

Let the Teacher Manage the Challenge of Classroom Management

Fazalur Rahman

Lecturer, Department of Early childhood Education & Elementary Teacher Education ,
Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad, Pakistan, E-mail: fazalaiou@yahoo.com

Prof Dr Nabi Bux Jumani

Professor, Department of Education,
International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan. E-mail: nbjumani@yahoo.com

Abdul Basit

Subject Specialist, GHSS Tarnab Charsadda

Dr Saeedul Hassan Chishti

Assistant Professor, Department of Education,
International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan.

Dr Muhammad Ajmal

Lecturer, Department of Distance Education,
Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad, Pakistan, E-mail: drajmal@aiou.edu.pk

Abstract

Classroom management is an important aspect of teaching learning process. Management is a process of integrating resources and responsibilities towards the accomplishment of stated goals. The study was designed to look into the challenge of classroom management by the teacher. Objectives of the study were to examine classroom management practices at secondary level. Participants of the study consisted of 120 teachers and 240 students. Tools used in the study were questionnaires and teachers' interview. Separate questionnaire was developed for teachers and students. It was found that teachers commonly used motivational talk for the motivation of the students. It was concluded that classroom environment was generally satisfactory. The major problem was over crowdedness in the classrooms. It was recommended that verbal abuse may be avoided by the teacher. Further teacher may prepare lesson plan and teachers may be trained in use of socio metric techniques in classroom. The study also recommended that a democratic environment may be encouraged in the classroom as it has important impact on teaching-learning process.

Key words: Classroom management; secondary teacher; classroom environment

Introduction and Literature Review

Karp (2002, p.1), while describing her philosophy for classroom management plan, says, " In a classroom, the students have the right to learn safely and with dignity, just as the teacher has the right to teach safely and with dignity". On the other hand, Foutz (2005, p. 3) described that classroom management should be used to meet both the students' and the teacher's needs.

It should be constantly evaluated and re-evaluated in order to maintain an environment that is effective for both learning and teaching. An effective classroom management plan will enable the students and the teacher to respect each other. It is important in order for classroom organization and for efficiency in teaching.

Different researches have defined the concept of classroom management in a different way: Solis (2005, p. 1) says, "Ideally, classroom management should be a common understanding between the teacher and the students. It should be an agreed upon model that everyone abides by. In order for classroom management to work effectively," According to Teaching tips (2005, p. 1), "Classroom Management refers to the procedures and routines that are used to keep the daily business of the classroom running smoothly." Good classroom management is really a challenge for a teacher. What are the important aspects of a good classroom management? How a teacher can manage it effectively? However, according to Emmer, Evertson, Clements and Worsham (1997, p.111), "good classroom management depends on very careful planning of classroom organization, rules, procedures and instructions. It also requires active involvement of a teacher in maintaining student cooperation and compliance with necessary classroom rules and procedures."

Foutz (2005, p. 3) says, "Effective classroom management begins with the teacher. The teacher must plan well so that the students will be able to meet their learning and behavior objectives." Mayeski (2005, p. 1) argued that creating a safe and orderly environment in the classroom is a survival skill for teachers and optimizes the learning environment for students. In this regard the role of the teacher as leader is also very crucial. Referring this point, Ramsey (1999, p.15) stated that the role of an effective leader is to create a climate that welcomes, supports, and rewards innovative thinking and problem solving.

The key to good classroom management is the use of techniques that increase student cooperation and involvement in classroom activities and thus avert problems from occurring. There is a strong relationship between teacher behavior and student behavior. Maximizing the time that students spend in academic activities can minimize the problems of discipline. It can also be improved by resolving incidents of minor inattention before they develop into major disruptions. Lack of student discipline, poor classroom management and control, and disruptive student behavior are some common complaints. Many educators agree that classroom instruction is greatly affected by classroom management. Creating a close connection of trust, respect and interest with students is important. Certain attitudes and qualities are basic to successful management as these qualities in classroom management are effective in preventing problems, and in coping with problems effectively. University of Nebraska (2005, p. 57) has given keys for classroom arrangement as:

1. Students should be properly seated so that they are able to clearly see chalkboards, screens, presentations and displays and teachers and students can easily move in the classroom.
2. The teacher should have a place near the front of the room
3. Classroom rules should be clearly posted. Areas should be established to display student work.

