

## A Study of Setbacks Associated with Classroom Management in Goma Secondary Schools, DRC

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**Abstract:** This scientific article focuses on the setbacks associated with classroom management in Goma Secondary schools. It comes to provide some strategies that teachers should consider in their everyday teaching activity.

However, teaching is the most complex activity considering the different tasks to carry out during the process. Therefore, it is very important to teachers to be aware of those setbacks in order for them to be able to address them successfully.

Most of the teachers face uncountable challenges in managing the learners' behaviour, the time, the teaching materials as well as the different activities in the classroom, and those are the main setbacks they face. Therefore, this article will shed a light to help teachers in dealing with those setbacks and overcoming them successfully in their noble career.

**Keywords:** Classroom, setbacks, classroom management, learners, challenges, effective classroom.

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**Résumé:** Cet article scientifique se concentre sur les difficultés liées à la gestion de la classe dans les écoles secondaires de Goma. Il s'agit de fournir quelques stratégies que les enseignants devraient prendre en compte dans leur activité d'enseignement quotidienne.

Cependant, l'enseignement est l'activité la plus complexe et tenue des différentes tâches à effectuer au cours du processus. Par conséquent, il est très important que les enseignants soient conscients de ces difficultés afin qu'ils puissent y remédier avec succès.

La plupart des enseignants font face à d'innombrables défis dans la gestion du comportement des apprenants, du temps, du matériel pédagogique ainsi que des différentes activités en classe, et ces sont les principales difficultés auxquelles ils sont confrontés. Par conséquent, cet article mettra en lumière les enseignants pour les aider à faire face à ces difficultés et à les surmonter avec succès dans leur noble carrière.

**Mots-clés:** Classe, difficultés, gestion de classe, apprenants, défis, classe efficace.

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### 1. Introduction

A good classroom management is a very crucial strategy in the teaching/learning process in schools, since it helps in the proper execution of the curriculum and thus ensures that the classroom teacher develops the best teaching practice for a successful learning environment. Classroom environment creates in the mind of the students the first impressions of what to expect from the class and the teacher.

Effective teaching-learning process cannot be accomplished without a good classroom management and control. What goes on in the classroom between the teacher and students, and all other resources in the classroom, are important determinants of the success or otherwise of the teaching service delivery in schools. Parents, the Government, and the society at large expect a great deal from the teacher who is seen as one of the strongest agents of societal reform. This is especially so when we consider the enormous resources devoted to educating the citizens in the country are considered. It therefore becomes imperative for the classroom in order to guarantee effective learning in schools and ultimately help to achieve the various national objectives of education.

Classroom management is usually a difficult aspect of teaching by teachers. The troublesome activities of students in classrooms could discourage teachers to the extent that some of them would want to leave the teaching profession if they find alternative employment.

In the year 1981, the US National Educational Association reported that 36% of teachers stated that they would probably not go into teaching if they had to decide again. A major reason being students' negative attitude and discipline (<http://en.wikipedia.org>).

## 2. Methodology

The methodology that we applied to carry out this research in order to obtain the needed information included Classroom observation and interview. Two main tools were used: a questionnaire and a checklist.

By using class observation, we attended a lesson being taught by a teacher of English in two schools in Goma City, which are: CS Amani and Isidore Bakanja High Schools. We attended the whole lesson from the beginning to the end, and also got enough time to collect our observations on the way teachers were managing their classrooms during those lessons.

As far as the interview and questionnaire are concerned, we spent time discussing with some English teachers and asked them a number of questions pertaining to the way they manage their classrooms. The feedback they provided was carefully recorded as it was meant to facilitate our data analysis.

## 3. What is Classroom Management?

Classroom management implies the effective and efficient utilization of all resources available to the classroom environment in order to ultimately achieve the goals and objectives of the teaching and learning process in schools. Classroom management is a way by which the teacher ensures that classroom lessons run smoothly despite disruptive behaviors by students. It also implies preventing disruption by students. It is a wide variety of skills and techniques the teachers uses to keep the students organized, active, orderly, focused, attentive, on task, and academically productive in the classroom. The goal of the teaching-learning process is to ensure that learners assimilate the contents delivered to them by the class teacher under congenial atmosphere which will in turn influence their behaviors positively in line with the social and economic needs of the society and the achievement of the national objectives.

