct and development in Nigeria and the US?

Thematic Analysis

The interview data was analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach. This systematic method allowed the researcher and second coder to identify, analyze, and report patterns within the qualitative data. Using ATLAS.ti software (Web Version 24), the researcher coded and categorized the interview transcripts to identify key themes that addressed the research questions about perceptions of discipline strategies among parents and teachers in Nigeria and the United States. In total, six major themes emerged from the analysis which provide insights into how discipline strategies are used and perceived to impact preschoolers' development across both countries.

RQ1- What Are the Perceptions of Selected Parents and Teachers in Nigeria and the United States on Discipline Strategies for Preschoolers?

For this research question, four major themes were identified: 1) Varying Views of Parents and Teachers on Discipline, 2) Factors Influencing Participants’ Choice of Discipline Strategy, 3) Challenging Behaviors Identified by Participants, and 4) Discipline Strategies Identified.

Theme 1: Varying Views of Parents and Teachers on Discipline

This theme addresses how parents and teachers in Nigeria and the United States define and understand the word “discipline” which directly relates to the first research question on their perceptions of discipline strategies suitable for preschoolers. The categories that emerged in this theme are the various definitions given to the word discipline by both teachers and parent participants from both countries.

Figure 4

Varying Views of Parents and Teachers on Discipline

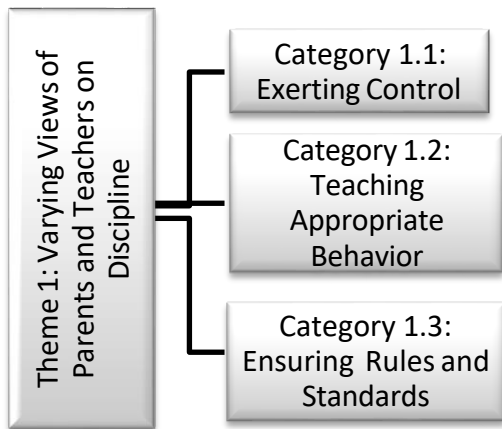


Table 4*Varying Views of Parents and Teachers on Discipline*

Category	Nigeria <i>n</i> = 6	United States <i>n</i> = 6	Total Comments <i>N</i> = 12
1.1 Exerting Control	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	2 (12.5%)
1.2 Teaching Appropriate Behavior	3 (38%)	5 (47%)	8 (50%)
1.3 Ensure Rules and Standards	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	6 (37.5%)
TOTAL COMMENTS	8 (50%)	8 (50%)	16

Participants expressed various meanings of discipline, ranging from boundary setting to exerting control, teaching appropriate behavior, and ensuring certain rules and standards are followed. When comparing how parents and teachers in Nigeria and the United States perceive discipline, there seems to be a general understanding that discipline is a way of maintaining standards and guiding behavior. However, the approach and strategy employed differ across the two countries. Both categories (parents and teachers) in each country have similarities and differences in their understanding of the word “discipline”.

Category 1.1 Exerting Control. This category was particular to Nigerian participants (both parents and teachers) who expressed views and statements emphasizing authoritarian approaches and direct behavioral control in managing preschoolers’ misbehavior. A Hausa Nigerian teacher stated, “Discipline to me among those pupils is exhibiting a kind of control over them so that they can learn what is right and wrong.” Likewise, a parent stated it as, “Generally having control over things my children do.... most of the time I beat them.”

These statements point to an authoritarian approach and understanding of

discipline. These statements also place a high emphasis on exhibiting control over preschoolers to maintain classroom “order.” Participants from Nigeria mostly embraced the authoritarian approach and understanding of discipline. However, this doesn’t mean we do not have participants in Nigeria with opposing views, for example, an Igbo Nigerian teacher describes discipline as “guiding pupils to develop essential life skills” as against exerting control.

Category 1.2 Teaching Appropriate Behavior. Although participants from Nigeria and the United States viewed teaching appropriate behavior as their understanding of discipline, their approaches to discipline still varied significantly. A teacher in Nigeria reflected on their perception of discipline as:

You know discipline to some; it sounds somehow harsh. But the truth of the matter is, whatever you call a spade, the spade remains a spade. Whether you call it correction, whether you call it guidance, whether you call it discipline. All are geared towards ensuring that a proper behavior or particular trait is inculcated in the children.

An African American parent in the US said:

Discipline for me is just coming up with a way to show a child that something's not right or something is wrong, so it doesn't have to resort to getting a pop or a whooping. It's like, okay, you need a 5-minute time out.

A Hispanic US parent said, “I guess I want him to understand what's right from wrong. And not just tell him to say sorry, just to say sorry, but understand it.” These statements point to an understanding of the word discipline as being focused primarily on

understanding, nurturing, and teaching.

Category 1.3 Ensuring Rules and Standards. In this category, Nigerian parents mostly emphasized discipline as a way of maintaining societal standards and rules. Out of the three parents interviewed in Nigeria, the Yoruba parent defined discipline as: "Maintaining certain standards, rules, and regulations," while the Hausa parent said:

As I understand it, it's a process of assisting children, the younger ones, to get acquainted with standard behaviors that are acceptable within a particular society. You don't just do things of your own will. There are standards that have been set, of course, by society.

As stated by a Caucasian parent in the US "... a way to teach children about society and themselves." A Yoruba Nigerian parent reflected saying, "I used to think spanking was necessary, but now I've learned there are better ways to discipline without hitting."

These statements emphasize understanding rule-over-rule-enforcement, which reflects a more authoritative approach. In all, responses from participants reflected that there is an increasing awareness in both countries toward viewing discipline as a developmental tool rather than just a punitive measure.

Theme 2: Factors Influencing Participants' Choice of Discipline Strategy

Various factors and sources that seem to have influenced participants' knowledge and choice of discipline strategy range from their upbringing specific to the culture and environment they were raised in, teacher training programs, and on-the-job experience.

Figure 5

Factors Influencing Participants' Choice of Discipline Strategy

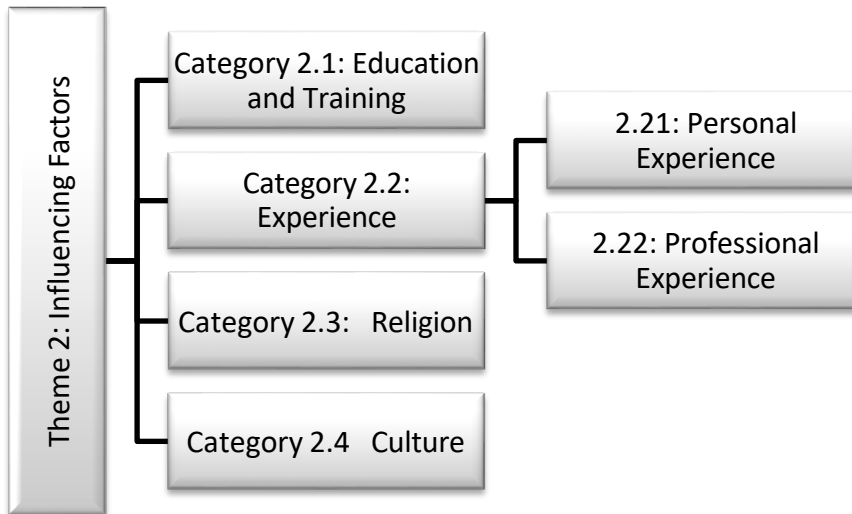


Table 5

Factors Influencing Participants' Choice of Discipline Strategy

Category	Nigeria <i>n</i> = 6	United States <i>n</i> = 6	Total Comments <i>N</i> = 22
2.1 Education and Training	0 (0%)	3 (100%)	3 (13.6%)
2.2 Experience	2 (15.4%)	11 (84.6%)	13 (59%)
2.21 Personal Experience	2 (22.2%)	7 (77.8%)	9 (69.2%)
2.22 Professional Experience	0 (0%)	4 (100%)	4 (30.8%)
2.3 Religion	3 (100%)	0 (0%)	3 (13.6%)
2.4 Culture	2 (66.6%)	1 (33.3%)	3 (13.6%)
TOTAL COMMENTS	7 (31.8%)	15 (68.2%)	22

Category 2.1 Education and Training. While personal experience is common to both countries as to what factor influences their choice of discipline strategy, participants in the United States leaned more towards educational philosophies and professional training. Participants in the US stated, “All my background is in early childhood education. So, I really lean on constructivist learning.” and “Well, I believe that the model, the curriculum that I was working with was Reggio Emilia inspired. So that influenced a lot.” These statements reflect that the choice of approach was informed by educational background, theory, and professional training.

Category 2.2 Experience. This particular category carried the highest percentage of the factors participants in both countries identified as being the reason that influences their choice of discipline strategy; this category is further divided into personal and professional experience.

Subcategory 2.21 Personal Experience. Personal experiences, particularly the participants’ childhood experiences as to how they were disciplined, are another factor identified. Participants from both countries alluded to these in their different comments saying:

So, I don't know what I would call that method, but I know I tried not to do the spanking thing because that's how I grew up. I feel like just making the choice to not continue the way that I grew up, and just to do things differently.

Other participants said, “I also try not to yell at my kids because I hated it when my parents yelled at me growing up;” “From a very personal perspective coming from where I was raised, it's very hard for me to set boundaries. It's very hard for me to say no. Because we were never given that choice;” and “Maybe let me say, that's how my own parents brought me up.”

