

Discipline and
improve students
behaviour in
classroom education
essay



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The problem of how best to discipline and improve students' behaviour in classroom is of permanent interest. This review is oriented to searching different methodologies concerning students' behaviour in classrooms, teachers' discipline strategies and behavioural management. Different points of view and different examples for appropriate behaviour have been discussed referring to the topic. The sources reviewed present different solutions. This paper examines also the classroom environment and its relation to successful behaviour implementation. The first paragraphs give different definitions conversant with behaviour and discipline according to the authors' view. The continuation of the literature review is presented by different approaches and strategies concerning a good behavioural management. This elaboration sets out some of the arguments and recommendations which are discussed in more detail.

Charles C. M. submits several definitions corresponding to behaviour:

Behaviour refers to everything that people do. Misbehaviour is behaviour that is not appropriate to the setting or situation in which it occurs.

Discipline... are strategies, procedures, and structures that teachers use to support a positive learning environment.

Behaviour management is a science that puts an accent on what teachers have to do to prevent misbehaviour (Charles 1). Students' behaviour depends on several factors such as traditions, demographic settings, economic resources, family, experiences, and more.

Some authors have made important contributions in managing classroom discipline related the twentieth century. Jacob Kounin (1971), one of them, reports that appropriate student behaviour can be maintained through classroom organization, lesson management, and approach to individual students. Rudolf Dreikurs (1972) on the other hand emphasizes the desire to belong as a primary need of students in school. He identifies types of misbehaviour and gives ideas about how to make students feel a part of the class or group (p. 63). William Glasser (1986) shows another view, making a case that the behaviour of someone else cannot be controlled. He reckons that everybody can only control his own behaviour. Personally I support this idea that we must control ourselves. According to the opinion of the other authors, Linda Albert's, Barbara Coloroso's, Nelson and Lott's a good discipline in the classroom can be achieved through Belonging, Cooperation, and Self-Control. A similar idea of classroom management is also presented by Rackel C. F who declares that the teachers, considered it was necessary, " to develop students' sense of belonging to the school" (p. 1071) The author supports the opinion of the significance of a good school climate and tells that it might be precondition for facilitating positive youth development (Rackel C. F 1071). In order to attain to a good classroom atmosphere there is a need of growing positive relationship between students and teachers, motivation the students' participation and clear rules to control classroom discipline (Rackel C. F 1072). In addition these above-mentioned views can be defined as a positive outlook as regards to improving the classroom management.

Another point of view inside the subject of managing discipline is through active student involvement and through pragmatic Classroom management (Charles, C. M. 2007, p. 7). Discipline through raising student responsibility is also positively oriented approach for

classroom management. The three principles that improve behaviour presented in the article " Self-assessment of understanding" are positivity, choice, and reflection (Charles, C. M. 12). There the author explains the principles meaning. He states that being positive means being a motivator. When students have opportunity to share their choices they can present themselves with a good behaviour. " Asking students questions that encourage them to reflect on their behaviour can help them to change behaviour" (Charles 14).

Rebecca Giallo and Emma Little (2003, p. 22) from RMIT University Australia give their comments also on classroom behaviour management. They claim that confidence is one of the most important characteristic that influence teachers' effectiveness in classroom management. Giallo and Little (2003, 22) based on the previous statement of Evans & Tribble accept that less confident teachers seem more vulnerable to stressful classrooms. They maintain the theory that the classroom stress is a reason for giving up a teacher's career. In school the stress can be overcome through involving of drastic measures concerning managing a good discipline.

One of the most popular strategy for solving behaviour problems is punishment. By reason of the popularity of the subject in the field of education, many experts have written articles and books as well as given

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lectures on discipline and punishment. Anne Catey based on Dreikur's words considers that there is no need of using punishment in class. Based on Catey's words kids need to have a chance they can share their ideas in the class (1). This is the best way to "smooth, productive functioning in schools" (Charles, C. M, 1999). Anne Catey from Cumberland High School gets an interview from several teachers in Illinois district about their discipline practices. She accepts the suggestion given by Lawrence as mentioning that, "very effective technique is a brief conference, either in the hallway or after class, with the misbehaving student" (Punishment, 1). Anne Catey has her own techniques for classroom management. She disagrees with Lawrence viewing about humour as one of the bad strategies for effective discipline and believes that using of humour can be effective if done without abusing the students (Punishment, 1). In this way she gives each one a bit of individual attention. When some of her students are a bit distracted on one task, talking to friends instead of reading Catey says, "Since I always assume the best of my students, I assume the noise I hear is students reading aloud or discussing their novels. However, it's time to read silently now instead of reading aloud" (Punishment, 1). This sounds as a good strategy but personally I disclaim this thesis. This doesn't work all the time. I am trying to be strict with my students and according to this the pupils have to observe the rules in my classes. That doesn't mean that I admit the severe punishment but rarely the stern warnings. I agree with the following techniques used by Anne Catey (2001) to modify behaviour including giving "zeroes for incomplete, inappropriate, and/or missing work and taking points off at the end of a quarter for lack of participation and/or