The classroom manager (the teacher) is effective when he or she has achieved what is expected to be achieved. On the other hand, he/she is efficient if the achievement is made at the cheapest possible cost. Cheapest cost in this case, could be in terms of time spent, resources used etc. For instance, if the teacher uses classroom management skills effectively, the teacher, in one way or the other, minimizes such students' behaviors that could impede teaching and learning for both individual students and groups while at the same time maximizing or taking advantage of those behaviors that will facilitate or improve effective learning In the classroom. In an effort to ensure that the students learn well and attain the best possible knowledge in school, it is important that the class manager (teacher) possesses the necessary skills that will enhance the expected success of the school system.

## 4. The Teacher as a Classroom Manager

Management is a process of planning, organizing, leading, coordinating and controlling the efforts of organization members to achieve set goals and objectives.

A manager is therefore seen as a person who plans, organizes, leads, coordinates, and controls efforts of subordinates towards the achievement of set goals. In addition to the above definition, the teacher, as a manager, also has the responsibility of ensuring that students and other school resources are utilized efficiently in such a way that the goal of the school system is achieved.

As a teacher, you perform the function of a manager at micro level in the school system. As a class manager, you are expected to perform the following functions.

- ❖ **Plan teaching activities:** this involves deliberate efforts to set activities according to priorities for future action in an attempt to minimize wastage and increase productivity. Lack of or inadequate planning could be very costly. For instance, a teacher who fails to plan his lesson not to be delivered as at when due, may end up misplacing priorities and hence be providing the wrong information at that point in time. He or she may lose focus and may waste the very limited teaching time on the non-relevant activity. A well-structured and planned teaching content will provide easy delivery and comprehension for the teacher and student respectively.

The major interest of planning in the school centers on: (i) achieving results from the teaching and learning process, (ii) organizing the learning activity, how to improve the performance, interaction and satisfaction of the clients (students) as well as how to utilize facilities in order to enjoy the utility value that the facility possesses. The benefit of effective and adequate planning among others include: minimizing wastage of time and other teaching resources:

- ❖ **Organize students and materials:** this involves the arrangement of work in an orderly manner. The good classroom manager, i.e. the teacher, should be able to arrange the class in such a way that orderliness and fairness will be maintained in the classroom. Both students and materials for teaching should be organised in such a way that no student or pupil is at a disadvantage. For instance, it may be needful for the class teacher to consider or take note of the height or sight status of students in class and place where they may not be unduly excluded from the teaching activities going on in class.

- ❖ **Coordinating students and activities:** as the teacher and classroom manager, the responsibility of synchronizing or harmonizing the students, resources and activities in the classroom rests on your shoulders. This is important In order to ensure that teaching and learning take place in a congenial atmosphere devoid of rancor and pandemonium. This managerial function of the classroom brings about successful teaching-learning process in the classroom.
- ❖ **Leading (commanding) activity of the teacher:** the term commanding was common in the classical era. However, a more friendly word used today is leading. This involves providing a guide or direction for others to emulate or follow. It is the responsibility of the teacher to provide guidance or direction to students so that they (students) can comprehend the learning program provided. Teachers are supposed to ensure that students are given the right direction. This must be done with the interest of the students in mind as a father leads a child. It is intended to show the way to the students so that they may not fall into costly mistakes. This helps to promote cordiality and mutual respect.
- ❖ **Control function of the teacher:** control involves regulating an activity in order to ensure that the expected result is obtained through the laid down procedures and methods. This is to avoid deviation from expected result. Control is a security mechanism, policy or procedure that can counter system attack, reduce risks and resolve vulnerabilities. It helps to safeguard the system. The teacher must exercise effective control of the classroom situation and should monitor outcomes and make necessary corrections wherever there is deviation from the norm by means of a feedback mechanism.
- ❖ **Rational for effective classroom management:** the classroom management creates a set of expectations which are used in organized classroom environment. Classroom management is important since it helps ensuring that students learn what they are expected to learn in the most appropriate environment.

