

Exploring Challenges Hindering Teachers' Implementation of Classroom Management Strategies in Gauteng High Schools, South Africa

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ABSTRACT

This study explores challenges hindering teachers' implementation of classroom management strategies in schools and suggests solutions thereafter. This study adopts the behaviourism theory, which aims to help learners unpack and emulate desirable behaviour, arguing that learning should lead to the adoption of constructive, observable conduct, such as what individuals say or do. The study is located within a qualitative approach using a case study design. The study consisted of purposively sampled participants comprised of twelve Grade 10 (FET Phase) educators from the three chosen high schools in Gauteng Province in the Ekurhuleni North District, South Africa. The collected data was analysed using content analysis. The findings highlighted large class sizes and insufficient parental involvement as key obstacles to effective classroom management. Setting clear expectations and fostering a positive environment were noted as crucial solutions. Recommendations include schools and educators actively promoting a supportive classroom atmosphere, establishing clear expectations, and encouraging parental participation in the learning process to overcome classroom management challenges and enhance high school teaching and learning experiences.

KEYWORDS

Classroom management; management strategies; high schools; challenges, solutions.

INTRODUCTION

The study aims to investigate the challenges and solutions associated with teachers implementing classroom management strategies (CMS). Classroom management is a crucial component of effective teaching, as it encompasses the immediate actions and decisions made by teachers to create a conducive learning environment (Maag, 2016; Büyüktaşkapu-Soydan et al., 2022). Teachers must identify and address situations that hinder smooth classroom management from implementing successful actions that prevent problems and facilitate meaningful learning experiences. However, the failure to implement effective CMS results in limited opportunities for learners to engage in meaningful learning experiences. Instead of delivering impactful and well-structured lessons, teachers face a multitude of classroom management-related problems (Nilson, 2016). For example, neglecting CMS leads to the inability to develop and organise effective instructional assignments, a lack of variation in lesson plans, and a failure to encourage students to discuss or analyse the course content they are working with. Ultimately, this neglect hampers the overall learning experience and prevents the achievement of desired educational outcomes.

The deficiency in classroom management strategies is a global issue, not confined to South Africa alone. For instance, a study conducted by Omodan et al. (2018) revealed that Nigerian secondary schools are inadequately equipped with the necessary human and material resources required for effective classroom management, ultimately impacting learner achievement adversely. Additionally, Sibanda (2021) highlighted that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MOPSE) in Zimbabwe emphasises the importance of nurturing an environment that promotes self-discipline among students, supplemented by proactive and positive disciplinary interventions. According to a study conducted in Indonesia, Affandi et al. (2000) highlighted the challenges related to classroom management can be classified into challenges that come from the teacher and students. The internal challenges related to the teacher's ability are a challenge that manifested in the form of assumptions, knowledge, and teacher skills. Meanwhile, external challenges arise from the conditions in which the teacher is on duty, namely the classroom and the students. Within the internal challenges, teachers have a limited understanding of classroom management in which the teacher interprets classroom management as a series of activities that focus on physical aspects of the class, such as the arrangement of seating and class facilities. This aligns with the recommendation of Weinstein et al. (2023) that Teachers should be aware of cultural differences in communication styles and modify their discourse styles to create respectful, inclusive, and culturally responsive classroom management strategies.

Despite these efforts, the challenges persist, underlining the universal nature of the problem and the necessity for a comprehensive approach to address the underlying issues affecting classroom management across different regions. Moyo (2019) highlighted that despite the Zimbabwean government's concerted efforts to bolster effective teaching in primary