These statements reflect majorly how personal childhood experiences with

discipline significantly influenced participants' current disciplinary approaches. While some of the participants actively chose a different path from what they experienced growing up, particularly regarding physical punishment, yelling, and authoritarian parenting styles that lacked choices and boundaries, some (2 of the Nigerian parents interviewed) embraced it because that is how their parents raised them.

Subcategory 2.22 Professional Experience. This sub-category was only peculiar to US participants. In contrast, Nigerian participants made no comment in relation to workshops or professional training as related to their choice of discipline strategy. Rather, the only on-the-job experience alluded to by a teacher in Nigeria is that “We don't have a lot of resources, so sometimes we have to use a discipline method that is strict to avoid children wasting resources.” In contrast, a teacher in the US said, “I've learned a lot about positive discipline techniques through our school's training workshops.”

Category 2.3 Religion. Religion also played an important role, particularly for parent participants in Nigeria. Religious beliefs, mostly in connection with Christianity, largely shaped the choice of discipline strategy in Nigeria. Two of the parent participants in Nigeria referenced scripture, saying, “And when you even go into the Christian dome, the scripture says that spare the rod and spoil the child.” This suggests that religious teachings and beliefs directly influence disciplinary strategies used for preschoolers.

Category 2.4 Culture. The role culture played cannot be over-emphasized especially when it comes to views of the Nigerian participants, although this category was also mentioned by a teacher participant in the United States. This influence is rather largely attributed to both participants from Nigeria who said, “In our culture, we believe children need firm discipline to learn respect.” Another said, “I'm an African, and of course, we have our approach to issues of

discipline.” A teacher in the US said, “When I first started teaching. I mean from someone with an African background. I did not see how this thing (positive discipline) was going to work.”

In all, from the perspective of the interviewed participants, it is obvious that culture played a major role in the choice of discipline strategy. Overall, while cultural and religious influences appear more prominent in the Nigerian context, educational theories and personal experience seem to play a larger role in shaping disciplinary approaches in the US, with both contexts showing evidence of evolving perspectives on discipline.

Theme 3: Challenging Behaviors Identified by Participants

Figure 6

Challenging Behavior

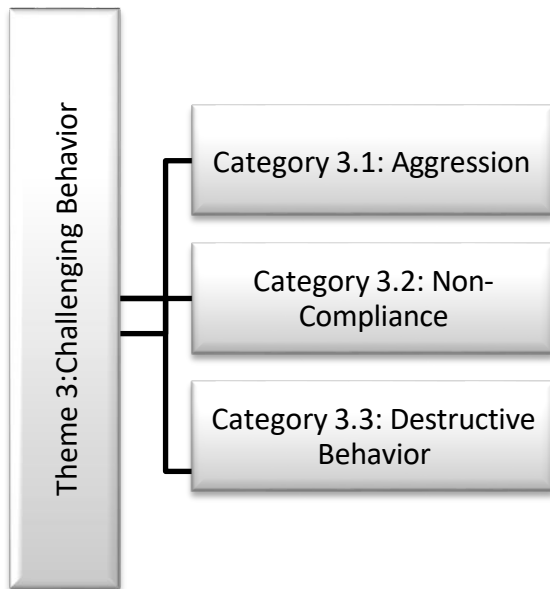


Table 6*Challenging Behaviors*

Category	Nigeria <i>n</i> = 6	United States <i>n</i> = 6	Total Comments <i>N</i> = 37
3.1 Aggression	2 (22%)	7 (78%)	9 (24%)
3.2 Non-compliance	13 (52%)	12 (48%)	25 (68%)
3.3 Destructive Behavior	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	3 (8%)
TOTAL COMMENTS	17 (46%)	20 (54%)	37

Participants' various perceptions show that both parents and teachers in Nigeria and the United States experience similar challenges with preschoolers which affirms the statement made earlier that behavioral challenge is a global issue (Purnama, 2022), not specific to a particular country or race but a necessary part of children's development. However, too much of it is what should be concerning (Salari et al., 2014). From the analysis, the most common challenging behaviors in preschoolers identified were aggression, non-compliance, and destructive behavior. These misbehaviors are exhibited in the form of shouting, breaking items, hitting, not being remorseful, not sharing, running away, hiding, and hitting.

Category 3.1 Aggression. Physical aggression is one of the challenging behaviors identified by some of the participants. This aligns with Hollingsworth and Winter (2013) definition of aggression, which includes physical actions, belligerence, and property damage. An African American teacher in the US stated, "Hitting other kids is probably the biggest issue we deal with." This statement reflects an aggressive behavior that involves the intentional act of harming others through the actions of hitting. Other behaviors mentioned by participants include pushing and punching.

Category 3.2 Non-Compliance. This misbehavior was the most mentioned and recounted by participants from both countries. The participants' expressions and explanations align with Forehand et al. (2013) definition of non-compliance as a child doing anything other than what a teacher or another adult authority figure has requested within a specific time frame. A Hispanic parent in the US stated, "Well it's like I'm trying to do everything to get him to listen, and nothing works." On the other hand, a Hausa parent in Nigeria notes, "I've observed that they are reluctant to take instructions. Sometimes they want to do things their way." These statements reflect non-compliance and align with the earlier stated summations on non-compliance's ability to manifest as passive resistance or direct defiance to instructions.

Category 3.3 Destructive Behavior. This is another challenging behavior that emerged during the interview session with parent participants in Nigeria. As earlier affirmed by Hacker et al. (2013), approximately 9% to 15% of preschool-aged children struggle with behavioral issues including destructive tendencies. A Hausa parent in Nigeria reported that the child damaged valuable items when they stated that, "He shows some behaviors that are not accepted like damaging items in the rooms, and some school items which, of course, cost some money to get." This kind of behavior is what Bufferred et al. (2012) identified as a form of disruptive behavior that can persist into early primary school years, potentially affecting both the child's current functioning and their future development.

Category 3.4 Reasons Attributed to Challenging Behavior.

Figure 7

Reasons Attributed to Challenging Behavior

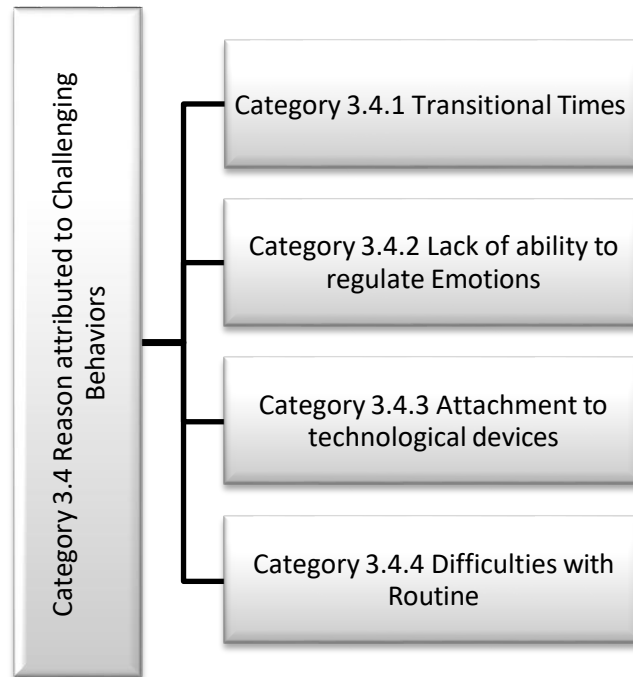


Table 7

Reasons Attributed to Challenging Behaviors

Category	Nigeria <i>n</i> = 6	United States <i>n</i> = 6	Total Comments <i>N</i> = 27
3.4.1 Transitional times	8 (57%)	6 (43%)	14 (52%)
3.4.2 Lack of ability to regulate emotions	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	4 (15%)
3.4.3 Attachment Technological Devices	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	4 (15%)
3.4.4 Difficulties with Routines	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	5 (19%)
TOTAL COMMENTS	14 (52%)	13 (48%)	27

Category 3.4.1 Transitional Times. Aside from identifying the most common behavioral challenges, certain reasons and factors attributed as the cause of these challenging behaviors include transitional times from one activity to another. A Caucasian teacher participant in the US reported, “I think transitional times can be the most challenging. With preschoolers, they tend to have a hard time participating in cleanup.”

Category 3.4.2 Lack of Ability to Regulate Emotions. Another is the lack of preschoolers’ ability to regulate their emotions. An African American teacher in the US said, “One of the most challenging behaviors for me is children not being able to regulate their emotions.”

Category 3.4.3 Attachment to Technological Devices. The use of technological devices/gadgets and screen time management is another, and it's peculiar to parents in both countries. An African American parent in the US states, “All of my kids have iPads, but I try to set their schedules to use their iPads. I try not to let them use them all day.” A Yoruba parent in Nigeria states, “Another one is the usage of phones and gadgets, watching cartoons. She wants to go on watching cartoons.”

Category 3.4.4 Difficulties with Routines. Other behaviors identified include difficulties with routines such as bedtime, morning preparations for school, and morning prayer. A Yoruba parent in Nigeria mentions, “Getting up early to prepare for school, which is, waking her up in the morning. She likes sleeping.” These pose reasons for concern for parents and teachers in both countries.