Here below are some of the reasons why the classroom teacher should ensure effective classroom management and control.

- ✓ To utilize available resources in the best possible way: resources are usually limited in supply. Therefore, it is important for the classroom manager to ensure the prudent use of these scarce resources when they are available.
- ✓ To enable learners achieve the right level of potential abilities. Effective classroom management enables students to discover their abilities and what they are capable of achieving in a given congenial environment.
- ✓ To encourage good relationship with the class members. A high level of social interaction and healthy completion is made possible through effective classroom management and control.
- ✓ To encourage hard work. It creates an atmosphere of competition among the students thereby inculcating the culture of hard work.
- ✓ To ensure the attainment of objectives for which the topic was taught
- ✓ To avoid wasting time. Time resource is the most fragile of all resources available to teachers, its misuse could spell consequences for the entire system.

### 5. Setbacks Faced in Classroom Management

Human behavior is the most complex to manage, while teaching is one of the most difficult jobs when we consider the different challenges that are involved in the process. Teaching concepts such as students' backgrounds, interests, abilities, and most suitable teaching methods are some of the setbacks or challenges the classroom Manager (Teacher) has to struggle with from time to time. The way teachers conduct the classroom matters has a deep influence upon their own teaching and students' learning. This is because the classroom is an operation theatre where the closest interaction between students and teachers take place. Effective classroom management, therefore, decides the effectiveness of teachers' teaching quality and students' learning.

Effective teachers create a sound, supportive and friendly environment in classrooms where students feel safe, respected, cared for, and secured. For this purpose, effective teachers create conditions of operation, discipline and responsibility both for themselves and for their students. The teachers are the ultimate deciders of the classroom atmosphere with a crucial role in influencing the behaviors of students. Teachers who plan practically are able to overcome many classroom setbacks such as disruptions, deviant behaviors or misbehaviors of students, as a result, helping them to become independent and confident learners.

Zubair (2013), citing different researchers such as Duck, 2007, Freiberg,2002, Meister & Melnick,2003, Merret & Wheldall,1993, Stoughon, 2007, posited that most new teachers feel unprepared when it comes to classroom management skills and hence they are often unprepared to function successfully in today's classrooms with regards to managing administrative tasks, curriculum, and behavior problems, additionally, students' misbehavior is a factor in teacher disappointment and could lead some teachers to decide to leave the profession. Therefore, classroom management is an important feature of the total education process. It contains

all the steps through which interactions between the Educator and the Students take place, the process of ensuring that classroom lessons run smoothly despite disruptive behaviors by students and a term for the prevention for disruptive behavior of students (Berliner, 1988).

It also refers to all those essential activities which are highly necessary not only to create but also to maintain a supportive and orderly atmosphere which include planning and preparation of teaching and learning materials, organization of the materials, decoration of the classroom (Classroom arrangement), creation of expectations and establishment and reinforcement of rules and routines in the classroom (Tan, Parsons, Hinsons and Sardo-Brown, 2003). In this regard, the nature of the teacher plays a vital role, for example, different teachers have different ways of instinctively managing the classroom environment and patterns of setting up classrooms that best fit their purpose (Aly, 2007).

Managing a classroom is the ultimate responsibility of a teacher. The way a teacher manages the classroom, will change the thoughts of the students towards learning, and defines the role of the students, their behaviors, choices, and the overall targets and tone of the school. Strong and consistent management and organizational skills have been identified as leading to fewer classroom discipline problems (Froyen and Iverson (1999). Children subjected to inappropriate and dysfunctional living conditions have a greater tendency to engage in inappropriate behaviors in the classroom. Problems relating to behaviors occur when a child is unable to communicate his/her needs or desires affectively. Inappropriate behavior significantly disrupts individual learning, social acceptance, and opportunities for inclusion into the society at large. Extreme challenging behavior can be dangerous and even life threatening.