poor listening". As expected, these methods are effective for some of the pupils but not for the others.

Related to the above-mentioned topic it could be noticed some of the classroom discipline strategies utilized in Australia, China and Israel. On the basis of elaborated research in these countries some psychologists and school principals (Xing Qui, Shlomo Romi, 2005) conclude that Chinese teachers appear less punitive and aggressive than do those in Israel or Australia. Australian classrooms are presented as having least discussion and recognition and most punishment. In Australia (Lewis, 2005) as concerned to the study the teachers are characterized by two distinct discipline styles. The first of these is called "Coercive" discipline and comprises punishment and aggression (yelling in anger, sarcasm group punishments, etc). The second style, comprising discussion, hints, recognition, involvement and Punishment, is called "Relationship based discipline" (Lewis 7). Coercive discipline according to the above-mentioned authors means the teacher's behaviour is such as "shouting all the time, unfairly blaming students, picking on kids, and being rude, to stimulate student resistance and subsequent misbehaviour" (Lewis, Ramon 2). The importance of classroom discipline arises not only from students' behaviour and learning as outlined above. It depends also on the role of the teacher. Sometimes it is obvious that teachers are not be able to manage students' classroom discipline and it can result in stress. So," classroom discipline is a cohesion of teacher stress" (Lewis 3). Chan (1998), reports on the stressors of over 400 teachers in Hong Kong, claims that student behaviour management rates as the second most significant factor stressing teachers.

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In the article Teachers' Classroom discipline several strategies have been presented for

improving classroom management. They are Punishing (move students' seats, detention), Rewarding (rewards, praises), Involvement in decision-making (decides with the class what should happen to students who misbehave), Hinting, Discussion and Aggression. Another strategy for improving discipline in class is conducting questionnaires between the students. It is an appropriate approach for defining students' opinion about behaviour problems. In each Chinese and Israeli school a random sample of classes at all year levels have been

selected. As a research assistant administered questionnaires to these classes their teachers

completed their questionnaires (Yakov J. Katz 7).

In comparison to all of the mentioned countries the model in China is a little different in that students support use of all strategies except Aggression and Punishment. Based on the conducted research the only strategy to range within a country by more than 2 ranks is Punishment, which ranks as the most common strategy in Australia, and the fourth and fifth most commonly used strategy in Israel and China. The author, Xing Qui generalises that, "there is not more Punishment at the level 7-12." Classroom discipline techniques showed that students in China, compared to those in Australia or Israel, report less usage of Punishment and Aggression and greater use of Discussion and the other positive strategies. At the end of their article "

Teachers' classroom discipline and Student Misbehaviour in Australia, China
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and Israel "(p. 14) the authors recommend that teachers need to work harder to gain quality relationships with difficult students.

What I have drawn from reviewing literature so far is that teachers are able to use

different techniques for enhancing classroom management in their profession. After making a

thorough survey on the above-mentioned issue I would like calmly to express my position. It is harder for the teacher to keep the student focused on any frontal instruction. That's why as with all classroom management practices, the teachers should adapt what they like to their classroom, taking into consideration the age, ethnicity, and personality of the class as a group, and of them as teachers. Much of the disruptive behaviour in the classroom can be alleviated before they become serious discipline problems. Such behaviours can be reduced by the teacher's ability to employ effective organizational practices. These skills are individual for each teacher. The lecturer should become familiar with school policies concerning acceptable student behaviour and disciplinary procedures. Establishing rules to guide the behaviour of students is also important. Once these standards are set up the teachers have to stick to them. I agree with the authors who prefer involving the positive approach in behaviour management. But I also accept that some situations are more complicated than the others and in this case the teachers must take drastic measures against inappropriate students' behaviour.