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Teacher Personality and Effective Classroom Management

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Abstract:

The paper discussed teacher personality as a major determining factor for effective classroom management. Personality refers to unique enduring qualities of an individual which determine his adjustment to environmental challenges. Teacher personality characteristics that influence his managerial efficiency in the classroom include temperament, organization, discipline intelligence, communication effectiveness and sensitivity. The paper defined classroom management as skills employed by the teacher to get students organized, maintain discipline and create a safe and conducive learning atmosphere. The paper identified the importance of classroom management as achieving effective teaching, fewer behaviour problems and efficient use of time. Various ways of managing the classroom effectively were highlighted; set rules, have expectations, be firm and consistent, be organized, lead by examples etc. the paper was concluded and the following recommendations were made thus, teachers should ensure that they dress neatly and appear decently before the students prepare well for their lessons, maintain discipline, speak clearly and audibly.

Keywords: Discipline, management organization, personality temperament

1. Introduction

The aim of teaching is to bring about behaviour change in the learner and this requires an effective management and control of the teaching – learning environment and processes. Classroom management and control are skills which are central to effective teaching and can be acquired through professional training and experience. It is also greatly linked to the teacher personality traits.

Classroom management is a crucial variable in the practice of teaching because it supports the proper execution of curriculum development, creates conducive learning atmosphere, maintains discipline in class and ensures that classroom lessons run smoothly despite disruptive behaviour by students. This paper therefore links the effectiveness of these managerial skills to teacher personality which accounts for the teacher's uniqueness, charisma, abilities, interest, motivation, discipline etc. the personality is what draws students in, makes you worth listening to and gives them a compelling reason to want to behave. A stiff, boring and spiritless teacher no matter how committed he will be in following classroom management plan is likely still going to struggle with behaviour.

Linsin (2012) observed that the magic in effective classroom management is about your likability, your rapport your consistency, your trustworthiness and more that gives you the leverage you need to transform your class.

However, this paper also identifies that teacher personality traits requires a professional blend for the achievement of optimum classroom managerial effectiveness. This involves the use of appropriate teaching procedure, understanding developmental challenges of the students, use of appropriate disciplinary approaches, setting measurable objectives and planning towards achieving them, use of adequate instructional materials and other professional competences.

2. Effective Classroom Management

Zane (2012) explains effective classroom management as ensuring your classroom lessons run smoothly, establishing rules, motivating students to participate, maintaining discipline, and creating a safe learning environment in which students can succeed, are all factor that contribute to effective classroom management.

Classroom management refers to the wide variety of skills and techniques that teachers use to keep students organized, orderly, focused, attentive, on task and academically productive during a class. When classroom management strategies are executed effectively teachers minimize the behaviours that impede learning for both individual students and groups of students while maximizing the behaviour that facilitate or enhance learning. Generally speaking, effective teachers tend to display strong classroom management skills, while the hall mark of the inexperienced or less effective teacher is a disorderly classroom filled with students who are not working or paying attention.

While a limited or more traditional interpretation of effective classroom management may focus largely on “compliance”- rules and strategies that teachers may use to make sure students are sitting on their seats, following directions, listening attentively, etc. more encompassing or up-dates view of classroom management extends to everything that teachers may do to facilitate or improve student learning. Which will include such factors as behaviour (a positive attitude, happy facial expressions, encouraging statements, the respectful and fair treatment of students etc), environment (for example, a welcoming, well-lit classroom filled with intellectually stimulating learning materials organized to support specific learning activities), expectations (the quality of work that teachers expect students to produce, the ways the teacher expects students to behave toward other students, the agreements that teachers make with students) or activities (the kinds of learning experiences that teachers design to engage students interests, passion and intellectual curiosity). Given that poorly designed lessons, uninteresting learning materials or unclear expectations, for examples, could contribute to greater student’s disinterest, increased behavioural problems or unruly and disorganized classes, classroom management cannot be easily separated from all the other decision that teachers make Cini (2016) identified that effective classroom management involves classroom design, rules, Discipline, scheduling, organization, instructional technique and communication.

Classroom Design: Although often over looked, the first element of classroom management is intentional design. The desk should be arranged in other to create adequate spaces for free movement in the classroom. This will allow the teacher to come in contact with students early. All unnecessary and distracting items be removed.