Lewis et al (1998) examined part of a school-wide program's management of elementary students' behavior in the cafeteria, on the playground, and during transitions. Results from this intervention did not completely eliminate problem behaviors; however, it did reduce the number of discipline referrals. Behets (1997) investigated the effective of teacher's strategies in relation to student behavior. Behets found that more-effective teachers spent more time observing students participating/trying out in a new skill versus time on actual instruction.

Colvin & Fernandez (2000) describe the critical factors and procedural steps that an elementary school utilized to establish a proactive school-wide discipline plan and implement effective behavior support systems. These factors include; (a) establishing and maintaining the need, (b) forming and maintaining a leadership team, (c) clarifying roles and expectations for all faculty, (d) developing a data system that is systematically used for decision making, (e) sustaining a focus to address all components in the system, (f) maintaining a focus to meet evolving needs, (g) access to consultation from outside support systems, and (h) increasing emphasis on academic support.

Objectives of the Study

Objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine the existing classroom management practices.
2. Identify the classroom management problems.
3. Examine the teacher's competency and attitude regarding classroom management.

Methodology of the Study

It was a descriptive research. Random cluster sampling technique was used for the purpose of the study. Every school in the urban area of district Peshawar was taken as a block or unit. In this way the whole population of teachers and students was divided into blocks or units. Then a sample was selected from these blocks at random. Equal number of sample was drawn from each of these blocks. The process was aimed at making the aggregate sample a representative of the different blocks or units, thus increasing the precision of the results. The sample for teachers comprised of teachers of secondary level in urban schools of district Peshawar. Teachers were selected by random cluster sampling technique and five teachers were selected from each school. A total of 120 teachers were selected from these schools. The sample for students was selected from all the students enrolled in Government High/Higher Secondary Schools for boys in urban area of district Peshawar at secondary level. Selection of students was also based on random cluster sampling procedure. 10 students were selected from each school. Thus a total of 240 students of grade 9th and 10th were elected as sample for this study.

Data for this research was collected through questionnaires. Two questionnaires were developed keeping in view all the important aspects related to classroom management at secondary level. The questionnaire for teachers consisted of 29 items which was followed by an interview. The questionnaire included the following aspect of classroom management:

- i. Physical conditions of the classroom
- ii. Lesson planning by teacher
- iii. Teacher behavior about classroom management

While the questionnaire for students consisted of 26 items and it cover the following aspects of classroom management:

- i. General classroom environment
- ii. Classroom teaching & Teacher behavior in the classroom

Data Analysis

The instruments used for this study were two questionnaires. A questionnaire for teachers was used to know various management techniques applied by the teachers and their attitude towards classroom management. It contained of 60 items and the questionnaire was followed by an interview with the teachers. The other questionnaire was used for studying the classroom environment and it was administered to students. This questionnaire contained 41 items having five point rating scale and one open ended question at the end.

Insert table (1) about here

Physical condition of classrooms was found satisfactory. Student furniture was arranged in most classes in rows and columns. Seats were properly arranged in the classroom but availability of audio visual aids was not satisfactory. Most of the classrooms were found overcrowded and per student space was not good.

Insert table (2) about here

Despite the fact that teachers were satisfied with the workload, majority of teachers did not prepare lesson plans for each lesson. Teachers usually spent about five minutes time on opening the period/roll call and about 10 minutes of class time on checking student work. About 15 to 20 minutes of class time was spent on presentation of lesson/ activity. Table further indicated that teachers gave less than 15 minutes to students for group work/discussion. For most of the teachers wrap up time was less than three minutes. Table also revealed that teachers gave about 15-20 minutes of homework to students regularly and regularly checked student assignments.

It was revealed in the table that students were generally satisfied with the physical environment of the classroom.

Insert table (3) about here

Insert table (4) about here

Insert table (5) about here

Table shows that students endorsed most of teachers' characteristics regarding their teaching and behavior in the classroom; however they were of the view that resources in the classroom were not fully utilized. Similarly many teachers did not properly involve students in the teaching-learning process. Table further indicated that students preferred democratic attitude and they disliked Verbal abuse. Table indicated that weekly and monthly review of their lessons was conducted and immediate feedback was provided to students about their performance. Further, teachers generally maintained some student record in the classroom and they discussed student record with their parents.