Theme 4: Discipline Strategies Identified

Several discipline strategies were identified from discussion with the participants, ranging from positive/constructive discipline, reinforcement (positive and negative), preventive discipline, corrective discipline, non-verbal cues, and corporal punishment.

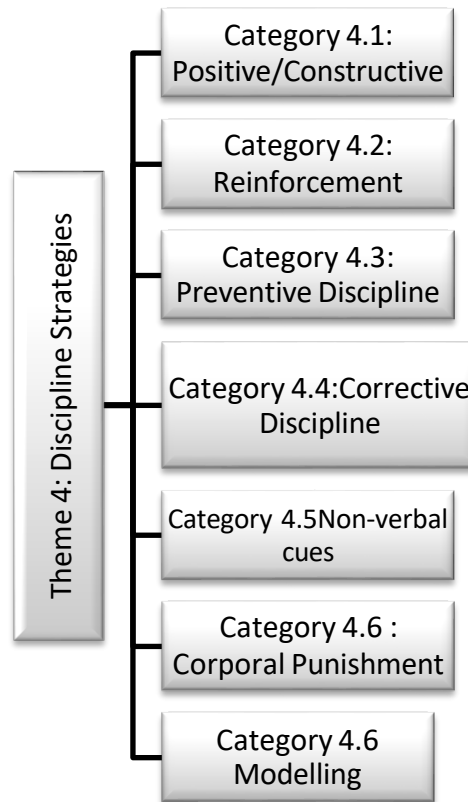
Table 8

Discipline Strategies Identified

Category	Nigeria <i>n</i> = 6	United States <i>n</i> = 6	Total Comments <i>N</i> = 12
4.1 Positive/Constructive Discipline	9 (25%)	27 (75%)	36 (32%)
4.2 Reinforcement	7 (47%)	8 (53%)	15 (13%)
4.3 Preventive Discipline	10 (50%)	10 (50%)	20 (18%)
4.4 Corrective Discipline	6 (43%)	8 (57%)	14 (12%)
4.5 Non-Verbal Cues	4 (100%)	0 (0%)	4 (4%)
4.6 Corporal Punishment	8 (82%)	3 (18%)	11 (10%)
4.7 Modeling	2 (29%)	5 (71%)	7 (6%)
TOTAL COMMENTS	46 (43%)	61 (57%)	107

Figure 8

Discipline Strategies



Category 4.1 Positive/Constructive Discipline. Interview data and analysis revealed that US participants strongly approve of this approach (67% of statements made in this category). Parents and teachers placed more emphasis on the importance of communication, positive reinforcement, and logical consequences. For example, both parent and teacher participants in the US stated, “So, I think.... Talking to them, giving them choices, and just being there to facilitate the resolution of their problems works for me,” and “My approach is positive. I don't know what I would call it, I tried not to do the spanking or the physical route. I didn't like that growing up.” This is not to say that no participants in Nigeria approve of this approach. The

predominant use of positive discipline strategies in the US is consistent with recent trends in early childhood education and parenting practices (Durrant & Ensom, 2012).

Category 4.2 Reinforcement (Positive and Negative). Both positive and negative reinforcement were commonly mentioned by participants in both countries. A Nigerian participant stated:

I adopt the use of carrot and stick in dealing with some situations with my children. What do I mean? The use of positive reinforcement and negative one may come in depending on the context where this issue occurs. Has a child done something worthwhile that he needs to be encouraged to say, oh, I say "Well done"? Or the carrot comes in. Where there is the reverse, something negative is done, then maybe the reverse one may have to come in, because he must be trained to know that life is not a bed of roses. It's a nuance that contains different milieu, and the child must learn to know where to do what, and where not to do what. Essentially, positive and negative reinforcement is a strong approach I use in dealing with my children at home.

On the other hand, a parent participant in the United States stated:

I do a lot of time timing like I'm going to give you three minutes to buckle, when the timer's up. You're not going to have ice cream after dinner when we get home, or like. You're not going to watch what you want to watch at home if you don't buckle up. And so that happened the other day he didn't buckle. And I had to ask him a lot of times, and it took a really long time, so when we got home he didn't get to watch anything. And so that happened like taking things away. And then reinforcing positive behaviors with words of encouragement basically. I don't like

to give extrinsic motivation, if that makes sense, like, you know, stickers and rewards and things like that. More of expectations and activities.

All of these statements indicate reinforcement as an approach that aligns with Martin and Pear (2015) research regarding the importance of appropriate reinforcer selection and timing.

Category 4.3 Preventive Discipline. According to Idris and Alegbeleye (2015), this discipline strategy aims to establish a system where children willingly adhere to rules with their input considered in rule formation. Preventive discipline is another strategy that was inferred by a Caucasian teacher in the US stating that, “I create classroom rules with children. They're involved in the process”. This is to say that this strategy aligns with a proactive approach that enables fostering development and preventing misbehavior since rules are made to be clear and straightforward with the learner’s input.

Category 4.4 Corrective Discipline. Corrective discipline is another strategy identified, and this is peculiar to one of the parent participants in Nigeria. A parent participant in Nigeria stated, "I adopt the use of carrot and stick.” Also, corrective discipline techniques like timeouts with an African American parent in the US mentioning, “You're not going to do anything fun. If you're going to talk back, you're not going to have fun things.”

My interpretation of this is related to striking a balance between rewards and punishments for a particular behavior. The primary objective is to act as a deterrent, preventing future unintended behaviors, and imposing sanctions to instill a sense of intimidation (Idris & Alegbeleye, 2015). This approach shares elements of both authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles. Practices align with corrective discipline being used as a deterrent from

misbehavior, though it was implemented differently in both countries.

Category 4.5 Non-Verbal Cues. As stated by Abdullahi's (2014) research on nonverbal communication in educational settings, this approach demonstrates the importance of what the researcher described as silent or invisible language. This strategy was mentioned particularly by a participant from Nigeria where non-verbal communication is said to carry significant meaning. The use of non-verbal cues as a discipline strategy was mentioned by participants from both countries but seemed more prevalent in Nigerian participants' responses. For example, a Hausa parent in Nigeria stated:

Sometimes when I begin to shake my head in a particular way, the child knows that it's a warning, or once I observe that maybe a child is acting funny in the class. I just called the name of that child immediately. I call John for example. John will look at me, and I will do my face somehow, and that alone will send a signal to John that oh, stop that which you are doing. So, I'll just call John and do my eyes in a way, and John will just adjust himself.

This is an indication of the use of culturally specific non-verbal communication in discipline.

Category 4.6 Corporal Punishment. The use of corporal punishment emerged as a significant category in this theme, particularly among Nigerian participants. Both parents and teachers seem to buy the authoritarian approaches to discipline, which is why most of the interviewed participants stated or alluded to this as a discipline strategy. Corporal punishment as identified from discussions with participants in Nigeria reflects that they still viewed it as an acceptable form of discipline. Statements made by participants greatly align with UNICEF's

(2014) definition of corporal punishment as applying physical force with the goal of inflicting pain or discomfort. Nigerian participants openly acknowledged their use of physical punishment. “There are instances I beat,” stated one parent, while a teacher affirmed “And at some point, you can just spank them just a little to make the children know that, come on, stop it, just spank. It is allowed here in my own country. You can just spank them.” Another Nigerian parent elaborated:

Yeah, most of the time I beat them. Okay. Maybe let me say, that's how my own parents brought me up. Exactly, so I beat them. I beat them. My hands are fast; I beat them very well. So sometimes like yesterday, now the little boy was misbehaving, and I just told him to kneel, raise his hands up, I took the cane again, and I beat him.

These statements are indications that physical punishment is still part of their choice of discipline strategy. This aligns with findings from Bassey (2016), who noted that cultural beliefs in Nigeria often support the use of physical punishment in child-rearing. Overall, in as much as there is a prevailing trend towards the use of corporal punishment in Nigeria, we still have parents like one in Nigeria stating, “You know, the corporal dimension to it (discipline) should be avoided.”

This suggests that as much as there's a large acceptance of the use of corporal punishment, there is also a growing awareness of alternative discipline methods. This gradual shift in Nigeria aligns with global trends toward more positive discipline approaches, as noted by Gershoff et al. (2017).

Category 4.7 Modeling. Modeling as a discipline strategy directly connects to Bandura's social learning theory especially because it emphasizes the importance of observational learning. This is another strategy mentioned by 2 of the 3 teachers interviewed in the US. This strategy was mentioned specifically by teacher participants in the US stating that, “I try to model correct

behavior. I tried to implement modeling. And I believe that if they see how I treat others, they will try to copy that behavior.” Another US teacher stated that, “Modeling to them, talking to them, giving them choices, and just being there to facilitate their own resolution of their problems really works.” As stated earlier, modeling as a strategy plays a significant role in shaping children's behavior through observation and imitation of significant adults in their environment.

