

Effectiveness of Classroom Management Instruction:

A Study among New Secondary Education Teachers

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### Abstract

This study will address classroom management education given to teachers that are now practicing in their own classrooms. The research problem will address failure of teacher education programs to properly equip teachers to effectively manage classroom behavior and target this as a detriment to student learning and new teacher retention to the teaching profession. The purpose of the study is to explore how teacher education programs in Western Tennessee universities prepare secondary education teachers for managing classroom discipline in their prospective classrooms once they obtain teaching positions in high schools using qualitative research methods. Participants will consist of two hundred and fifty new teachers that are within their first three years of teaching. Teachers will participate by filling out an informational survey sent via e-mail.

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## Introduction

Classroom management refers to the supervision of procedures and student behavior during instructional time in the classroom setting. Students participate in various kinds of learning in classrooms by receiving instruction, participating in cooperative groups, completing assignments, conducting experiments, and by completing any number of tasks a teacher may deem necessary to ensure the learning of the daily objective for all students. In order for learning to take place for all students, teachers are required to manage the flow of daily activities, limit distractions and disruptions, and correct inappropriate behavior of students when necessary.

Teacher education programs contain a wide variety of courses designed to equip teachers to effectively teach students including classroom management course work. During these courses, pre-service teachers are taught strategies not only for managing student behavior but also for managing classroom procedures and activities. Pre-service teachers will also have opportunities to observe teachers and the methods that those teachers use. Before teacher education programs conclude, a semester of student teaching is required. During the student teaching experience, a pre-service teacher can actually experience what it is like to teach a classroom and use the techniques they have learned while being supervised by a veteran teacher.

The classroom management techniques available have varied levels of success depending on the grade level of the students the technique is applied to and the degree of implementation. There are a number of strategies that address classroom procedures, activities, and behavior. Student learning and success depends on classroom management procedures being applied effectively.

**Problem Statement**

Failure to properly equip teachers to effectively manage classroom behavior is detrimental to student learning and teacher retention. New teachers often struggle with classroom management even though they have completed educational programs that require classroom management training and student teaching. This is in part due to degree awarding programs failing to provide enough experience in educating teachers how to effectively manage classrooms (Oliver & Reschly, 2007).

Sending new teachers into classrooms unequipped to manage student behavior and be effective educators could be considered educational malpractice since there are many federal laws put into place to ensure student success among all students. Also, inability to manage student behavior results in continuously stressful work situations for new teachers and is a reason some new teachers do not continue their careers as educators (Oliver & Reschly, 2007).

Previous research indicates that deficiencies in both teacher preparation programs and district training opportunities (Oliver & Reschly, 2007). More research should be conducted to ensure that behavioral management techniques are up-to-date (Simonsen, Fairbanks, Myers & Sugai, 2008).

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore how teacher education programs in Western Tennessee universities prepare secondary education teachers for managing classroom behavior in their prospective classrooms once they obtain teaching positions in high schools. Participants will consist of two hundred and fifty new teachers that are within their first three years of teaching. Teachers will participate by filling out an informational survey sent via e-mail.

**Research Questions**

**Q1.** How frequently do student teachers majoring in secondary education at Western Tennessee universities receive classroom management instructional strategies from professors that do not have backgrounds and/or qualifications in secondary education?

**Q2.** What are some common disciplinary problems experienced by new secondary education teachers during their first years of teaching?

**Q3.** How do the disciplinary problems experienced in the first years of teaching compare to the example problems covered during classroom management instruction while enrolled in a teacher education program?

**Q4.** What are some of the uncertainties of new secondary education professionals that lead them to ineffectively manage their classrooms?

**Brief Review of the Literature**

Teachers participate in educational programs that sometimes require classroom management training and in class experience time; however, degree awarding programs fail to provide enough experience in educating teachers how to effectively manage classrooms. Without proper management of classroom behavior student learning cannot properly take place, and this is detrimental to student progress (Oliver & Reschly, 2007).

**Pre-Service and In-Service Teacher Studies**

In a study conducted by Zuckerman (2007), teachers were asked to recall an event from their student teaching. Of the submissions, 87% dealt with disciplinary issues, and only a little over half of those submissions were considered to be met with strategies successful in dealing with the disruptive student behavior (Zuckerman, 2007). This could indicate that many student

teachers are inadequately prepared for managing their own classrooms. Teachers that do not have successful classroom management techniques can become successful if given appropriate guidance and feedback (MacSuga & Simonsen, 2011). Teachers that have received additional in-service training in classroom management and a support system to follow-up on information learned reported classroom environments with fewer problems (Baker, Gentry, & Larmer, 2016).

### **Classroom Management Strategies**

Various strategies for classroom management exist; however, Briesch et al. (2008) state, “Teachers should be trained and supported in implementing practices that are likely to be successful; that is, practices that are backed by evidence” (p. 351). Several studies, textbooks, and articles exist outlining classroom management techniques that show positively supported results. Gaining control of a classroom is essential from the first day and will require planning before the class begins (Roscoe & Orr, 2010). Consideration should be given to how the classroom will be organized, what will be expected from students, and what procedures will be used in the classroom (Roscoe & Orr, 2010). Other successful strategies to consider maintaining student behavior after class commences are using a point system that allows students to redeem points for rewards established by the teacher, establishing a structured routine for students to follow and teaching students that routine, developing routines for teacher duties, using seating arrangements, and communicating expectations for both student-to-student communication and teacher-student communication (Xenos, 2012; Rawlings, Bolton, & Notar, 2017; Pedota, 2007).

### **Summary**

Teachers receive classroom management training in education programs and as in-service teachers, and classroom management strategies are numerous; however, thirty percent of teachers discontinue teaching within three years of obtaining a teaching position and fifty percent

leave after teaching only five years (Xenos, 2012). Failure to train teachers how to manage their classrooms can lead to an environment that is not conducive to learning and one that is stressful to work in (Oliver & Reschly, 2007). More research is needed to ensure that management techniques are effective and current (Briesch, Fairbanks, Myers, Simonsen, & Sugai, 2008).

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