It is further revealed that classroom rules regarding absence, late coming, and behavior during instruction etc were established. Most teachers had established beginning and end of the period routines and used the strategy of preventing misbehavior before it occurred. Teachers were generally using extra work, fines and verbal abuse as punishment technique in the classrooms. Motivational talks were most commonly use technique used for motivation of the students. The data also revealed that the teachers did not use socio metric techniques.

Discussion

All teachers need to master classroom management techniques in order to establish a successful classroom environment. Classroom management is linked to curriculum and requires a set of detailed plans for developing student interest with thought-provoking content.

It is evident from the literature that classroom activities, procedures, school rules and routines, student behavior, room arrangement, and parent involvement are all essential factors of good management. Research further revealed that classroom management should take a partnership approach between teacher and students and should satisfy the needs of both. It is important to create a classroom environment that uses innovative material, method and knowledge in a positive manner and is able to incorporate new advances in education and learning.

Teachers need to use their knowledge and resources to make the lesson interesting and understandable for students; they need to manage class time, individual and group interactions, student behavior, and classroom resources to create a supportive learning environment. This environment should produce creativity, cooperation, individual growth, social development, parent communication, student interaction, and good behavior. There is a need for leadership based on knowledge rather than on authority; on intrinsic motivation rather than on extrinsic motivation; and on preventing problems from occurring rather than punishing students after a problem behavior has occurred. It is, therefore, necessary to promote and maintain a balanced approach conducive to learning and growth.

Results of the present study are also some important implication for teachers and teacher educators. Firstly, the teacher should be a role model for students and instead of using extra work, fines and verbal abuse as punishment technique in the classroom; they should focus on motivational techniques. It was found that motivational talks were most commonly used technique by the teachers; however, other motivational techniques may be adopted. Another important finding of the study was that the teachers did not use socio metric techniques. The teacher educators may focus this aspect in teacher training.

Results indicated that teachers usually spent about five minutes time on opening the period/roll call, 10 minutes time on checking student work, 15 to 20 minutes on presentation of lesson/ activity, less than 15 minutes provided to students for group work/discussion and wrap up time was less than three minutes. Results of the study indicated that weekly and monthly review of lesson was conducted and immediate feedback was provided to students about their performance. Teachers generally maintained some student record in the classroom and they discussed student record with their parents. It was further revealed that classroom rules regarding absence, late coming, and behavior during instruction etc were established. Most teachers had established beginning and end of the period routines and used the strategy of preventing misbehavior before it occurred.

There is a need for empowerment of teachers for management of their classrooms. Teachers should be given the opportunity to identify their own needs. They should explore new ideas and information. It is important for teachers to possess and develop a set of skills to perform their task effectively. They should think about their classroom management practices and learn from their experiences and also get help from the experiences and knowledge of their colleagues.

Recommendations

1. Physical conditions of the classrooms may be improved with some audio visual aids.
2. Number of students in a classroom may be reduced so that the teacher can give proper time to each student.
3. Teacher properly plan lessons and use better time management techniques in the classroom. Students may be involved in the teaching learning process.
4. Use of verbal abuse and physical punishment may be avoided and students may be properly rewarded for good work.
5. Teachers may be trained about use of socio metric techniques in classroom.
6. A democratic environment may be encouraged in the classroom.

References

- Aguilar, F. R. (2005). Classroom management plan. Retrieved April 26, 2009 from <http://www.calstatela.edu/faculty/classmgmt.html>
- Allen,W. (2005). Classroom management plan. Retrieved April 2009 from <http://www.calstatela.edu/classmanagementplan.html>
- Anderson, T. (2000), Classroom management paper. Retrieved September 2, 2009 from <http://www.irs.ed.uluc.edu/students/hale1/classmgmt.html>
- Behets, D. (1997). Comparison of more and less effective teaching behaviors in secondary physical education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 13(2), 215-224.
- Boice, M. (2003), Classroom Management Plan, Retrieved April 26, 2009 from http://www.boicewebsite/teacher_studentportfolios.htm
- Bull, S. & Solity, J. (1987), Classroom management: Principles to practice. Buckingham: Croom Helm.
- Colvin G. & Fernandez, B. (2000). Sustaining effective behavior support systems in an elementary school: Keeping the plan operating for almost a decade. *Journal of Positive Behavioral Intervention*, 2(4).
- Cotton, K. (2001). School wide and classroom discipline. School improvement research series (sirs); Research you can use. North West regional Educational Laboratory. USA:
- Emmer, E. T, Evertson, M. C; Clements, S. B. & Worsham, E. M. (1997). Classroom management for secondary teachers (4th Edition). USA: Viacom Company