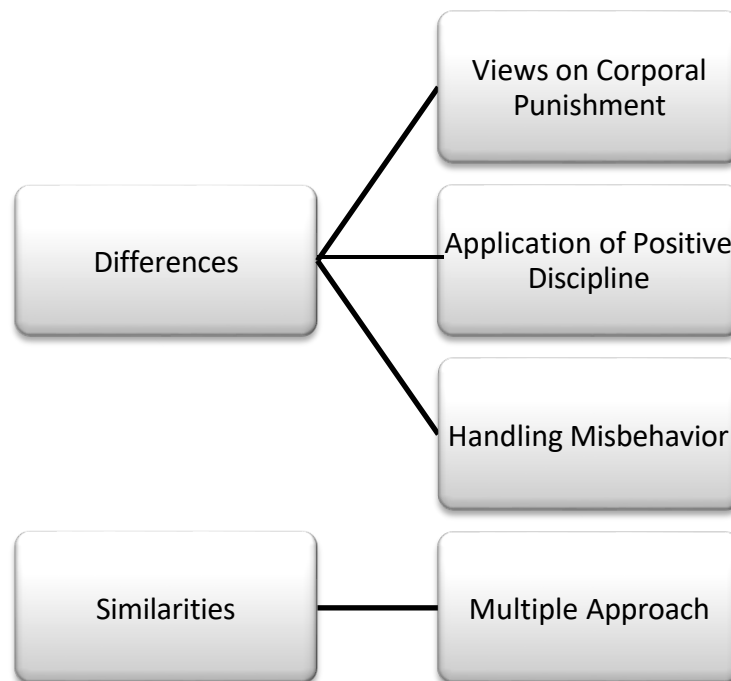
RQ2- In What Ways Are These Strategies Similar and Different?

Theme 5: Similarities and Differences in Discipline Strategies

In terms of similarities and differences, there’s a huge cultural difference between the two countries, and this impacts the choice of strategy being used.

Figure 9

Similarities and Differences in Discipline Strategies



Views on Corporal Punishment. One of the major differences is the participant's view on corporal punishment. Most Nigerian participants like to view it as an acceptable choice of discipline strategy even though there's a minority opinion that doesn't buy the idea. A Yoruba Teacher in Nigeria stated, "You can just spank them. Or a little bit of raising up your voice to actually make the child keep quiet..." In contrast, a parent participant in the United States says they do not like to "whoop."

Handling Misbehavior. Also, there is a clear difference in terms of how participants in the United States explained handling misbehavior. It mostly revolved around verbal explanation, setting boundaries, stating clear expectations, and reasoning with children. An African American teacher in the US explained, "I always try to talk through why a behavior was wrong and what to do differently next time."

Application of Positive Discipline. While participants from both countries mentioned positive reinforcement, there is a clear difference in how it's being applied. While one of the teachers in Nigeria mentioned using biscuits and snacks as a motivation for good behavior, a teacher participant in the US stated specifically that:

I don't like to give extrinsic motivation, if that makes sense, like, you know, stickers and rewards and things like that. I use more of expectations and activities. So that A, the motivation is that he knows what's coming next and B, he's able to start thinking in his head. Okay, this is what's happening. I'm getting used to the idea. And this is what I have to look forward to because most of what we do during our day with preschoolers should be exciting and fun for them.

Multiple Approach. However, in terms of similarities, participants from both countries have a similar summation on their choice of multiple discipline approaches being used. Parent participants who have more than one preschooler and teachers with multiple preschoolers in their care emphatically stated that they use different strategies interchangeably, depending on which child they are dealing with. Nigerian parents stated, “I noticed something with my children. They are two. I use different methods for them.” In the United States, a Hispanic teacher also stated, “But sometimes I know it can be frustrating and challenging, and you have to just keep trying different things.” Another said, “Well, to families, I would say, just to be patient and to try different strategies until something works.” Another participant said, “It’s a combination of all. It’s not just one. There are instances I beat. There are instances I threaten. There are instances where I use positive and negative reinforcement.” It is therefore obvious that parents and teachers from both countries agree that using a variety of discipline methods is important, which is a key similarity despite their other differences. They recognize that children should be treated uniquely and that one strategy doesn’t work for all. However, there’s still a big difference in what these various methods include. US participants generally focus on positive discipline, modeling, reinforcement, and talking things through with the children, while the majority of the Nigerian participants use physical punishment alongside other strategies. This shows that while both groups understand the need for flexibility, their cultural backgrounds still influence what they consider acceptable in terms of discipline strategies.

RQ3 - How Do Parents and Teachers Perceive That These Various Approaches to Managing Preschooler Behavior Affect Preschoolers' Conduct and Development in Nigeria and the US?

Theme 6: Perceived Effectiveness and Impacts of Discipline Strategy on Preschoolers' Development

When these issues (behavioral challenges) are left unaddressed, they can have also long-lasting effects on a child's well-being and future success. (Salari et al., 2014). Participants generally reported that their chosen discipline strategies were effective. For instance, an African American parent in the US stated, "I think they are very effective. I really love the methods that I use because they translate to other areas." Similarly, a Yoruba parent in Nigeria affirmed, "Well, to the best of my knowledge. I think they are working for me. They are effective."

Participants gave examples of different occurrences that reflect a kind of emotional and social development/impact based on their choice of discipline strategy. However, judging by the examples given by participants from the two countries, it is evident that the criteria for effectiveness differ.

Figure 10

Impact of Effectiveness on Development

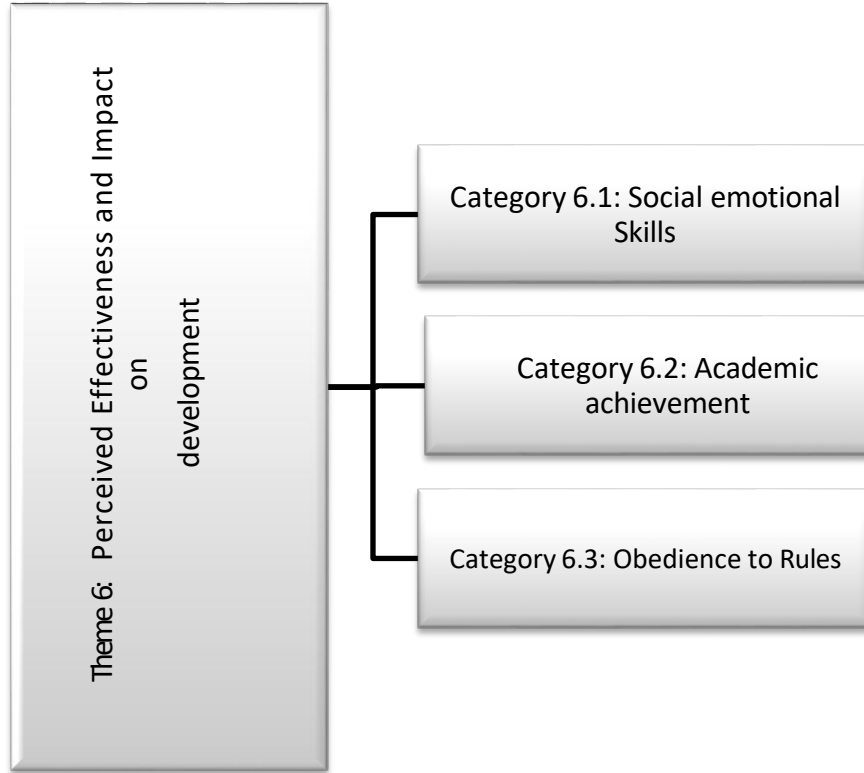


Table 9

Perceived Effectiveness and Impact on Development

Category	Nigeria <i>n</i> = 6	United States <i>n</i> = 6	Total Comments <i>N</i> = 42
6.1 Social-emotional skills	8 (28%)	21 (72%)	29 (69%)
6.2 Academic readiness	4 (67%)	2 (33%)	6 (14%)
6.3 Obedience to rules	6 (86%)	1 (14%)	7 (17%)
TOTAL COMMENTS	18 (43%)	24 (57%)	42

Category 6.1 Social-Emotional Skills. From the perspective of participants in the United States, it seems effectiveness was measured by improvements in children's self-regulation and social-emotional skills. A Caucasian teacher in the US said, "I now see children who are more confident, who are more adept at managing social situations, children who are more independent, and also children who have stronger relationships with their peers." This aligns with the emphasis on social-emotional learning in US early childhood education (Denham et al., 2014).

Socio-emotional skill development was mostly alluded to by participants in the United States. An example is an African American parent in the US stating that:

I feel like my kids are more open with me. They're able to express themselves with me. They're able to come, tell me stuff, sit down and communicate with me in a very healthy way. And I really like that. They know if something's wrong, if they're frustrated, they can sit down and talk instead of doing anything physical, such as fighting.

However, a parent participant in Nigeria also stated: "When we now attend social functions, the behavior has considerably improved unlike what it was years back."

Category 6.2 Academic Readiness. Nigeria participants seem to link effectiveness to academic readiness. An Igbo parent in Nigeria stated, "After the whole test and when we went for an open day, and I saw her scores I was, I was really surprised." This statement came because of how a Nigerian parent in a moment of frustration and harsh verbal discipline unexpectedly led to positive behavioral change, where her daughter developed academic independence and self-motivation, though the participant acknowledged that shouting wasn't ideal interaction, but it

brought about a drastic change in the child's academic performance.

Category 6.3 Obedience to Rules. This category has the highest percentage of 86% from Nigeria participants, just as their understanding of discipline is largely connected to exerting control. Therefore, the measure of effectiveness is attributed to obedience to rules. A teacher participant in Nigeria has a rule for his classroom environment to be devoid of noise. In relation to obedience, he stated that:

Now I observed that there is a measure of calmness and recognition that Oh, the teacher is around now, which has not been happening in the past. So that's the change. I observed that now they know that classroom environment should be serene and yeah, cool and calm.