schools by providing essential resources such as infrastructure materials, qualified personnel, physical facilities, foreign teachers, and financial assistance, there remains a disappointing trend of poor student performance in final exams. This observation is supported by Chidakwa and Lunga (2021), who noted that the Ministry of Education and Culture of Zimbabwe implemented policies to reduce the failure rate, particularly in the final grade seven examinations, but with limited success. Similarly, in Botswana, Chitsamatanga and Rembe (2020) observed that the inadequate attention given to learners' welfare in public schools and classrooms has led to a culture of silent exclusion, hindering the country's educational development. This situation is exacerbated by unprofessional behaviour exhibited by teachers, including absenteeism and inappropriate interactions with students, which negatively impact student attendance and academic performance (Baa-Poku, 2019). Baa-Poku (2019) further noted that the use of teaching methods that do not promote democratic education contributes to students' disinterest and lack of motivation to recognise the value of attending classes. These observations underscore the multifaceted challenges affecting educational outcomes across different regions, necessitating a comprehensive and context-specific approach to address the underlying issues.

Adewusi (2020) notes that the South African education system faces many challenges, including school violence, poor academic performance, insufficient sanitation measures, and a rising dropout rate. Furthermore, there is a pervasive lack of enthusiasm for learning among the current generation of South African students, attributed to demotivating factors both at home and in school. A significant contributor to this problem is the inability to implement conventional classroom management procedures effectively in most schools, exacerbated by parents neglecting their responsibilities to ensure their children arrive punctually, attend school regularly, and complete assigned class work. Therefore, creating a stimulating environment where teachers can instruct creatively and students can learn competently is critical to classroom management. Teachers must possess and actively implement this skill to foster optimal teaching and learning experiences.

Barrett (2005) noted the prevalence of poor classroom management strategies among teachers, with some appearing indifferent to the learners' need for better management strategies during and after the teaching and learning process. This perception of a lack of support from teachers has led to adverse consequences, such as learners arriving late or skipping classes altogether due to boredom or a lack of interest aroused by the teacher. Such situations are directly linked to ineffective classroom management strategies. Burden (2020) reinforced this by stating that classroom management strategies (CMS) are often overlooked in schools. Ayebo and Assuah (2017) suggested that addressing classroom management issues requires being well-prepared for class, inspiring students, creating a welcoming and secure learning environment, boosting students' self-esteem, and using creativity and imagination while developing and presenting daily lessons. Therefore, there is a critical need to investigate how teachers' CMS can be enhanced to facilitate effective teaching and learning in high schools.

While existing literature provides some strategies for addressing classroom management issues, there is a lack of comprehensive research on the effective implementation of these strategies in high schools. Furthermore, the current body of literature does not adequately address the underlying reasons for teachers' indifference towards the necessity of effective classroom management. This study aims to bridge this gap by exploring the challenges that hinder the implementation of effective CMS and proposing solutions that can be practically applied in high school settings to foster optimal teaching and learning experiences. Hence, the study is positioned to enhance teachers' classroom management strategies to facilitate optimal teaching and learning experiences within high school settings. This is paramount to improving the overall quality of education and ensuring positive outcomes for students in South Africa and beyond.

Research Questions

In order to address the above problem, the following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- What are the challenges hindering teachers from implementing classroom management strategies?
- What are the possible solutions to the challenges hindering the implementation of classroom management strategies?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored in the behaviourism theory, which John Watson initially proposed in 1913. This theory encompasses several underlying assumptions about methodology and behavioural analysis (Guercio, 2020). It aims to assist learners in unpacking and emulating desirable behaviour, positing that learning should culminate in the adoption of constructive, observable conduct, such as what individuals say or do (Skinner, 1953). Within this framework, students are perceived as inert beings with unconditioned, unreinforced behaviour. The theory posits that reinforcing behaviour enhances the likelihood of its recurrence by providing or withholding a stimulus immediately after its occurrence (Bandura, 1971). As desired behaviours are consistently reinforced and refined, they become assimilated or ingrained as habits (Pavlov, 1927).