### 6. Strategies for Effective Classroom Management

- ❖ **Devote quality time to plan your lesson:** planning is one of the very important activities leading to effective and successful delivery of the teaching contents. It makes it easy for the teacher to sequentially present the subject content in such a way that students will be able to assimilate the subject matter without unduly missing out.
- ❖ **Good classroom structure:** a well and orderly arranged classroom could be a driver for effective teaching and learning in school. The way the classroom is arranged is important because it helps the teacher to appreciate the individual students' characteristics in the classroom. For instance a well-structured classroom would consider some particular students' features such as height, sight, disability, etc.
- ❖ **Awareness and respect of student's rights:** It should be noted that students have the right to be respected and valued by the teacher. For instance, students have the right to ask questions, even the right to disagree with ideas based on his/her conviction. Students' freedom of expression is not to be rejected by the teacher.
- ❖ **Use of appropriate instructional method:** The teacher must ensure the use of appropriate and relevant teaching method so that the learners will be able to assimilate the lesson.
- ❖ **Use of appropriate instructional materials:** Instructional materials are tools used by the teacher to facilitate the learning and teaching process. Examples of teaching materials include: textbooks, workbooks, graphic organizers, etc. It is important for the teacher to use relevant materials that have a positive impact on the students.
- ❖ **Establish classroom rules and procedures:** Classroom rules and regulations are important in controlling students and even teacher responses and behaviors to classroom activities. For instance, there should be guiding rules in terms of lateness to class, use of mobile phones while teaching is on-going and other distracting actions. Such rules are also important to attract adequate punishment when they are broken. All of these rules are there to ensure discipline in the classroom environment.
- ❖ **Good mastery of the subject matter:** The teacher is expected to have a good knowledge of the subject to teach to learners. This can be achieved through the teacher's adequate preparation. A good mastery of the subject should stimulate the student's interest in both the subject and the teacher.
- ❖ **Avoid mannerism:** this involves avoiding unwholesome behaviors both in words and action in the classroom. For examples, the use of nasty and abusive words, toying either with the hairs or toes in the classroom, must be avoided by the teacher and students as well.
- ❖ **Good knowledge of learners:** in the classroom, a teacher should develop personal intimacy with the students on individual bases. The teacher should be able to identify the individual differences in the students. This will enable him/ her to avoid the temptation of relating of all the students in the same way. He should be able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each students in order to know what best approach or method to apply in solving their individual problems. It is equally encouraged that the teacher should be able to know the names of their students.

- ❖ **Provide safe and comfortable classroom climate-avoid the use of threats:** the use of threats on a student could create fear on the student. This could lower his or her confidence which could also affect his/her listening in the school.
- ❖ **Maintain healthy student-teacher interaction:** this is very important because it builds confidence on the concerned. Teacher should be able to create an atmosphere that enables the learner to interact freely with his/her teacher. This must however be done with caution to avoid being abused.
- ❖ **Be afraid of all learners:** in classroom, the teacher as a good manager must not show any discrimination or special preference to any pupil/student. He must treat all students equally irrespective of their backgrounds.
- ❖ **Cultivate voice by being audible enough:** the teacher as a good manager should be audible or loud enough in the class in order to ensure that every student in the class hears hearing challengers in the classroom. The tone of voice of the teacher should be pleasant enough to attract the students' attention. However, being audible does not imply shouting to cause distractions in the classroom. This should be done with utmost decency.
- ❖ **Be observant and sensitive to every activity during teaching:** the teacher as a good manager has the obligation to carry along every student in the classroom and to be observant in dealing with the individual differences of the class. The teacher should be familiar with the different students and their peculiarities among others within the class setting. For instance, there could be certain students with a particular challenge such as health, trauma, sight problem or even low/high IQ as the case may be etc. So, a good teacher should be able to identify and be sensitive to these differences while dealing with students in the class.
- ❖ **Be flexible:** this means allowing changes in some rules or regulations in certain circumstances depending on the situation. This is because there are no permanent or fixed instances especially when concerned with human behavior.
- ❖ **Questioning strategy:** the classroom teacher could use the questioning method to stimulate students' learning interest in the subject being taught. For instance, the teacher can ask questions from previous lesson or from the subject that the students are already familiar with.