- Foutz, A. (2005). Classroom Management Plan, Retrieved April 19, 2009 from <http://www.calstatela.edu/faculty/classmgmt.html>
- Globalnet (2005), Classroom management: Excellent link giving practical advice about solving behavioural problems. Retrieved April 2009 from <http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/ca/ssmanagement.html>
- Good, T. L. & Brophy, J. E. (1997), Looking in classrooms (7th Edition). USA: Addison-Wesley.
- Kato.S. (1997), Classroom management; Methods and models for today's teachers; Model Central Theories or Principles. Retrieved April 20, 2009 from <http://www.ice.ucdavis.edu/seed/pdf/centraltheories.pdf>
- Kelly, M. (2005), Secondary school educators; Classroom rules for teachers. Retrieved April 24, 2009 from <http://712educators.about.com/cs/backtoschool/a/classrules.htm>
- Mayeski, F. (2005). The Metamorphosis of classroom management Retrieved April 18, 2009 from <http://mcrel.org/claddroommanagement.html>
- Miller, G., & Hall, T. (2005). *Classroom management*. Wakefield, MA: National Center on Accessing the General Curriculum. Retrieved on November 2009 from http://www.cast.org/publications/nca/nca_classroom.html
- Ramsey, R. D. (1999), Lead, Follow or Get out of The Way; How to be a more Effective leader in Today's School. California: Crowin Press Inc., Thousand Oaks.
- Solis, A. (2005), Classroom Management Plan. Retrieved April 26, 2005 from <http://www.calstatela.edu/faculty/classmgmt.html>
- Teaching Tips.com (2005), Class Management; Ideas to inspire and support teachers. Retrieved April 17, 2005 from <http://www.teachingtips.com/articles/Xclassgmt.html>
- Temple education. (2005). CETP Classroom management, Retrieved April 26, 2005 from http://www.temple.edu/CETP/temple_edu/cm-routi.htm
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln (2005), Organization and Management of the Classroom, Project PARA. Retrieved April 19, 2005 from <http://para.unl.edu/para/trainingintro.html>

Table 1
Teachers' comments about physical condition of the classrooms

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Bad</i>	<i>Rank</i>
1	Per student space	6 5%	16 13%	56 47%	26 22%	16 13%	7
2	Classroom construction	6 5%	46 38%	44 37%	14 12%	10 8%	3
3	Ventilation in classroom	20 17%	54 45%	28 23%	10 8%	8 7%	1
4	Arrangement of light	8 7%	24 20%	40 33%	10 18%	26 22%	5
5	Condition of blackboard	12 10%	32 27%	42 35%	16 13%	18 15%	4
6	Teachers' furniture	12 10%	42 35%	50 42%	4 3%	12 10%	2
7	Students' furniture	4 3%	20 17%	46 38%	32 27%	18 15%	6
8	Availability of AV aids	0 0%	6 5%	24 20%	28 23%	62 52%	8

Table 2
Lesson planning by teacher

S. No	Statement	Yes	To some extent	No	Rank
1	Prepare of lesson plan for each period	10 8%	32 28%	77 64%	6
2	Allowing students to take notes during lesson	102 85%	10 8%	8 7%	4
3	Observing students during a lesson	104 87%	10 8%	6 5%	3
4	Assigning regular home work to students	87 73%	23 19%	10 8%	1
5	Regularly check students' assignments	64 62%	30 25%	16 13%	2
6	Asked students to bring textbooks /notebooks to the classroom	106 88%	14 12%	0 0%	2
7	Class time spent on opening the period/roll call	>3 min 4 min 5 min <5min	14 26 48 32	12% 22% 40% 26%	4 2 1 8
8	Time spent on checking students' work	>10min =15min <15min	60 32 28	50% 27% 23%	1 2 3
9	Time spent on presentation of lesson/activity	>15min =20min =25min =30min <30min	40 40 20 9 11	33% 33% 17% 8% 9%	1 1 2 4 3
10	Time given to students for group work/ discussion	>15min =20min =25min =30min <30min	96 14 2 5 3	80% 12% 2% 4% 2%	1 2 4 3 4
11	Class time spent on wrapping up/ closing of a lesson	>3 min =5 min <5min	80 24 16	67% 20% 13%	1 2 3