In all, the United States participants strongly emphasized emotional and social development while Nigerians placed much more importance on obedience at 86% and academic readiness at 67%. These numbers clearly show the disparities and differences in what is considered effective in both countries.

Table 10

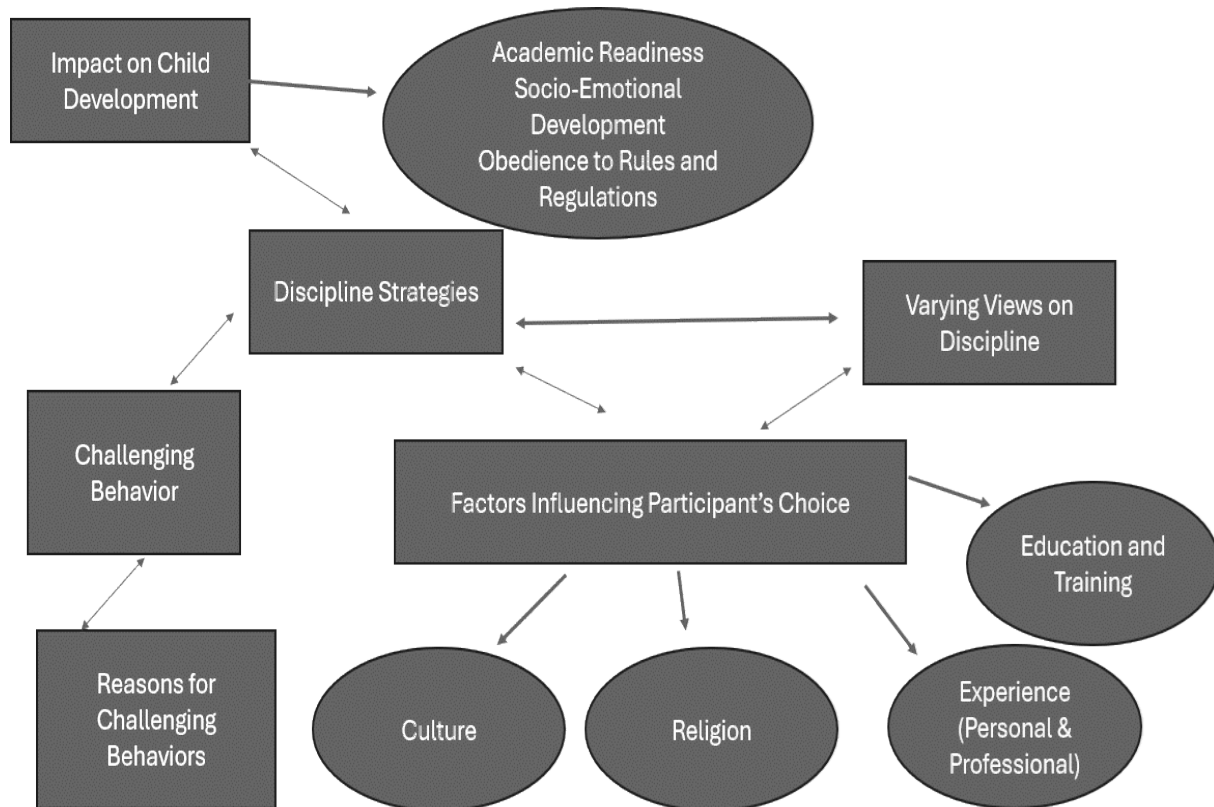
Thematic Definitions

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Varying Views of Parents and Teachers on Discipline	This is how parents and teachers in Nigeria and the US understand and define discipline, ranging from exerting control to teaching appropriate behavior and ensuring rules are followed.

Factors Influencing Participants' Choice of Discipline Strategy	These are the key elements that shaped participant's choice and perception of discipline strategies, including education/training, personal/professional experience, religion, and cultural background.
Challenging Behaviors Identified by Participants	This refers to behavioral issues exhibited by preschoolers, including aggression, non-compliance, and destructive behaviors, as identified by participants in both countries.
Discipline Strategies Identified	These are the strategies used by participants to address challenging behaviors which include positive/constructive discipline, reinforcement, preventive discipline, corrective discipline, non-verbal cues, corporal punishment, and modeling.
Similarities and Differences in Discipline Strategies	These are the shared commonalities and variations in the choices of discipline strategies as well as the process of implementation.
Perceived Effectiveness and Impacts of Discipline Strategy on Preschooler's Development	This is how participants evaluated the success of their choice of discipline strategy. Particularly in social-emotional skills, academic readiness, and obedience to rules and instruction.

Figure 11

Thematic Map



Chapter 5. Discussion

This chapter discusses the key findings and significance of the study in relation to the research questions while considering the limitations and implications of its results in terms of practice, policy, and research. It acknowledges the limitations of the study while suggesting possible future research.

Key Findings

The following key findings were made during the study of the interview data analysis. The study reflected how different discipline strategies (positive discipline, corporal punishment, modeling, non-verbal cues, corrective and preventive discipline) align with parenting styles from Baumrind's theory. It was made clear by participants from both countries (Nigeria and the United States) that they perceived discipline differently, and their choice of discipline strategies differed. For example, the fact that Nigerian participants were receptive to the use of corporal punishment matches the authoritarian parenting style, while participants in the US leaned towards positive discipline. These choices also impact the behavioral outcomes of children and contribute to their effective and holistic development. However, this effectiveness is measured differently in both countries due to background and cultural differences.

Additionally, in alignment with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, the result shows how these complex "layers" of the environment influence a child's development based on the kind of discipline strategy used. The predominant acceptance of corporal punishment among Nigerian participants supports Bassey (2016) findings about cultural factors influencing Nigerian parents' approval of physical punishment.

In line with Bandura's social learning theory, the study reflected the importance of

modeling to elicit desired behaviors in preschoolers. This supports Parsonson (2012) assertion that children learn significantly through observation of significant others. Combined with this is the use of positive reinforcement. For example, both Nigerian and American participants used positive reinforcement which supports Salsabila and Wahyu (2019) findings on the effectiveness of positive reinforcement in improving discipline behavior, however these discipline strategies were used by participants from both countries differently. After interviewing a teacher participant in Nigeria, who stated an example of reinforcement being used as “giving biscuit and sweet to calm children,” a US teacher participant also alluded to the use of intrinsic motivation in the form of prompting a child’s curiosity through a promise of an exciting activity. This is in line with Dagnall (2021) assertion that “curiosity is strictly an intrinsic drive.”

Skinner's theory of operant conditioning was evident in how reinforcement was applied across both countries, though in different ways. Nigerian teachers used more extrinsic rewards like snacks and treats, while US teachers focused on building internal motivation through clear expectations and the promise of fun activities. This aligns with Skinner's emphasis on how different types of reinforcement shape behavior and supports Salsabila and Wahyu (2019) findings on the effectiveness of positive reinforcement in improving discipline behavior. However, this research confirms that the strategy is used across the two countries.

Also, the findings of this study show that although a great number of Nigerian participants still used corporal punishment, one of the parent participants in Nigeria alluded to becoming more aware of other options outside the use of corporal punishment. This supports the findings of Iguh and Nosike (2011) who stated that educated parents are more accepting of alternatives to physical discipline.

During the interviews, participants also made certain recommendations as to what they

perceived to be the appropriate solution to addressing preschoolers' misbehavior. One such recommendation was “home-school collaboration.” A strong partnership between home and school emerged as crucial. A parent in Nigeria stated this clearly, “There's a need for a synergy between the home and the school...The school, too, must interface with home, especially where there are behaviors which they feel the home has to work upon.” He further emphasized that “there's a need for strong collaboration between the home and the school in providing needed assistance and guidance for these children.” The importance of home-school collaboration emphasized by participants aligns with Bendayan et al. (2013) findings on the significance of supportive interactions between important figures in children's lives. The study also confirms Morrow and Singh (2014) findings regarding the complex relationship between cultural beliefs and discipline practices, particularly in transitioning societies.

Finally, the clear difference in ways participants from both countries measure discipline effectiveness aligns with Ijaz et al. (2012) research on how cultural norms influence behavioral expectations. Nigerian participants' focus on academic readiness and obedience reflects traditional cultural values, while US participants' emphasis on social-emotional development aligns with contemporary Western educational philosophies (Denham, 2014).

Recommendations by participants also include “showing love and providing physical comfort to foster trust.” The importance of creating a nurturing environment was highlighted by participants in both countries. A teacher in Nigeria recommended, “You can handle such a pupil by showing them love...we should show them love. We should not discriminate.” A teacher in the US similarly emphasized building trust: “I think as long as you give them that sense of safety and trustworthiness...they will understand it.”