The theory of behaviourism is particularly pertinent to this study as it provides a framework for teachers, especially those encountering difficulties in classroom management, to effectively address learners' disruptive behaviours and learning deficits. By judiciously implementing behaviourist principles in classrooms, educators can acknowledge the uniqueness of learners' learning styles and adapt classroom management strategies accordingly to minimise behavioural challenges and facilitate effective instruction. Classroom management is crucial as it dictates the extent to which the learning environment fosters optimal learning. This involves observing learners' actions and assessing whether they are fully exploiting available learning opportunities (Chimbi & Jita, 2021; George et al., 2018). Effective classroom

sorganisation and the ability to manage learner behaviour are also significant determinants of novice teachers' retention in the teaching profession. Therefore, adhering to behaviourist principles can aid educators in tailoring their classroom management strategies to address learners' negative behaviours most effectively.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research approach. Qualitative approach is suitable because it allows for an in-depth exploration of teachers' experiences and perceptions regarding the application of behaviourist principles in addressing disruptive behaviours and learning deficits in the classroom. This also allows the researchers to gain insight into participants' realities by collecting and analysing data to elucidate the significance of central themes in their lifeworld. According to Peel (2020), this approach necessitates interpreting the real world through the participants' lens, requiring them to accurately articulate their experiences, emotions, and behaviors. This approach aims to acquire accurate and comprehensive depictions of the actions, entities, procedures, and individuals under investigation. Tracy (2019) explains that the research design ensures the accuracy and authenticity of the collected data for analysing the issues at hand. The study benefits from employing a case study approach, as it enables data collection in a real-world setting while considering the political and ideological context in which the research is conducted. A case study research design is appropriate for this study as it assists in analysing the phenomenon to identify variables, structures, forms, and levels of interaction among the relevant participants, including evaluating work performance for school advancement. Allan (2020: 189) notes that case studies are best suited to answer 'how' and 'why' research questions, so the questions for this proposed study are pre-planned and designed before the commencement of the case study. This design allows the collection of data by conducting semi-structured interviews and delving deeper into the school, the participants, and the inner workings and interactions of the participants.

The qualitative approach and case study design are relevant to this study as they facilitate a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the participants' perceptions and lived experiences. This approach ensures that the research accurately reflects the realities of those being studied, ultimately providing a detailed narrative of the participants' comprehension and understanding of the main issue - classroom management strategies.

Data collection, Sampling and sampling procedure

In this study, semi-structured interviews are utilised as the primary data collection instrument. Dikko (2016) explains that semi-structured interviews involve a series of open-ended questions centered around the research topic. This format is applied in this study, enabling the interviewer to clarify the topic, probe deeper for more detailed responses, and gain knowledge of the phenomenon. This interactive approach means that the researcher can ask follow-up questions after the initial response, allowing the participant to expand on their initial thoughts. After each participant gave their consent to be interviewed, an appointment was mutually scheduled

between both parties. The participants' interviews were conducted in English, although occasionally, idioms in their home language, either Northern or Southern Sotho, were used to express certain ideas. Despite English not being the participants' native tongue, they exhibited high proficiency in it, especially in positions of authority. Conducting the interviews in English allowed the researcher to accurately capture the participants' descriptions without the need for translation. However, any information spoken in a language other than English was translated during the transcription stage. This was done to ensure that the data would be clear to individuals who do not speak Northern or Southern Sotho, as the researchers deemed it necessary to translate all interview materials into English.

Additionally, purposive sampling was employed to select participants intimately familiar with the scenario under investigation and likely to provide insightful answers to the researcher's questions. This method ensures that the selected information is both rich and relevant to the study. The participants selected for this study consist of twelve Grade 10 (FET Phase) educators from three chosen high schools in the Gauteng Province's Ekurhuleni North District, RSA. Each school is represented by four participant-teachers, totaling twelve participants for the study: four females and seven male teachers. The experience of participant is from one to five years and they are in their early thirties to forties.

Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations

This study employed content analysis to dissect the data obtained from the interviews by extracting valuable data segments from the transcripts. This method facilitates a comprehensive examination of the document's content by analysing who says what, to whom, and how, enabling the researcher to provide a detailed and accurate depiction of the respondents' perspectives. The data was analysed in the following process to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings by following this procedure:

- Firstly, by transcribing the collected data, we familiarised ourselves with the interview responses and read through the transcripts several times to detect common themes in the participants' responses.
- Secondly, the data were coded by scrutinising the elements, such as how the participant answered the questions to retain the meaning and capture only key points.
- Thirdly, the information was summarised, compiled, and interpreted in light of the research questions.