### 7. Strategies that Inspire Student Academic Learning

All the teachers, of course have different personalities, but they also have a lot in common, including the fact that many of them entered the profession in order to help students learn. They are often included in the professional category with others in serving industries, such as those who become nurses, counselors, ministers, and social workers. The writers Harry and Rosemary Wong (1998: 21) go further, saying that teachers are in the helping and caring profession, a service profession to help people enhance the quality of their lives. With a responsibility as great as this, teachers often feel an insatiable need to help others and finish a day with positive expectations for students behavior and achievement. Optimistic teachers believe that they can influence student learning and positively affect their lives. It is vital that teachers demonstrate positive expectations toward all the students, because research shows that whatever the teacher expects is generally what the learner tends to produce. Teachers go into the teaching profession with the best of intentions but will still be ineffective without productive classroom management strategies.

In order to establish dynamic strategies in the area of classroom management, you have to be in charge of your students, the space around them, the time allotted for your content area or areas and how you use it, and the materials needed so that everyone in your class is effectively learning. There definitely is a link between how well-managed your classroom is and how much your students achieve (Marzano & Pickering, 2003) quoted by Jim Walters and Shelly, F. (2007:20).

Through all your efforts, you are essentially trying to do two things: Enhance your student involvement and cooperation and establish a positive working environment.

Every educator has a different idea of what makes a good teacher. In all areas, including discipline, teachers glean ideas from their own personal experiences and while growing up, past teaching experiences, and the advice and ideas from other educators.

Sometimes it is difficult to go off of personal memory or even the advice of another teacher because it is difficult to second-guess what some other person might do in a given situation. You might think that a particular method, style, or point of view is the best way to do something and then end up frustrated when it doesn't fit your teaching style or work for a particular challenging group of students. Try to be someone else and you will almost always get poor results. There is definitely room for individualism and flexibility in the profession of teaching. Teachers need to reflect and then act upon strategies that will work with their personal styles and needs of their particular students. It is a continuous, changing process as new students come into your classroom and your teaching approaches evolve.

✓ **The teacher's Conduct**

Before we examine the behavior of the students, it is very important to examine the general conduct of the teacher. The teacher's attitude, educational pedagogy, planning, preparation, and conduct are key elements that affect students' behavior in the classroom. It is essential that students perceive teachers as confident, caring, and fair. For this to happen, the teacher must establish himself/herself as an appropriate authority figure and role model. Often, when students are challenging a teacher's authority, the teacher may unwillingly follow with a counter-productive negative emotional response. However, there are several key components that need to be in place in order to avoid any such situations.

Fischer (2004) states that by carefully planning lessons, knowing the students, having a discipline action plan, and learning from past mistakes, teachers can avoid their own exaggerated emotional responses to disrespectful students, as well as avoiding subsequent defiant outbursts from the students. While teachers are expected to be caring, dedicated, skillful and sensitive, flexible and responsive, most of all they must be the authority figure in the classroom.

One of the top mistakes of new teachers is to try to be too friendly with students. While a friendly rapport with students is certainly desired and might come later in the year, the beginning is the time to establish rules, expectations, and order. The teacher can still develop a friendly rapport by personally greeting each student upon entering the classroom and then starting the day officially with expectation of correct behavior and high standards for learning. Some teachers create some signals with their learners to show how they are feeling. For example, a student who shows the number one is having a bad morning and the student showing a five feels great. Some other teachers provide cards to learners: for example ask them to show a green card for best understanding of the lesson, yellow for average, and red card if they do not get the lesson. As you go through your own teaching process, choose which strategies work best for you and your students (Starr, 2005) quoted by Jim, W. & Shelly (2007:22).

In a nutshell, we can conclude that, the teacher's conduct plays an important role to influence the student's behavior. Therefore, teachers are required to be models and preach the community thanks to their social way of living.

✓ **Respecting students**

Fundamental to any workable program is respect for your students. It is important to accept the students you have, not the students you wish you had. To elevate yourself to this level, you will first have to think of each individual student as a person who deserves to be treated with dignity, regardless of his/her intellectual abilities, primary language, social training, cultural background, or personal circumstance. Those who have been treated unfairly may become scapegoats or targets of violence by their peers. If teachers treat students fairly, they are more likely to respect one another. In some cases, students may react in aggressive way. Some children have been constantly disrespected even by their own family members for years. Here, it is vital that the teacher perseveres in showing them that they not only deserve respect but can also live up to that respect.