Rules: Develop rules that foster respect, caring and community in your classroom.

3. Importance of Classroom Management

Classroom management is important to the whole education process because it offers students an ideal learning environment, helps prevent teacher burnout and makes students and teachers feel safer and happier, it involves more than just discipline and rules. It also entails organization, routines with which students come to feel comfortable.

Ministry of Education, Guyana (2015) discipline always comes to mind at the mention of classroom management, but the crucial component of teaching is much more. Classroom management creates a set of expectations used in an organized classroom environment. It includes routines, rules and consequences. Effective classroom management paves the way for the teacher to engage the students in learning

3.1. Effective Teaching

A disorganized classroom without routines and expectations makes it difficult for the teacher to do his job. Students don’t know what to do so they might get of task or cause disruptions. When the teacher is constantly redirecting students or handling behavior problems, he loses crucial teaching time. Classroom management helps create an organized classroom environment that’s conducive to teaching.

3.2. Efficient Use of Time

Classroom management also involves taking time to create routines and procedures before school starts. This saves time in the long run, because the teacher spends less time giving instructions, directives, arranging and re-arranging.

3.3. Consistency

A teacher with strong classroom management skills creates consistency for his students. The students know what to expect everyday when it comes to the routine activities. Thus even in your absence they know what to do because they are already in tune with how the classroom runs. The students will still fare better when you’re gone if you have set expectations for everyday tasks. Thus they would be able to help whoever substitutes you in your absence.

3.4. Fewer Behaviour Problems

The main goal for classroom management is to reduce misbehaviour in the classroom. Effective classroom management gives the students little time to misbehave. Because the expectations are clearly explained, the students know what they need to do. Transitions in particular are difficult to control when a teacher has strong management skills. The expectations for behaviours that are part of a classroom management plan give students boundaries as well as consequences.

Kratochwill, DeRoos and Blair (2016) identified that effective classroom management:

- Establishes and sustains an orderly environment in the classroom.
- Increase meaningful academic leaning and facilitates social and emotional growth.
- Decreases negative behaviours and increases time spent academically engaged.

4. How to Manage a Classroom Effectively

What a teacher can do to maintain discipline and management in the classroom.

- i. *Have rules:* It is important to have basic set of rules for student to follow. These regulations will help maintain classroom management and discipline. These rules do not have to be anything advanced; they can be as simple as making sure that all students adhere to time

- ii. *Have expectation:* If your students know what you want from them, they are more likely to exhibit the type of behavior you want
- iii. *Make students aware of the rules:* Every school has its own disciplinary rules that students should be expected to follow. Make sure that the students are aware of the rules and the consequences.
- iv. *Be firm and consistent:* When you make your rules to manage your classroom, make sure that they are realistic and void of any inconsistencies. Approach the rules in a positive manner.
- v. *Be professional:* An effectively managed classroom is conducted with professionalism and adequate structure.
- v. *Keep the class interested:* Students who are interested in the material that what is going on in the class will be less likely to cause any disruption, as their attention will be focused on their lesson.
- vi. *Practice fairness:* As a teacher you need to be fair and make sure that you.
- vii. *Practice humor:* Creating a positive environment where there is laughter and happiness is key into keep students interested and engage in their work, and more likely to comply with any rules.
- viii. *Do not threaten:* Threatening student can weaken a teacher's credibility in a classroom. Be careful when you use threats, if any, instead, try to practice reinforcement.
- ix. *Lead by example:* If one of your rules is to have students show up to class on time every day. If you are regularly late, then you are setting a bad example for your students.
- x. *Give students opportunities:* By student's opportunities to act in the class, shows them – you have confidence in their abilities, they will feel like the overall management and flow of the classroom is up to them to uphold as well.

5. Teacher Personality Traits and Classroom Management

Personality: Personality refers to the uniqueness of a person in terms of his attributes, qualities, capabilities, weaknesses, emotionality, physical qualities etc. Mangal, (2014) puts it personality is all that a person is, it is the totality of one's behavior towards oneself as well as others. It includes everything about the person, his physical, emotional, social, mental and spiritual make-up. Allport cited in Mangal (2014) defines personality as dynamic organization within the individual of those psycho-physical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment. Eysenck also quote in Mangal (2014) sees personality as the more or less stable and enduring organization of a person's character, temperament, intellect, and physique, which determines his unique adjustment to the environment.