Participants also emphasized the need for consistency and persistence as crucial elements

for effective discipline strategies. Participants stressed that maintaining consistent approaches and following through with stated consequences builds trust and improves behavioral outcomes, as illustrated by a Nigerian teacher's observation: "They took me by my word... I used to fulfill my promise to them." A teacher in the US emphasized the need for constant, intentional practice: "You have to be very constant and very intentional about what you want the child to achieve," while acknowledging that success requires persistence through challenges: "Sometimes it can be frustrating and challenging, and you have to just keep trying until it works out." This persistence pays off, as demonstrated by a parent in the US who said, "I feel like my kids are more open with me... They know if they're frustrated, they can sit down and talk instead of doing anything physical." These testimonies suggest that effective discipline requires clear communication, consistent follow-through, patience through the behavior change process, and willingness to maintain the chosen approach despite initial challenges.

Finally, the study also affirmed the use of multiple discipline strategies by both teachers and parents as there is that similar awareness of the need for a unique and individualized child development approach to discipline. Participants continually emphasized the need for flexibility in approach and trying different strategies. A teacher in the US advised: "Well, to families, I would say, just to be patient and to try different strategies until something works out." This was echoed by a parent in Nigeria who noted, "Even those of them who are from the same father and mother will behave differently which means, even as parents, we have to develop various strategies."

Implications of the Study

This research contributes to the understanding of cultural differences in early childhood discipline practices. It highlights both the global shift towards more positive discipline

approaches and the persistent influence of cultural norms on disciplinary beliefs and practices.

The findings suggest that while there is growing awareness of the benefits of positive discipline strategies, implementation may be influenced by cultural context, educational background, and available resources. This underscores the need for culturally sensitive approaches when developing and implementing early childhood discipline policies and training programs.

The study also reveals the complex interplay between traditional practices and modern educational theories in shaping discipline strategies. This is particularly evident in the Nigerian context, where some participants expressed a dilemma about moving away from physical punishment despite recognizing its potential negative impacts.

Limitations

The limitation to the study will be the geographic scope of the study which was limited to specific schools in both Nigeria and the US. Expanding to other schools, possibly other areas, states/regions within these countries could lead to significant differences in the outcome and results of this study. A diverse geographic scope will reflect variations in the practices and beliefs of participants.

Additionally, the data collected was solely based on the self-reported perceptions of the participants during an interview session without any observation. This gives a form of bias, as participants might have reported what they believed to be socially acceptable rather than their actual practices. This brings me to my last limitation of this study which is the lack of observational data. Including observational data of actual discipline strategies being utilized by both parents and teachers may have provided a more comprehensive and holistic picture of what

strategies were actually being used.

Implications for Policy and Practice

It is evident from the study that professional training plays an important role in the adaptation of positive discipline specifically from the perspective of a US participant with an African background who mentioned learning about “positive discipline techniques through workshops.” Nigerian teachers made no such references. It is therefore particularly important in contexts where physical punishment is still prevalent that professional training programs should be emphasized and should not just address the “what” of positive discipline but the “how” and “why” to help overcome cultural barriers to its adoption.

Another major implication is the need for improved parent-teacher communication systems. Both parents and teachers emphasized the need for better communication systems. As a parent in Nigeria stated, “There's a need for strong collaboration between the home and the school.” This implies developing structured means of communication and a regular parent-teacher meeting and interaction focused specifically on discipline strategies and addressing misbehavior.

Also, policymakers in both countries, especially in Nigeria, may need to consider ways to bridge the gap between official policies discouraging corporal punishment i.e., the theoretical aspect of it and actual practices in homes and schools. Clearly, there is still a gap between what is expected and what is being practiced. This could involve public awareness campaigns, enhanced teacher training, and support for parents in implementing alternative discipline strategies. This was evident in the earlier stated study by Iguh & Nosika (2011) which states that “Although the use of corporal punishment was discouraged in the Child's Rights Act (CRA) of

2003, the bamboo cane is still being used to correct misbehavior in learners to this day in Nigeria” (p. 106).

Future Research

For future research, a larger and diverse sample size will be able to provide more insights into this kind of study. This study also reflects the need for more cross-cultural research on early childhood discipline. Future studies could explore a wider geographical scope while making comparisons between the two categories of participants: teachers and parents. Studying the long-term impacts of different discipline approaches in various cultural contexts and investigating effective ways to promote positive discipline practices while respecting cultural values is equally worthy of research. Another area worthy of research in the future will be the cultural role, particularly how an individual's ethnicity/race influences the choice of discipline strategy. Expanding the research to include a wider range of cultures and socioeconomic contexts to identify wide and culture-specific aspects of effective discipline strategies would be another recommendation.

Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the perceptions and practices of preschool discipline strategies in Nigeria and the United States. While there is a general trend toward more positive approaches, cultural differences continue to play a significant role in shaping discipline practices. The findings highlight the need for culturally sensitive, evidence-based approaches to promoting effective discipline strategies that support children's healthy development. By continuing to investigate and address these issues, we can work toward creating more nurturing and supportive environments for young children across diverse cultural contexts.

References

- Abdulmalik, J., Ani, C., Ajuwon, A. J., & Omigbodun, O. (2016). Effects of problem-solving interventions on aggressive behaviours among primary school pupils in Ibadan, Nigeria. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health*, 10, Article 31.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13034-016-0116-5>
- Aboluwodi, A. (2015). A critical analysis of retributive punishment as a discipline measure in Nigeria's public secondary schools. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(10), 134-142.
- Abdullahi, O. E. (2014). Non-verbal communication in the classroom: A study of teacher-students' non-verbal interaction. *African Journal of Educational Studies*, 3(2), 121-134.
- Ajaja, O. P. (2012). Methods of curbing learner misconduct in Zimbabwean secondary schools. *International Journal of Educational Administration and Policy Studies*, 4(4), 49-58.
- Ali, A. A., Dada, I. T., Isiaka, G. A., & Salmon, S. A. (2014). Types, causes and management of indiscipline acts among secondary school students in Shomolu Local Government Area of Lagos State. *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences*, 8(2), 254-287.
- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425596>
- Apalia, E. A. (2017). The effect of disciplinary management on employee performance in an organization: A case study of Kenya Pipeline Company. *International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration*, 2(3), 353-367.
- Archer, J., & Coyne, S. M. (2005). An integrated review of indirect, relational, and social aggression. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 9(3), 212-230.

- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice-Hall.
- Banks, J. B. (2002). Childhood discipline: Challenges for clinicians and parents. *American Family Physician*, 66(8), 1447-1453.
- Bassey, A. A. (2016). *Culture and attitudes regarding physical punishment of children in Akwa Ibom state of Nigeria* [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. ScholarWorks.
- Baumrind, D. (1966). Effects of authoritative parental control on child behavior. *Child Development*, 37(4), 887-907.
- Bendayan, R., Blanca, M. J., Fernández-Baena, J. F., Escobar, M., & Trianes, M. V. (2013). New empirical evidence on the validity of the Satisfaction with Life Scale in early adolescents. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*, 29(1), 36-43.
- Bilaty, N. C. (2012). *An assessment of the implementation of learner discipline policies in four high-density secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District, Eastern Cape* [Master's thesis, University of Fort Hare]. UFDC Home.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101.
- Breger, M. L. (2019). Corporal punishment in schools: A global view from an EU perspective. *International Journal of Law & Education*, 24(1), 3-34.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.

- Brown, J. D., Marshall, M. A., & O'Brien, E. (2001). Self-esteem and emotion: Some thoughts about feelings. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27(5), 575-584.
- Bufferd, S. J., Dougherty, L. R., Carlson, G. A., Rose, S., & Klein, D. N. (2012). Psychiatric disorders in preschoolers: Continuity from ages 3 to 6. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 169(11), 1157-1164.
- Bulotsky-Shearer, R. J., Dominguez, X., Bell, E. R., Rouse, H. L., & Fantuzzo, J. W. (2012). Relations between behavior problems in classroom social and learning situations and peer social competence in Head Start and kindergarten. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 20(3), 158-170.
- Carpenter, M., Nagell, K., & Tomasello, M. (2015). Social cognition, joint attention, and communicative competence. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 80(4), 1-174.
- Clark, A. (2020). Towards a listening ECEC system. In C. Cameron & P. Moss (Eds.), *Transforming early childhood in England: Towards a democratic education* (pp. 134-150). UCL Press.
- Coplan, R. J., Bullock, A., Archbell, K. A., & Bosacki, S. (2015). Preschool teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and emotional reactions to young children's peer group behaviors. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 30, 117-127.
- Cueto, S., & Leon, J. (2012). *Psychometric characteristics of cognitive development and achievement instruments in Round 3 of Young Lives* (Young Lives Technical Note 25). Young Lives.

- Darling, K. E., & Lippman, L. H. (2016). Early childhood social and emotional development: Advancing the field of measurement. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 45*, 1-7.
- Denham, S. A. (2014). Social and emotional learning during early childhood. *Encyclopedia of Primary Prevention and Health Promotion, 925-935*.
- Durrant, J., & Ensom, R. (2012). Physical punishment of children: Lessons from 20 years of research. *Canadian Medical Association Journal, 184(12)*, 1373-1377.
- Eisenberg, N., Cumberland, A., & Spinrad, T. L. (1998). Parental socialization of emotion. *Psychological Inquiry, 9(4)*, 241-273.
- Eisenberg, N., Spinrad, T. L., & Knafo-Noam, A. (2015). Prosocial development. In R. M. Lerner (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology and developmental science: Socioemotional processes* (7th ed., Vol. 3, pp. 610-656). John Wiley & Sons.
- Ennis, R. P., Lane, K. L., & Oakes, W. P. (2018). Empowering teachers with low-intensity strategies to support instruction: Self-monitoring in an elementary resource classroom. *Preventing School Failure, 62(3)*, 176-189.
- Eren, E. (2015). *Organizational behavior and management psychology*. Beta Publishing.
- Ergişi, B., & Dağlı, A. (2014). Teachers' views about classroom management styles. *International Journal of Academic Research, 6(4)*, 181-188.
- Ergin, A. (2014). Effective communication and dimensions in educational environment. In U. Demiray (Ed.), *Effective communication* (pp. 241-260). Pegem Academy.