Effective schools communicate with a deliberate and systematic effort to students and the greater community that all children are valued and respected; for example, displaying children's artwork, posting academic work prominently throughout the classroom, respecting students' diversities (Dwyer, Ooster & Warger, 1999) quoted by Jim Walters and Shelly, F. (2007:22). According to these writers, students respond to adults who respect them and hold them to high expectations of successful learning. Tell the students again and again that they are important and that you require them to live up to that standard. This produces a more confident student and proportionally reduces your discipline problems.

✓ **Dignifying students**

At first glance, dignifying students seems to be the same thing as respecting them, but it actually takes it one step further. You dignify others when you demonstrate interest in their lives, ideas, and activities. On the school wide level, schools that accomplish this are the ones where parents feel invited to participate and to be present on campus. These schools celebrate and validate the various cultures and languages represented in a school. By dignifying students' efforts, teachers in the classroom create an atmosphere where students feel welcomed, valued, and respected.

According to Glaser (2000), who even went so far to suggest that teachers adopt seven connecting habits: caring, listening, supporting, contributing, encouraging, trusting, and befriending. The teacher's goal should be to interface with students as an extension of his/her own authority rather than simply attempting to control. Students will normally accept fair and reasonable rules and consequences when they know that you are genuinely concerned about their well-being. This means that they should not be singled out or used as negative examples.

When you have had to repeatedly or strongly correct a student, it is important that before the student leaves for the day you reconnect and show that you care about, believe in, and sincerely want what is best for him/her. Perhaps you will want to take this child aside and explain that he/she is a role model for some of the others. With this kind of positive responsibility, they will generally live up to your expectations. The key is to continually validate the student. "You are important." "I know you can be one of the best..." "Others are depending on you". "I'm on your side". These types of statements not only redirect the students from counterproductive behavior, but they also provide them with hope and self-confidence.

#### ✓ **Keeping Control of Your Emotions**

According to Fischer, 2004, it is extremely important for you to control your emotions and not to lose your temper. This sort of immediate reaction usually reflects a teacher's own lack of confidence in dealing with a given situation. As an adult, you should model appropriate behavior even under highly stressful situations. If you lose self-control, it becomes more difficult for you to make the proper decisions under the circumstances and also to retain the respect of your students. When you lose your temper, your behavior becomes the focus of attention rather than the students and their learning. If you feel yourself getting too agitated, take a deep breath and examine what is going on for five seconds. If necessary, assign a few minutes of individual work and take some time to sift through papers at your desk. Then, move in to control the situation, and as you walk, place your hands behind your back. This is less threatening to the students and may possibly save you from inappropriately using your hands.

#### ✓ **Maintaining a Calm Voice**

Using different vocal inflections in the classroom is appropriate only if it has a legitimate educational purpose, does not demean students, and does not result in yelling, which is ineffective and abusive. Some teachers use loud projecting voices and find that they have to keep getting louder in order to compete with the 30 other voices in their rooms. These teachers might find themselves without a voice at all, or a very hoarse one.

Other teachers resort to fear tactics, such as yelling at students. Authors Nelson, Lott, and Glenn's case study (2000) showed an example of a teacher who was openly hostile with her students. Whenever students misbehaved, she yelled at them, criticized them, and humiliated them in front of their classmates. Using fear tactics to gain control does not prove conducive to learning. Students generally shut down completely or amp up and yell back in these situations. You will generally have much more control, as well as credibility, with your students, their parents, and your superiors if you never raise your voice (Fischer, 2004).

One of the most valuable voice techniques teachers can use is a stage whisper, because it is human nature for children to want to know what is being whispered. The teacher should get as close to them as possible and whisper as loudly as possible until they are straining to hear. Since it is impossible for every student to hear you the first time, do not expect them to calm down the moment you start. Give them a few seconds and watch what happens.