The effectiveness of managing a classroom greatly depends on the personality of the teacher which determines the teacher's level of organization, charisma and unique adjustment to classroom processes. Teachers may have the same professional qualities but they differ in their personality characteristics which makes their approach to classroom management also different. Thus the following can be considered as personality characteristics of the teacher that influence his managerial effectiveness in the classroom.

- Physical appearance (dressing)
- Intelligence
- Discipline
- Communication effectiveness/presentation
- Temperament
- Organization
- Teacher/pupil/student relationship
- Sensitively

- i. *Physical appearance of the teacher:* It is often said you are addressed the way you dress. Dressing well is an importance personality trait which attracts respect and value for a teacher. If a teacher appears good neatly dressed and well kept. The students will have a positive view of the teacher and full of expectations. Their positive view of the teacher keeps the students naturally focused and expectant with that level of respect the class comes to order.
- ii. *Intelligence level of the teacher:* Students naturally have great respect for intelligent teachers. An intelligent teacher is one who displays a strong grip of the subject matter, one who shows great mastery of content and has intelligent answers to student's questions. He gives several concrete examples and clear illustrations in class, his presentation does not raise unnecessary controversies and arguments. So his class is always attentive and orderly.
- iii. *Discipline:* Discipline is simply the quality of self-control in an individual. Social learning theories posit that children learn by observation and imitation children imitate the behavior of the teacher they observe. Thus the teacher has to be exemplary. Teacher can maintain discipline in class through the following ways (Egwu, 2013)
 - a. *Treat students:* With respect no matter the age of your students, treat them with respect. As you do that your students will treat you with respect as well.
 - b. *Get to know the students:* Show interest in your students by getting to know them. Make sure you know their names and bring them close to yourself.
 - c. *Use positive rewards:* Teacher should reinforce good behaviour by giving rewards, the reward can be in form of praise, clapping, gifts etc.
 - d. *Be fair and consistent:* Apply discipline evenly across board, avoid any form of favouritism.

- e. *Don't humiliate or demean student:* Is you used to address a student's misbehavior, don't do so in a way that humiliates the student or openly disgracing the student in the class. Address the offence and still protect his dignity. When students are embarrassed before their peers they tend to rather develop negative behaviour
 - f. *Don't get into arguments with students:* Remain neutral with students. If a student is trying to make you argue with him, don't rise to the bait. Instead maintain a firm yet clam stance. If the student continues to try arguing with you, say "we will discuss this after class". This closes down the conflict momentarily.
 - g. *Make rules together and indicate consequences:* Let the students be involved in making rules that govern the class. This will make students to keep the rules at will they will also tend to keep one another in check.
- (iv) *Effective communication:* Communication is the process of passing on information from a person to another through verbal and non-verbal approaches. The major personality qualities involved in this process are voice quality, gesticulations, maintaining focus, fluency and eloquence, confidence and comportment, simplicity, speed and sequence of speech. The voice of the teacher controls students' attention. Teachers with good voice quality (loud, clear and audible) are more likely to have less attention problems than teachers with poor or low voice quality. Apart from the voice, self confidence, compartment, eloquence, simplicity in the choice of words maintaining ideological focus without derailing during presentations in the classroom are personality qualities which promote communication effectiveness, attract attention and maintain order in the classroom.
- v. *Teacher Temperament:* For decades, scholars have debated about the diversity normally referred to as "super traits" or "Temperament". Three of these temperament dimensions are genetically based. (Grey, 1991).

In 1990, Eysenck concluded that extroversion (E), neurotism (N), and psychotism (P) are the genetic basis of individuals behaviour. The three components measure the degree to which a person is cooperative and sociable (E) fearfully avoids (N), and is hostile or aggressive (P) (Valencic, Macroskey, Richmond, 2005).

In psychology temperament refers to the characteristics and aspects of personality that we are both with. For that reason, they are similar to traits in that they are both innate and enduring.

Temperament according to dictionary.com (2016) is the combination of mental, physical and emotional traits of a person natural disposition. Unusual personal attitude or nature as manifested by peculiarities of feeling, temper and action. Teaching requires a huge amount of tolerance and patience. A teacher who is highly temperamental may not have the expected level of tolerance and patience to cope with the varying characteristics of children.