- Etyang, M. O., & Okoth, P. G. (2018). Influence of head teachers' disciplinary management practices on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub-County, Kenya. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 6(5), 353-366.
- Forehand, R., Jones, D. J., & Parent, J. (2013). Behavioral parenting interventions for child disruptive behaviors and anxiety: What's different and what's the same. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 33(1), 133-145.
- Furlong, M., McGilloway, S., Bywater, T., Hutchings, J., Smith, S. M., & Donnelly, M. (2013). Behavioural and cognitive-behavioural group-based parenting programmes for early-onset conduct problems in children aged 3 to 12 years. *Evidence-Based Child Health*, 8(2), 318-692.
- Gartrell, D. J. (2012). *Education for a civil society: How guidance teaches young children democratic life skills*. NAEYC.
- Gartrell, D. (1994). *A guidance approach to discipline*. Delmar.
- Gershoff, E. T. (2002). Corporal punishment by parents and associated child behaviors and experiences: A meta-analytic and theoretical review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128(4), 539-579.
- Gornik, A. E., Neal, J. W., Leary, S. L., & Durbin, C. E. (2018). Connections between preschoolers' temperament traits and social behaviors as observed in a preschool setting. *Social Development*, 27(2), 335-350.

- Greene-Santos, A. (2024). Corporal punishment in schools still legal in many states. *NEA Today*.
<https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/corporal-punishment-schools-still-legal-many-states>
- Hacker, K., Goldstein, J., Link, D., Sengupta, N., Bowers, R., Tendulkar, S., & Wissow, L. (2013). Pediatric provider processes for behavioral health screening, decision making, and referral in sites with colocated mental health services. *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, 34*(9), 680-687.
- Harris, P. L. (2012). *Trusting what you're told: How children learn from others*. Harvard University Press.
- Henarath, H. D. N. P., & Opatha, H. H. (2017). Employee discipline management. In H. H. Opatha (Ed.), *Human resource management personnel* (pp. 773-774). Department of HRM, University of Sri Jayewardenepura.
- Hollingsworth, H. L., & Winter, M. K. (2013). Teacher beliefs and practices relating to development in preschool: Importance placed on social-emotional behaviours and skills. *Early Child Development and Care, 183*(12), 1758-1781.
- Iguh, N. A., & Nosike, O. (2011). An examination of the child rights protection and corporal punishment in Nigeria. *Nnamdi Azikiwe University Journal of International Law and Jurisprudence, 2*, 97-111.
- Ijaz, M., Yasin, G., & Zafar, M. J. (2012). Cultural factors affecting entrepreneurial behavior among entrepreneurs: Case study of Multan, Pakistan. *International Journal of Asian Social Science, 6*(6), 908-917.

- Kauffman, J. M., & Landrum, T. J. (2014). Start point: Basic assumptions. In S. Kaner (Ed.), *Characteristics of emotional and behavioral disorders of children and youth* (p. 20). Nobel.
- Klassen, R. M., Perry, N. E., & Frenzel, A. C. (2012). Teachers' relatedness with students: An underemphasized component of teachers' basic psychological needs. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 104*(1), 150-165.
- Leijten, P., Thomaes, S., Orobio de Castro, B., Dishion, T. J., & Matthys, W. (2021). What to teach parents to reduce disruptive child behavior: Two meta-analyses of parenting program components. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 60*(2), 279-292.
- Magaldi, D., & Berler, M. (2020). Semi-structured interviews. In V. Zeigler-Hill & T. K. Shackelford (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of personality and individual differences* (pp. 4825-4830). Springer.
- Maglica, T., Ercegovac, I. R., & Ljubetic, M. (2020). Mindful parenting and behavioural problems in preschool children. *Hrvatska Revija za Rehabilitacijska Istrazivanja, 56*(1), 44-56.
- Maguire, M., & Delahunt, B. (2017). Doing a thematic analysis: A practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars. *AISHE-J: The All Ireland Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 9*(3), 3351-33514.
- Martin, G., & Pear, J. J. (2015). *Behavior modification: What it is and how to do it* (10th ed.). Pearson.

- McNiff, M. T. (2015). *Using group video self-modelling in the classroom to improve transition speeds with elementary children* [Doctoral dissertation]. University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Sage.
- Molina, P., Sala, M. N., Zappulla, C., Bonfigliuoli, C., Cavioni, V., Zanetti, M. A., Baiocco, R., Laghi, F., Pallini, S., De Stasio, S., & Raccanello, D. (2014). The Emotion Regulation Checklist - Italian translation: Validation of parent and teacher versions. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology, 11*(5), 624-634.
- Morrow, V., & Singh, R. (2014). *Corporal punishment in schools in Andhra Pradesh, India: Children's and parents' views* (Working Paper No. 123). Young Lives.
- Mugabe, M. J., & Maposa, A. D. (2013). Methods of curbing learner misconduct in Zimbabwean secondary schools. *International Journal on New Trends in Education and Their Implications, 4*(4), 111-122.
- Nduka, A. C., Mansor, M. B., & Talib, M. A. (2012). The effects of Igbo cultural importance and participation in cultural events on the parents' use of physical punishment on their children in Imo State of Nigeria. *International Journal of Asian Social Science, 2*(9), 1564-1578.
- Nguyen, X. T., & Tran, T. L. A. (2013). Corporal punishment of children in Vietnam. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 37*(8), 579-587.

- Nili, A., Tate, M., & Johnstone, D. (2017). A framework and approach for analysis of focus group data in information systems research. *Communications of the Association for Information Systems, 40*, 1-21.
- Nwinyokpugi, P. N. (2015). Positive discipline and employee performance in the public sector: A conceptual view. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Development, 4*(2), 95-99.
- O'Connor, C., & Joffe, H. (2020). Intercoder reliability in qualitative research: Debates and practical guidelines. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 19*, 1-13.
- Oruç, Z. (2015). Looking at empathy in the context of different concepts. In Y. Kabapınar (Ed.), *Developing with empathy, developing empathy: Children and empathy* (p. 167). Pegem Academy.
- Parsonson, B. (2012). Evidence-based classroom behaviour management strategies. *Kairaranga, 13*(1), 16-23.
- Paul Dagnall, R. (2021). The role of curiosity in learning: A case study. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 113*(4), 782-796.
- Pederson, C. A., & Fite, P. J. (2014). The impact of parenting on the associations between child aggression subtypes and oppositional defiant disorder symptoms. *Child Psychiatry & Human Development, 45*(6), 728-735.
- Perrotta, G. (2019). Behavioral activation in early childhood classrooms: Promoting social-emotional learning and self-regulation. *Young Children, 74*(3), 34-41.

- Purnama, S., Wibowo, A., Narmaditya, B. S., Fitriyah, Q. F., & Aziz, H. (2022). Do parenting styles and religious beliefs matter for child behavioral problem? The mediating role of digital literacy. *Heliyon*, 8(6), Article e09709.
- Rad, F. M., & Ya'gobi, N. (2015). The relationship between discipline and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) of high school teachers in Saveh City. *UCT Journal of Management and Accounting Studies*, 3(1), 118-122.
- Rädiker, S., & Kuckartz, U. (2019). *Focused analysis of qualitative interviews with MAXQDA*. MAXQDA Press.
- Rivai, V. (2017). The impact of discipline, leadership, and organizational culture on employee performance in company X. *International Journal of Economics, Business and Management Research*, 1(4), 958-969.
- Robinson, C. C., Mandlco, B., Olsen, S. F., & Hart, C. H. (1995). Authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting practices: Development of a new measure. *Psychological Reports*, 77(3), 819-830.
- Rohan, T. (2017). *Teaching for positive behaviour: Supporting engagement, participation, and learning*. New Zealand Ministry of Education.
- Rourke, L., Leduc, D., & Rourke, J. (2014). *Rourke Baby Record*.
<https://www.rourkebabyrecord.ca/>
- Ryan, A. M. (2000). Peer groups as a context for the socialization of adolescents' motivation, engagement, and achievement in school. *Educational Psychologist*, 35(2), 101-111.
- Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Sage.