Ethical considerations, including informed consent and anonymity, were rigorously maintained throughout this educational research. Before commencing the research, permission was sought and obtained from the Gauteng Department of Education and the principals of the selected schools. Participants were asked for their consent and were made aware that their participation was entirely voluntary, meaning they had the choice to participate or withdraw at any stage of the research process. Participants were thoroughly informed about the study's nature and their role in it. They were also informed about the significance of their participation and how their input would contribute to the research.

Additionally, respondents' anonymity was strictly preserved by ensuring their names were not disclosed to anyone, protecting them from public scrutiny and criticism.

Presentation of data

To adequately address the two research questions of the study, the data were meticulously organised and analysed in alignment with the respective questions. The first question was centred around the challenges associated with classroom management strategies, necessitating a detailed examination of various hindrances to effective classroom management. Conversely, the second question was focused on proposing solutions to these identified challenges, requiring an extensive exploration of potential strategies and interventions that could mitigate the obstacles encountered in classroom management. Organising and analysing the data in this manner ensured a targeted and comprehensive understanding of the prevailing issues and potential solutions in classroom management, ultimately contributing to the development of more effective and sustainable strategies to enhance the teaching and learning experiences in high schools.

Answering research question one: Challenges hindering classroom management strategies

In response to research question number one, challenges of classroom management strategies, the construct is broken into the following sub-themes: Teaching in large classes and lack of parental involvement.

Teaching in Large Classes

Observing the classes during teaching lessons has shown that most teachers, particularly inexperienced teachers, initially struggled with classroom management. The respondents thought that this was a result of the big classes. A class had more than 30 learners in each of its sections. There were some disruptive learners, it was noted. These learners' disruptive behaviours seemed to be a significant barrier to learning for inexperienced teachers. The participant supports the statement by saying that:

Teacher K: "I was given social studies for Grade 10; some cheeky learners in my class would always make fun of me in class. They caused so much commotion that I occasionally wanted to cry."

The other participants, who are also novice teachers, attested to what teacher K said by including their experience with such disruptive learners.

Teacher L: "It was difficult for me to manage adolescent boys sitting in a class with girls."

Teacher H said: "Teaching 10th graders in a mixed class was difficult for me because most of the boys were mischievous. They were challenging to manage."

One of the participants received an unkind remark. According to what she recalled, "...a learner in a troublesome 10th-grade class of boys was so mischievous that he used to call me "Bambino" (a young child).

Participants identified an issue with cramped classrooms. The following were observations: the teacher-learner ratio in all the schools observed ranged from 1:80 to 90, and in two schools, it was 1:100; however, the maximum number of learners allowed in these classes

was forty-five (45). In these circumstances, it was challenging for teachers to implement competence-based approaches in the teaching and learning process. Additionally, it was observed that the teachers were overworked because only one teacher was needed to instruct the class's five streams. After being observed in the classroom, the teacher stated that it was impossible to move around and assist learners who were having trouble learning because of how crowded the classrooms were.

Teacher J: "In a situation like this, where I am teaching a class of 90 learners with 5 streams, it is very difficult to put learner-centred approaches into practice. What chance do you think I have of using learner-centred strategies? Will I have time to complete the syllabus?"

Individual 15 Several participants struggled to effectively explain the contents because of the large classes and learners of varying abilities. One of the participants, for instance, stated: *Teacher H: "I was initially unsatisfied with my teaching because I had never seen any expressions of appreciation or satisfaction on the faces of my learners. I persisted in trying to change the way I taught, but crowded classrooms were a big obstacle because the learners in the back could hardly hear me."*

Teacher K: "My most time-consuming task was getting them to be quiet."