#### ✓ **Eye Contact**

Direct eye contact and non-verbal communication are effective classroom management tools, provided that they don't become inappropriate or intimidating to students. When a student is misbehaving or breaking a class rule, simply pause and look him/her in the eye. This is not to be intended as a threatening gesture, but one of authority. Many times, you won't even need to say a thing-the student will feel the power of your stare. Eye contact is also used as a preventative measure for discipline problems. Your students want some signal from you that validates their presence in the class. Get in the habit of scanning the room once every few minutes to know what is going on and to let the students know you value them being a part of the group. It is also very important to be aware of the cultural norms represented in your classroom. Students in some cultures are trained that eye contact from a student to an authority figure is rude. Thus, do not necessarily demand it of students, "Look at me when I speak to you", because they might be demonstrating respect by looking down.

#### ✓ **Praise and Correction**

Teachers like to be complimented and validated, and students aren't any different. Students crave attention. Sometimes, a student is so deprived of attention that he/she will invite even negative attention through rude behavior. Therefore, public praise in the classroom can be a very powerful tool. This can be a quick strategy that involves subtly recognizing a student with a positive gesture. When it comes to correction, it is generally more powerful and appropriate to correct students individually and privately. This applies to students at every grade level.

However, it might also be appropriate to direct positive correction in the form of an affirmation, such as "Pay attention, you are very important to us." Students who are corrected in front of their peers often respond by

acting out even more, because they are responding to that unconscious or conscious need for attention. It is ineffective to engage in disciplinary conversation from across the room (Starr, 2005). A general guideline level is to correct privately and to praise publicly. Remember that your students use you as a measure to see how they are doing. If you like what you see, let them know immediately.

Again, it is very important to be aware of the cultural norms represented in the classroom. There are certain cultural and religious groups in which being in the spotlight is uncomfortable, no matter if the situation is negative or positive. Furthermore, some experts have found praise to be counterproductive in that it can cause students to lose any confidence to give an answer without the teacher's evaluation immediately expressed. Additionally, not all students seek to please the teacher, especially as they grow older. Teachers can assess their use of praise by videotaping a typical lesson and then judging the motivation for praise used and how it seemed to affect the various children in the classroom. Praising should encourage self-confidence and autonomy in the willingness to take risks in learning.

#### ✓ **Encouragement**

One step further is to give encouragement. With reassurance, you may no longer need to use prizes or rewards. Reassurance shows children unconditional love and acceptance and separates them from their actions. With this support, they see that mistakes can become opportunities for learning. You become inspiring and stimulating without appearing to be judgmental or manipulating. This does not mean you have to "dummy down" your course or give false support, but it does mean you can build scaffolds, academically and emotionally. It also entails providing prompt and detailed qualitative feedback on how well your student is doing. "The students will catch the spirit and will probably come up with other ways to practice encouragement in the classroom" (Nelsen, Lott, & Glenn, 2000, p.164).

Hitz and Driscoll (1989) recommend that, rather than using praise, teachers encourage their students. According to them, encouragement differs from praise, as teachers offer specific honest and private feedback on improvement and effort, rather than using evaluative words publicly in order to manage and manipulate the work of all the children in the classroom. Encouraging environment can ultimately simplify the job of teaching as students are motivated to be engaged in their learning process.

#### ✓ **Listen Before You Discipline**

It is important to listen carefully to students and to consider their points of view before disciplinary action is taken. Listening to students is particularly important when there is a situation in which you may not have all the pertinent or correct information. When you can take the time to do this, you demonstrate a sincere respect for the child's sense of self-worth. Teacher knowledge of student thinking is critical.

Gathercoal (2001) has written that teachers need to listen and hear what students are saying as they conjecture and build arguments. Only then can they judge the quality of students' justifications and explanations

The process of listening will not only assist you in making proper decisions, but also will often result in a teachable moment for everyone involved. Sometimes, the greater issue isn't the problem at hand. Keep an open mind for an underlying situation or frustration that may need to be addressed. If an incident occurs in class and you don't have time to get into a discussion, you can say something like, "I'd like you to work over there by yourself so that no one bothers you." This way, you have given the redirection immediately and done it in a positive manner.