- Salari, R., Wells, M. B., & Sarkadi, A. (2014). Child behaviour problems, parenting behaviours and parental adjustment in mothers and fathers in Sweden. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health, 42*(7), 547-553.
- Salsabila, M., & Wahyu, F. (2019). Effectiveness of positive reinforcement to improve discipline through caregiver. In *2nd International Conference on Intervention and Applied Psychology (ICIAP 2018)* (pp. 121-132). Atlantis Press.
- Searle, A. K., Miller-Lewis, L. R., Sawyer, M. G., & Baghurst, P. A. (2013). Predictors of children's kindergarten classroom engagement: Preschool adult-child relationships, self-concept, and hyperactivity/inattention. *Early Education and Development, 24*(8), 1112-1136.
- Sevilmis, A., & Yildiz, Ö. (2021). An approach for being able to use the options of calculating inter-coder reliability manually and through software in qualitative research of education and training in sports. *International Journal of Progressive Education, 17*(2), 369-384.
- Silverman, D. (2005). *Doing qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Sage.
- Skinner, B. F. (1953). *Science and human behavior*. Macmillan.
- Skinner, B. F. (1971). *Beyond freedom and dignity*. Alfred A. Knopf.
- Skinner, B. F. (1974). *About behaviorism*. Alfred A. Knopf.
- Stahl, N. A., & King, J. R. (2020). Expanding approaches for research: Understanding and using trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Developmental Education, 44*(1), 26-28.

- Subject and Course Guides at the University of Texas at Arlington. (2024). *What is qualitative research?* https://libguides.uta.edu/quantitative_and_qualitative_research/qual
- Sugai, G., Simonsen, B., Bradshaw, C., Horner, R., & Lewis, T. J. (2014). Delivering high quality school-wide positive behavior support in inclusive schools. In J. McLeskey, N. L. Waldron, F. Spooner, & B. Algozzine (Eds.), *Handbook of effective inclusive schools: Research and practice* (pp. 306-321). Taylor and Francis.
- Sutton, A. (2016). Measuring the effects of self-awareness: Construction of the Self-Awareness Outcomes Questionnaire. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 12*(4), 645-658.
- Twum-Danso, A. (2013). A cultural bridge, not an imposition: Legitimising children's rights in the eyes of local communities. In P. Pecora & M. Whittaker (Eds.), *Children's rights in international development* (pp. 9-25). Palgrave Macmillan.
- UNICEF. (2014). *Hidden in plain sight: A statistical analysis of violence against children*. United Nations Children's Fund.
- Uwaoma, N. C., Osita-Njoku, A., & Madukwe, A. U. (2012). Education, male child and childlessness as predictors of spouse abuse among rural and urban Igbo-Nigerian women. *Canadian Social Science, 8*(1), 70-76.
- Wakschlag, L. S., Briggs-Gowan, M. J., Choi, S. W., Nichols, S. R., Kestler, J., Burns, J. L., & Henry, D. (2014). Advancing a multidimensional, developmental spectrum approach to preschool disruptive behavior. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 53*(1), 82-96.

White, L., Delaney, R., Pacifici, C., Nelson, C., Dickinson, S. L., & Golzarri-Arroyo, L. (2019). Understanding and parenting children's noncompliant behavior: The efficacy of an online training workshop for resource parents. *Children and Youth Services Review, 99*, 246-256.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Questions

Teacher Interview Questions

1. What behaviors do you find most challenging when interacting with preschoolers in your classroom? Can you give me specific examples or a recent occurrence of this in your classroom? (RQ1)
2. How do you typically respond to these challenging behaviors? Why do you respond this way and what do you hope to achieve? (RQ 1 and 2)
3. What does the word “discipline” mean to you when you think of teaching? (RQ1)
4. How would you describe your own method/approach of managing these challenging behaviors? (RQ1 and 2)
- 4b. Are there any specific techniques or methods you regularly use? Can you give me an example of how you've applied one recently? (RQ1 and 2)
5. Have you noticed any changes based on your approach? (RQ3)
 - 5b. How effective do you think your methods are in addressing these challenging behaviors? (RQ3)

Parent Interview Questions

1. What behaviors do you find most challenging when interacting with your preschool-aged child at home? Can you give me specific examples? (RQ1)
2. How do you typically respond to these challenging behaviors? Why do you respond this way and what do you hope to achieve using this strategy? (RQ1 and 2)
3. What does the word "discipline" mean to you when you think of parenting? (RQ1)

4. How would you describe your own method or approach to managing these challenging behaviors with your child? (RQ1 and 2)

4b. Are there any specific techniques or methods you regularly use? Can you give me an example of how you've applied one recently? (RQ1 and 2)
5. Have you noticed any changes in your child's behavior or emotional development based on the use of this approach? (RQ3)

5b. How effective do you think your strategies are in addressing these challenging behaviors? (RQ3)

Appendix B: Prescreening Data Collection Survey

Fill in the following demographic information to confirm eligibility and write *Nil* to where question is not applicable to you.

1. Indicate your category of participant

- Parent
- Teacher

2. Years of Teaching Experience

3. Age of Parent

4. Contact Information

Email-

Phone Number-

5. Age of Participant (Teacher)

- Under 18
- Above 18

6. Sex

- Male
- Female
- Non-Binary/third gender
- Prefer not to say
- Other

7. Ethnicity/Race

- Caucasian
- African American
- Hispanic
- Yoruba
- Igbo
- Hausa

Other: please list

8. Classroom Age -Bracket/Child's Age

- 0-2
- 3-5
- Above 5

9. Nationality

- Nigeria
- United State of America

10. Do you speak English and Understand English Language.

- Yes
- No

Appendix C: Recruitment Email

Commencement of Data Collection for Research Study on Parent and Teachers Perception on Discipline Strategies for Preschoolers in Selected Schools in Nigeria and United States of America

Dear ma'am,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to inform you that the data collection phase of my research study titled " Parent and Teachers Perception on Discipline Strategies for Preschoolers in Selected Schools in Nigeria and United States of America " is set to commence in your school.

As previously discussed, the study aims to help gain a better understanding of the most used discipline strategies in Nigeria and the United States, as well as how they affect preschoolers' behavioral outcomes and socio-emotional development. The study has been approved by the ETSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Nigeria authority.

I kindly request your assistance in recruiting willing participants (3 teachers and 3 parents) from your school for the study by forwarding a copy of the attached flyer to teachers and parents platforms on my behalf. The participants will be chosen through random sampling to ensure a diverse representation of staff and parent body. Each interview session will be recorded using the Zoom recording feature, and field notes will be taken concurrently.

Please be assured that all data collected will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this research. Participants' identities will remain anonymous throughout the study.

I greatly appreciate your support and cooperation in this research endeavor. Your school's participation will contribute to a better understanding of effective discipline strategies and their influence on preschoolers' development.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to your response and to working with your school on this important study. Attached is a copy of the study flyer that contains a link to a pre-screening survey to confirm participant's eligibility. This link (https://etsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b1v3wQ30vMPXU5U) leads to the study prescreening data collection survey.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Solape Folaranmi (She/her/hers)

MA, Early Childhood Education

Department of Early Childhood Education

East Tennessee State University

Phone: 423-732-5223

Appendix D: Recruitment Flyer



Parents and Teachers Perception on Discipline Strategies for Preschoolers in Selected Schools in Nigeria and the United States of America

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of parents and teachers perception on discipline strategies for preschoolers and how it influences preschoolers behavioral outcome and socio-emotional development.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. However, your participation will contribute to the understanding of effective discipline strategies for preschoolers and may provide valuable insights for educators and parents.

To confirm your eligibility as a participant, kindly fill this pre-screening survey using this link.

https://etsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b1v3wQ30vMPXU5U.

By participating in the survey, you indicate that:

- You have read the above information
- You agree to volunteer
- You are at least 18 years old
- You can speak English
- You are a teacher who teaches children between the ages of 3-5 years or a parent with a child in the same age range
- Teachers should have at least 2 years of work experience
- Parents should be between the ages 20-35 years
- You are willing to participate in a 30-minute Zoom interview if you are selected as a participant.

If you have any research-related questions or concerns, you may contact me

Solape Folaranmi,
+1-423-732-5223
folaranmis@etsu.edu.

VITA

SOLAPE ADEJOKE FOLARANMI

- Education: Master of Arts in Early Childhood Education, East Tennessee State University (ETSU), May 2025.
- B. Ed Early Childhood Education, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria, 2020.
- West African Senior High School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), Oritamefa Baptist Model School, Ibadan, Oyo State Nigeria, 2015.
- Teaching Experience: Graduate Assistant, Ballad Center for Early Learning, ETSU, 2023-2024.
- Class Teacher, B-Sims Treasure School, 2021-2022
- Conferences: National Association for the Education of Young Children November 2023
- Nurturing Hearts and Minds in Early Childhood Education – ETSU Early Childhood Conference, July 2024
- Professional Training and Development: Rethinking Relationships and Bias in Early Childhood – Early Childhood Investigations Webinars, October 2024
- Nurturing Transitions: Supporting Children and Families in the New School Year – Early Childhood Investigations Webinars, September 2024
- Introduction to Early Literacy – ProSolutions Training, October 2024
- Revised TN-ELDS for Infants: Birth-12 Months – ProSolutions Training, October 2024

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and Safety Risks for Infants

ProSolutions Training, October 2024

Preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome, Abusive Head Trauma, and Child

Maltreatment – ProSolutions Training, October 2024

Administering Medication in Child Care Settings – ProSolutions Training,

October 2024

Emergency Preparedness: Better Safe Than Sorry! – ProSolutions

Training, October 2024

Forest School Training – Forest School Teacher Institute, March 2023

Responding to Medical Emergencies – ProSolutions Training, March 2023

Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma – ProSolutions Training,

February 2023

Before You Begin: New Educator – ProSolutions Training, February 2023

Professional
Membership:

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)