Teacher I: "Slow learners were often particularly challenging to teach because they couldn't keep up with the class as a whole. I always tried to bring the slow learners up to the level of the mediocre ones, but it was difficult for me as I found the rest of the class bored."

With the above statement, participants believed that slow learners were hurt by gifted learners being taught at their own pace.

Teacher F (novice teacher): "I was unable to apply what I had learned in my B.Ed. Coursework in my class. Senior staff instructed me to narrate from a copy of a former learner. It was difficult for me to avoid teaching by dictation."

The results of the participant interviews showed that the participants used various strategies to deal with the difficulties. The strategies used by each participant were largely the same. Their primary methods for overcoming difficulties included interacting with learners, displaying their respect and care for them, and being aware of the school's culture.

Insufficient Parental Involvement

Parental involvement refers to communicating between school and home, supporting learning at home, and participating in school life, from helping in classrooms to decision-making through governance structures (Hamlin, 2021; Adigun & Ndwandwe, 2022). School success partly depends on the support (emotional support, helping with homework, assistance with encouragement, and educational decisions) given to the child by parents (Goshin *et al.*, 2021). From the data collected, for learners' academic success as well as the reduction and resolution of potential issues they may encounter at school, it is crucial for parents to be actively involved in their children's learning processes. Teachers prioritise the need to improve this relationship because they feel that parents don't support them in dealing with their children's misbehaviours in class, despite the fact that they do.

Not all participants agree that parents are uninterested in their children's education, but others argue that parents of students at their school are cooperative. In many cases, after students have accumulated a certain number of pages for inappropriate behaviour, parents are invited to come to school; therefore, they respond by coming. Parents' cooperation allows educators to carry out their plans. Parents and educators discuss misbehaviour with students. The educators also stated that such actions bear fruit. Parents are seen as playing an important role in maintaining school discipline without the use of corporal punishment. The following is evidence of the educator's parental involvement in the school:

Teacher H: "When parents refuse to cooperate, it becomes difficult. We cannot achieve our goals unless we collaborate with parents. Parents play an important role in ensuring school discipline. When students are spoken to in front of their parents, they tend to change their behaviour. Therefore, we will have a problem if the parents don't show up."

Educators expressed concern about parents who refuse to come to school when asked. They stated that this makes dealing with negative student behaviour difficult. Such students are suspended until their parents meet with the principal and/or the disciplinary committee. This is demonstrated in the following extract:

Teacher G: "There are not many cases where parents don't attend school when we ask them to, but they do happen. This makes dealing with discipline as difficult as we would like to deal with it. In such cases, parents waste their own children's time because we will not allow them to return to class if their parents do not accompany them."

Another teacher stated:

Teacher I: "Some parents must be invited a third or fourth time before they can come to school, and when this happens, we temporarily suspend the learner until the parents arrive."

In support of the educators' remarks, I believe parents should be contacted when problems arise with their children at school as soon as possible. With parental involvement, they can ensure that students' behaviour is acceptable, that they arrive on time, and that they are dressed appropriately. Parents can also ensure that their children finish their homework on time.

Educators consider themselves fortunate to work under such conditions. They argue that parents understand what education means for their children and thus participate in their education. According to educators, this is how they can maintain school discipline without resorting to corporal punishment. They also recognised the significance of involving parents in their children's school affairs. The evidence from the participants is as follows:

Teacher J: "To be honest, parental involvement in the affairs of their children has a positive effect. The learner fears that if he or she behaves inappropriately, he or she will embarrass his or her parents and that the personal relationship with the parent at home will deteriorate. As a result, students are compelled to behave well at school in order to avoid their parents' visits."

Teacher L: "Parents of students at this school are literate. They understand the importance of parental involvement in their children's education."

The findings suggest that involving parents in their children's education makes them more likely to ensure that the community's values, direction, and character are established and maintained at school. Parental involvement aids in the elimination of learning and behavioural issues. The findings conclude that if parents do not participate in disciplining their children, any behaviour change program implemented by the school will be ineffective.