Linsin (2011) supports that teachers who are highly temperamental are impatient quick to anger pessimistic irritable and overly sensitive. He explained that impatient teachers take fast, act and move fast. They tend to either look at the other way in the face of misbehavior or react emotionally to it. They rush through lessons, gloss over instructions, and out of necessity have lower expectations for students. This produces a restless, excitable classroom that is primed to cause trouble.

Being quick to anger can undo weeks of rapport building with your students when you yell, scold, use sarcasm or otherwise lose your cool, you distance yourself from your students and undermine their trust and respect of you, you become less approachable less likeable, and less influential-all critical keys of creating a well-behaved classroom.

Temperament can result to pessimism. This yield negative thoughts feelings and attitudes about students it negatively the building of relationship with students.

Irritability (grouchiness, moodiness) communicates to students that they can't trust you or depend on you. It creates resentment, confusion, and instability. It also causes a teacher to be inconsistent-both in classroom management plan and in your interaction with students-leading to more frequent and more severe misbehavior.

Overly sensitiveness is an emotional or temperamental trait which leads to seek revenge against their students. They can't help themselves out of their resentment and spite they make the kind of classroom management mistakes like yelling, scolding and holding grudges that result in a spiraling of student behaviour.

Teachers with high levels of temperament easily get frustrated over trivial issues in class. This leads to frequent sighs refusal to give required attention to students, over reaction and totally losing the effective managerial grip in the classroom.

5.1. Teacher Organization

Teacher organization refers simply to adequate preparedness or getting set for the accomplishment of task in the classroom. Organization as a personality trait which involves the act of proper planning and working according to plan. Efficient organization allows a teacher to spend more learning time with students. Have a way of handling routines, collecting students work, handing out materials, posting assignments, keeping the class on track etc.

An organized teacher plans his classroom activities carefully before the start of day. A teacher with such a personality trait is likely to have well organized and effectively managed classroom.

- Viii *Teacher - Pupil Relationship:* The teacher-students' relationship is very important for children. Children spend approximately 5 to 7 hours a day with a teacher for almost 10 months. The communication between teacher and students serves as a connection between the two, which provides a better atmosphere for a classroom environment. it is not possible for a teacher to understand every problem for every child in his or her classroom; however, the closer the pupil is to the teacher the better understanding he gains about the child's problems. Jones (1995) found out that academic achievement and student behaviour are influenced by the quality of the teacher and student relationship. The more positively the teacher

connects with his students, he gains better control over them. This can lead to obedience of rules in the classroom and less problem behaviour, which makes classroom management easier and more effective on the other hand, a teacher who does not have the personality of being close to his student or has a poor rapport is not likely to have the much deserved control which will ease effective management of the classroom.

- ix. *Sensitivity*: Effectiveness classroom management also requires the personality of high sensitivity, being sensitive means having a high degree of awareness and responsiveness to changes challenges, needs and demands of students in your classroom. It is the quality a teacher has in understanding students behaviour, feelings, orientations, capabilities (strength and weakness) and knowing how to respond adequately when the need arises. Being quickly sensitive to whatever may cause infraction or bring about indiscipline in class is an advantage to effective classroom management.

6. Conclusion

Personality which refers to the personal qualities of the teacher count so much in achieving effective classroom management. The major determinant of success in the classroom is the value which the students attach to the teacher. The worth of a teacher's personality naturally yields obedience, respect and esteem from students. A worthy personality places the teacher on an advantage to have a better control of his students and manage the class effectively. A teacher with an organized personality struggles less to manage his classroom.

7. Recommendations

Since the teacher's personality is an important factor in classroom management. Teacher should ensure that they;

1. Dress neatly and appear decently before their student
2. Study and have a good grip of the subject matter before appearing in front of the student to teach
3. Create limits in their interaction with students. Display self control and be very exemplary. Establish uncontroversial class rules.
4. Speak audibly, clearly and during their presentations taking time to give clear explanations and illustration with concrete examples.
5. Present subject matter logically and sequentially, and make use of instructional materials.
6. Avoid over reactions, sudden outburst of anger and show high level of maturity.
7. Create rapport or relate positively with their students.

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