Table 3
Students' opinion about General classroom environment

<i>Sl. No</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>UNC</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SDA</i>	<i>Rank</i>
1	Your seats are properly arranged in the classroom	98 40%	70 29%	19 8%	22 9%	32 13%	1
2	Cleanliness in the classroom is given special attention	99 41%	67 28%	24 10%	27 11%	23 10%	2
3	Classroom environment has a good effect on your inner self	76 32%	84 35%	32 13%	19 8%	29 12%	5
4	You are satisfied from your classroom environment	76 32%	67 28%	36 15%	32 13%	29 12%	3

Table 4
Students' opinion about Teaching strategy & Teacher's attitude

<i>S. No</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>UNC</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SDA</i>	<i>Rank</i>
1	Teachers come to classroom in time	81 34%	135 56%	12 5%	8 3%	5 2%	1
2	Lesson is explained with the help of interesting examples	97 40%	74 31%	36 15%	24 10%	9 4%	9
3	Lesson is taught in full detail	112 47%	83 34%	20 8%	16 7%	9 4%	3
4	Resources in the classroom are properly used	39 16%	70 29%	57 24%	59 25%	15 6%	14
5	Teachers use clear and standard language	104 43%	74 31%	27 11%	14 6%	21 9%	8
6	You are kept involved in the teaching learning process	38 16%	56 23%	30 13%	58 24%	58 24%	15
7	You are motivated to ask questions	106 44%	63 26%	27 11%	26 11%	18 8%	10
8	Teacher appreciates your correct response	115 48%	71 30%	22 9%	15 6%	17 7%	6

9	Teachers correct your wrong responses to questions	112	80	15	12	21	4
		47%	33%	6%	5%	9%	
10	Teachers check work at the end of lesson	69	79	38	29	25	12
		29%	33%	16%	12%	10%	
11	You easily complete homework assignment	79	68	26	43	24	13
		33%	28%	11%	18%	10%	
12	You are happy when the teachers enter the classroom	161	54	12	8	5	1
		67%	23%	5%	3%	2%	
13	Teachers remain happy in the classroom	101	81	32	17	9	6
		42%	34%	13%	7%	4%	
14	There are good teacher-student relationship	87	76	25	29	23	9
		36%	32%	10%	12%	10%	
15	Teachers consult you about various classroom related problems	91	64	29	27	29	13
		38%	27%	12%	11%	12%	
16	Teachers accept your good suggestions	87	96	30	13	14	4
		36%	45%	13%	5%	6%	
17	Teacher provides guidance in case of any problems	74	86	34	24	22	10
		31%	36%	14%	10%	9%	
18	Teachers consult your parents about your educational problems	20	43	41	41	95	15
		8%	18%	17%	17%	40%	
19	Teacher shows good manners in the classroom	121	68	19	16	16	5
		50%	28%	8%	7%	7%	
20	Teacher takes care of your feelings and emotions	44	92	45	21	38	14
		18%	38%	19%	9%	16%	
21	Teacher immediately corrects himself after realizing his mistake	86	86	25	15	28	8
		36%	36%	10%	6%	12%	
22	Teacher treats all the students equally	90	66	39	8	37	12
		38%	28%	16%	3%	15%	

Table 5
Teacher behavior about classroom management

S. No	Statement	Yes	To some extent	No	Rank
1	Conducting weekly review of lessons	70 58%	30 25%	20 17%	4
2	Conducting monthly review of lessons	84 70%	22 18%	14 12%	3
3	Maintaining student record in the classroom	69 58%	15 13%	36 30%	1
4	Discussing student record with their parents	42 35%	42 35%	36 30%	2
5	Established classroom rules regarding absence late coming, behavior during instruction etc	100 83%	14 12%	6 5%	1
6	Established beginning and end of the period routines	82 68%	19 16%	19 16%	2
7	Use of socio-metric techniques in classroom	34 28%	36 30%	50 42%	2
8	What is your strategy for improving class discipline?	Prevent misbehavior before it occurs	75	63	1
		Deal after occurrence	45	37	2
9	What kind of punishment do you most generally use in your classroom?	Extra work	36	30	1
		Fines	32	27	2
		Abusive verbal attack	20	17	3
		Lowering academic grades	16	13	4
		Exclusion from the class	16	13	4
10	How do you motivate the students for achieving the desired goals?	Motivational talk	81	68	1
		Rewards	16	13	2
		Physical punishment	11	9	3
		Fines	6	5	