Answering researcher question two: Solutions to the challenges

In response to research question number two, which seeks to provide solutions to challenges hindering the implementation of classroom management strategies, the construct is broken into the following sub-themes: Need for classroom management that sets expectations,

Need for classroom management that sets expectations

According to responses from interviews, the participants view that it is particularly simple to see how management and instruction in the classroom are intertwined from the viewpoint of the learners. At least two cognitive demands are constantly placed on learners: the demands of academic tasks (understanding and working with content) and the demands of social tasks (interacting with others regarding that content). One of the participants emphasised his point by stating that;

Teacher G: "learners must simultaneously work to understand the content and find appropriate and effective ways to participate in order to demonstrate that understanding."

According to participant educator G, educators H and I attest that the teacher must facilitate learning these academic and social tasks. Consequently, management and instruction cannot be separated from the standpoint of what learners must understand in order to succeed. Every action a teacher takes, such as setting the scene, adorning the space, setting up the chairs, conversing with learners and managing their responses, establishing routines (and then putting them into action, modifying them, and reinstating them), developing rules, and explaining those rules to the learners, has an impact on classroom management. All of these relate to managing a classroom.

As the interviews continue, the participants mention that the need for classroom management includes Creating and implementing a learning environment that necessitates careful planning for the beginning of the academic year. Participants view and agree that the learning environment needs to be thought of as both a physical space and a cognitive space. The following participant continues to view that;

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Teacher C: "As the teacher sets up the classroom for the learners, the physical space is managed. Is the room welcoming and comfortable? Does the design of the classroom align with the teacher's approach to teaching? Do the learners have access to the required resources? Are the room's distracting elements removed? A teacher can better manage the classroom's physical

space by paying attention to these and similar questions. Teachers must also consider the cognitive space required for a learning environment."

Teacher I: "Effective teachers develop and employ classroom management techniques that foster an enjoyable learning environment for their learners."

The participants assert that this cognitive area is found in the standards teachers set for their learners in the classroom and the process of establishing a motivating environment. Throughout the interviews, the participants continue to emphasise the following statement that the beginning of the school year is essential for implementing efficient management in both elementary and secondary classrooms. The following participant support;

Teacher H: "The teacher setting expectations for learners' behaviour and expressing those expectations through rules and procedures is a crucial part of this beginning. Rules outline the standards for classroom behaviour and how learners should interact with their peers and the teacher. The way things are done is related to procedures. Rules and procedures must be taught, practised, and consistently enforced."

Teacher J: "Effective classroom teachers start the year by setting expectations; better teachers at the elementary school level also routinely analyse classroom tasks, impart going-to-school knowledge, observe learners' behaviour from the start of the year, and see the classroom through their eyes. At the middle school and junior high levels, better teachers also clarify policies and procedures, keep an eye on learners' behaviour, foster their work responsibility, communicate information, and plan lessons from the first day of class."

A systematic approach to classroom management is implemented at the start of the school year by teachers whose learners exhibit high task engagement and academic achievement, as shown by the participant. Thus, setting expectations is a crucial component of managing classrooms successfully or managing classrooms in a way that will improve learners' learning.

Positive Classroom Environment

A positive classroom environment is essential in keeping behaviour problems to a minimum (Alam, 2022). The participants share the view that there are various ways for teachers to foster a positive learning environment. To ensure a positive environment, see below;

Teacher D: "it is crucial for teachers to begin the school year with high expectations."

Teacher A: "A teacher must discuss the significance of expectations in order to foster a culture of success."

Teacher E: "Parents and learners both feel that what is happening in the classroom is important because it is allowed and encouraged for them to participate. The success of the school year and the creation of a positive learning environment are directly related to parental involvement in the classroom and in their children's education. Fostering a positive learning environment in the classroom is crucial to good instruction."