Some teachers keep a notebook in the back of the classroom in which students are invited to write issues that arise in the classroom. The teacher reads the notebook at the end of each day and can be aware of ongoing problems between students and address concerns when necessary.

In a nutshell, teachers have to listen to students' opinions before judging them. Otherwise they will be subjective in addressing the problem and consequently innocent pupils will be victims.

#### ✓ **Giving Directions**

Even the seemingly simple process of expressing directions can be stated in an affirming way. Examples include, "We need you to pay attention so that you don't miss vital information," or "You are important to this discussion". Other times, you need to give specific expectations in your directions. When you are confronted with a student who needs constant redirection, you might need to take these further steps: look the student in the eye, call him/her by name, use close proximity, and use appropriate verbal and non-verbal cues. The use of a student's name pronounced correctly Conveys to that student that he/she is important to you (Wong & Wong, 1998). Consider specific goal-directed messages such as: "Mary, sit down in your chair now; work quietly, finish these ten exercises, and do not get up until the bell rings". "John, stop hitting Sue now, and do not hit anyone else ever again in this class". Give the student sufficient time to process the direction, decide to comply, and then actually obey after giving a request. During this waiting interval, do not converse or argue; rather, look



the student in the eye, restate the request if required, and wait for compliance. All of this is to be done in a calm and even tone of voice.

#### ✓ **Avoiding Confrontations with Students**

Arguments are merely power struggles. As the teacher, you already are the authority, so you have no need to argue. Never get into an argument with students regardless of what they may say. These confrontations are pointless, they are futile, and they make you appear unprofessional. Students who disagree with what the teacher requires should be encouraged to discuss those concerns privately. They should not be allowed to argue with the teacher in front of other students or to publicly challenge the teacher's authority. If a student continues to press the point after you have told him/her what to do, simply say, "Nevertheless..." and restate your point. In brief, it's not allowed to the teacher to start a quarreling discussion with their learners otherwise they'll expose their personalities.

#### ✓ **Eliminate the Use of Threats**

One of the reasons that children can behave perfectly without any problems for some teachers, but are uncontrollable with others, is the issue of conducting oneself in a respectful manner. Teachers must use their superior positions and confidence to gain compliance. You should never threaten students. While threatening might cause temporary compliance, the strategy will not help children make ethical, wise decisions about behavior in the future (Kohn, 1994). Allowing yourself to get carried away with such strong emotional reactions will always be counterproductive, and you will probably regret it later (Fischer, 2004). Rather, be consistent and do not forewarn consequences that you are unable or unwilling to deliver.

Clearly spell out the cost of students' choices and then be prepared to back up your words by consistently enforcing the rules. It is much better to say nothing than risk saying something that cannot be followed through. This is a great example of the necessity of clear expectations from the onset of the school year. If there is a readily seen and accepted list of rules and consequences, then the teacher does not constantly have to come up with consequences to enforce. The students will not be surprised when consequences are enforced. Even if they choose to make the same choice every day with a negative behavior, there will be consistency in the consequence that they are then choosing.

### **8. Conclusion**

Classroom management is one of the critical aspects of the overall drive towards achieving a successful teaching and learning in schools. School teachers are assumed to be effective at a very high percentage so as to allow their students to achieve greater learning outcome in schools. Effective classroom management directly influences the learning environment and provides the necessary impetus for students to learn and assimilate what is being taught in the class.

The classroom is the center of the school activities. What goes on the classroom between the teacher and the students will go a long way in determining the success or failure of the school system. Moreover, parents, educational investors, government and the society at large, are not only concerned about the prudent use of scarce resources available to the school, they also expect that the use these resources produce the expected results at the cheapest possible cost. This is where the role of the classroom manager (teacher) is highly appreciated. Classroom management and control is an important aspect of the teaching profession.

Although class management is a challenging task that all the teachers face, effective implementation of the various strategies such as maintaining quality relationship with students and creating attractive atmosphere for learning will help to overcome the challenges. Without an effective classroom management, the heavy investment in the school system could produce loss rather than gain. The ultimate objective of teaching-learning process in schools is to ensure that the students have achieved their full potential.

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