Teacher B: "In order to ensure a positive learning environment in the classroom, it is imperative for teachers to begin the school year with high expectations. On the first day of school, positive

expectations should be put in place. By doing this, the learners will feel more in control of and accountable for their actions. With an academically structured environment, this implementation will encourage them to behave and act appropriately.”

Teacher F: “Teachers should uphold these expectations throughout the academic year. Teachers are required to strictly follow the predetermined rules laid out at the start of the academic year. If this isn't done, the process will be undermined, and the learners will revert to their previous undesirable behaviour and antisocial activities.”

Teacher I: “Teachers must explain the significance of expectations to foster a positive learning environment. In order to create a positive environment, learners must participate. Their participation will enable them to take an active role in their education and foster a culture of consensus. Learners can choose their own courses of study thanks to their newly acquired sense of responsibility.”

It became clear during the observation that another tactic these Teachers (Participants) employed to promote learners' involvement was the use of class leaders. One or more learners may serve as monitors, either individually or collectively. Assignments for these learners to complete on a daily basis in the classroom must be made. They can constructively interact with their classmates thanks to this interesting activity in a classroom setting. The learners are given the chance to assume leadership positions as a result.

The participants also mentioned “Effective transitions”, it is designed to move learners from one activity to another while also transferring their mental and physical energies, as they explain.

Teacher D “Ensuring that all learners have the tools and perspectives required for a new activity is the aim of seamless transitions. Teachers must keep a close eye on their pupils in order to maintain a positive learning environment.”

Interpreting Teaching D's statement on classroom management, a positive classroom environment entails keeping a close eye on learners' behaviour, intervening to correct inappropriate behaviour before it worsens, handling misbehaviour consistently, and paying attention to learners' academic progress. Therefore, according to teacher D, effective teachers regularly assess their class or group and look for indications of learners' confusion or inattention. This is supported by his statement below;

Teacher D: “Keeping a close eye on learners helps assess and regulate both learners' behaviour and learning.”

Teacher F: “In order to maintain effective management for a positive environment, it is important to be aware of when learners appear to be stuck, when they require assistance, when they require guidance, when they require correction, and when they require encouragement. Teachers need to conduct both open and closed-door understanding checks. In order to be proactive rather than reactive in managing the classroom, the teacher must anticipate the actions and reactions of the learners.”

The above statements of participants support that best, classroom teachers go through each activity, anticipating any areas where learners might struggle and making plans to reduce confusion and increase the likelihood of success.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding from this study highlights that teaching in large classrooms is a significant obstacle for teachers in implementing classroom management strategies. This result suggests that managing a classroom with a high number of students hampers the implementation of effective classroom management. It is not only the sheer number of students that poses a challenge but also the students' behaviour, as they tend to exhibit disruptive behaviours such as being cheeky, mocking the teacher, and causing a commotion. In this context, a large class is defined as one with more than 30 enrolled learners. This finding is supported by empirical literature. For example, Aloe et al. (2014) found that large class sizes are associated with increased disruptive behaviours, making classroom management more challenging for teachers. Similarly, Blatchford, Bassett, and Brown (2011) found that teachers in larger classes are more likely to adopt teacher-centred approaches and spend less time on individual interactions, which can lead to less effective classroom management and lower levels of student engagement. Both studies highlight the difficulties faced by teachers in managing large classrooms and suggest that reducing class sizes could be a strategy to improve classroom management and, ultimately, student outcomes.

The finding that lack of parental involvement hinders teachers from implementing classroom management strategies is supported by several studies. Parental involvement is critical to a child's education and can greatly affect the classroom environment. When parents are actively involved in their children's education, it helps the child and helps the teacher manage the classroom. Epstein (2001) suggests that parental involvement is key to successful classroom management and student achievement. Epstein's framework of six types of involvement—parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community—illustrates how parents can be involved in their children's education. When parents are actively involved in these ways, it creates a supportive home environment, fosters positive relationships between parents and teachers, and ultimately helps in classroom management as parents reinforce classroom expectations and norms at home. On the other hand, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) also provide a theoretical model of the parental involvement process that supports this finding. Their model suggests that parents' decisions to become involved in their child's education are influenced by their beliefs about what they are supposed to do as parents, their perceptions of invitations to involvement from the school and their child, and their perceptions of life context variables that facilitate or inhibit involvement. When parents are actively involved, they can better understand and support classroom management strategies, which helps teachers implement these strategies.

The finding that the need for classroom management and setting expectations is crucial for implementing active learning and teaching in the classroom is corroborated by several empirical studies. Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering (2003) underscore the importance of establishing clear expectations for behaviour as a fundamental component of effective classroom management. They argue that teachers who delineate clear behavioural expectations, actively instruct students about these expectations, and consistently provide feedback and reinforcement are more adept at managing their classrooms and fostering active learning. This is because well-defined expectations furnish a framework that helps students comprehend what is expected of them, thereby creating a more structured and supportive learning environment. Similarly, Emmer & Stough (2001) affirm that setting expectations is pivotal to classroom management. They contend that effective classroom management entails addressing disruptive behaviour and cultivating a positive classroom environment conducive to learning. Clear expectations for behaviour, academic work, and classroom routines are vital strategies for creating this positive environment. When expectations are explicit and consistently enforced, engenders a sense of order and predictability in the classroom, which, in turn, facilitates active learning and teaching.

The finding underlines the importance of a positive classroom environment as a key solution to the challenges hindering effective classroom management in high schools. Effective classroom management goes beyond maintaining order during the class; it involves creating a conducive environment for both teaching and learning. Empirical studies support this finding. For example, Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1993) found that the classroom environment is a significant factor in student achievement, which is directly linked to effective classroom management. Hattie (2009) also emphasised that a positive classroom environment, characterised by supportive and inclusive interactions, significantly impacts student achievement. This is because a positive environment helps in managing the classroom by minimising disruptions, facilitating smooth transitions between activities, and fostering a sense of belonging among students. It includes setting clear expectations, using positive reinforcement, and building positive relationships with and among students. When students feel supported and included, they are more likely to engage in the learning process, follow classroom rules, and exhibit positive behaviours, all of which contribute to effective classroom management.

CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the study has elucidated several pivotal challenges and solutions regarding the implementation of classroom management strategies in high schools. Key challenges include the difficulties teachers face in managing large classes, which often result in disruptive behaviours and commotions, and the lack of parental involvement, which is crucial for supporting learning at home and school. Conversely, the study also highlighted the critical role of setting clear expectations and fostering a positive classroom environment as fundamental

strategies for implementing active learning and teaching. Evidently, effective classroom management is about maintaining order and creating a supportive and inclusive environment that facilitates optimal learning and teaching.

Therefore, it is recommended that schools and educators focus on creating a positive classroom environment by setting clear expectations, using positive reinforcement, and building supportive relationships with and among students. Additionally, it is essential to actively engage parents in their children's learning journey at home and in school to create a holistic support system for the students. Lastly, addressing the issue of large class sizes by reducing the number of students per class or providing additional support and resources to teachers managing large classes can also significantly enhance classroom management and, consequently, the overall teaching and learning experience.

Theoretical implications of the findings

The findings of the study have significant implications on the theoretical framework, which is based on the theory of behaviorism. The theory posits that desirable behaviour can be taught through reinforcement and repetition. However, the challenges identified in the study, such as large class sizes and lack of parental involvement, hinder the effective implementation of this theory in practice. For instance, large class sizes make it difficult for teachers to effectively manage and reinforce positive behaviours. Additionally, the lack of parental involvement means that positive behaviours reinforced in the classroom may not be supported or continued at home, reducing the behaviourism approach's effectiveness. The suggested solutions, such as setting clear expectations and fostering a positive classroom environment, align with the principles of behaviourism and underscore the need for a supportive and structured environment for the theory to be effectively implemented. Therefore, the study's findings highlight the importance of addressing these challenges to create an environment conducive to the successful application of the behaviorism theory in classroom management.

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