

## **Exploring Teachers Perceptions about Aggressive Classroom Management at Primary**

### **Level: A Qualitative Case Study**

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### **Abstract**

*It is known that aggressive classroom management style harms students mentally, physically, and emotionally. This study aimed to explore teachers' perceptions of aggressive classroom management at the primary level in Pakistan. The study was conducted while using the qualitative case study approach. Data were collected through self-constructed interviews with four teachers from a private school in Lahore, Pakistan. Teachers did not appreciate aggressive classroom management styles. They emphasized that this style has a vastly negative impact on students and develops negative behavior in students such as fear, denial, anxiety, conflict, disrespect, low self-esteem, and disruptive behaviors. The aggressive classroom management style also affects teacher-student relationships. It is also suggested to adopt a student-centered and friendly management style in the classrooms. Participants also suggested that there should be teaching licenses for those who want to adopt the teaching profession. Teachers should identify the root causes of childhood disruptive behavior, and teachers also need training on emotional management.*

**Keywords:** Aggressive Classroom Management, Case Study, Disruptive Behaviour, Primary Education, Punishment, Teachers Perceptions

### **Introduction**

Classroom management is an essential part of teaching and learning. Without knowing classroom management, teachers cannot teach students in appropriate ways to meet the needs of students, while students should not be passive in the teaching-learning process. Teaching is one of the noblest and most challenging professions, and teachers are considered the backbone for laying the nation's foundation. Teachers can bring immediate change in a nation and a person's life (Romi, 2011).

A successful teacher knows about the teaching and learning process and knows every student's needs. If a teacher does not know about the students' requirements, they will not achieve their goal (Riley, 2009). The teacher-student relationship is one of the most potent elements without which learning will not happen successfully. The core aim of teaching to make students socially beneficial can only happen with a conducive and friendly learning environment (Roorda et al., 2011; Spilt, Koomen & Thijis, 2011).

Students and teacher relationships play an essential part in our social life (Poulou, 2005). As an educator, we observe our students attitude and behavior and those teachers who encounter unfriendly behavior in classrooms find it hard to focus on students learning. The issues of negative attitudes from students create problems for teachers and cannot focus on their studies. Therefore, teachers should control students with their learning activities and acquire control with their style of teaching (Sava, 2002). Most of the students display this behavior due to their psychological issues, family or personal life issues, or maybe it originates from their lack of interest in education, including the possibility of not understanding the teacher (Romi, 2011).

The last few decades have been a source of great concern for the school system due to the aggressive behavior of teachers and students (Hoy, 2006). The most common problem faced by teachers during teaching concerns inappropriate student behavior. The aggressive classroom environment results in poor grades and fewer standardized tests for the students. Additionally, the

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control from the teacher about the aggressive classroom management costs a considerable amount of their time, particularly at the expense of academic instruction.

Aggressive classroom management focuses on reactive rather than preventive procedures and establishes a positive classroom environment in which the teacher focuses on better classroom management styles (Romi, 2011). The powerful preventive components for classroom management include disciplined rules and routines because they establish the overall content of the classroom, mainly, what is expected, what will be enforced, and what methods will be adopted to negotiate with inappropriate behavior (Romi, 2011). By giving students specific and appropriate behavior to engage in, aggressive classroom management can be reduced. In addition, monitoring students' classroom behavior assists the teachers in engaging those students who try to misbehave or try to escalate inappropriate behavior.

This has become a massive contemporary issue, with aggressiveness shown in almost every other child. One potential reason is children's lack of attention from their parents and extreme usage of the internet. Children at younger ages are more connected with the internet today than their parents, resulting in the situation where they are learning more things on their own. They are more involved in screen time activities, which cause stress, anxiety, and aggression. It makes them more frustrated and further widens the gap between children and their parents. Children need attention, and at a younger age, they need more attention. It is one critical aspect of teaching to give children the kind of environment that should be secured, friendly, conducive, and appropriate. If children are provided with proper attention, teachers can effectively enhance their cognitive, affective, and physical capacities. Aggressive behavior shows that their psychological needs are not being fulfilled adequately.

This research examines teachers' perceptions about aggressive classroom management at the primary education level, particularly for a developing country like Pakistan. This research helps to analyze methods that help teachers deal with punishment methods for naughty and disruptive students. The study also assists in understanding the perceptions of teachers regarding aggressive classroom management styles. Lastly, this study helps to understand the impact of aggressive classroom management on teachers, students, and relationships.

### **Literature Review**

Research on classroom management has been mainly focused on highlighting classroom management styles, which mainly focus on identifying individual practices that exist with evidence to support their adoption within classrooms (Riley, 2010). The assumption with this practice is that if the individual practices are effective, then combining these practices into a package will be equally, if not more, effective. Based on these assumptions, textbooks are written, and policies and guidelines are disseminated to school personnel. A significant gap in our current research exists about teachers' perception of controlling aggressive classroom management at the primary level (Sava, 2002). There is a significant need to understand these aspects from the teachers' perspectives to maintain the most effective and efficient classroom management system and identify the effects that teachers and administrators can gain from implementing effective classroom management strategies (Poulou, 2005). A thorough analysis is required to identify the most effective approaches to universal, whole-class classroom management as a set of standardized procedures to provide the field with clear research-based standards.

Teachers' classroom management practices have a significant, positive effect on improving aggressive classroom management behavior (Hoy, 2006). Prior research studies have highlighted some essential terms regarding the current research issue. These terms include but are not limited to students' behavior, classroom management, aggressive classroom management, and the impact of aggressive classroom management. Each of these terms is discussed in this section, highlighting their meaning and the associated characteristics that exist with these terms.

### **Students' Behavior**

A student's behavior within the learning environment is the degree of interest in which students show off their attitude towards classroom tasks and assignments. Newmann, Marks, and Gamoran propose that students need to be given opportunities to "use their minds well," which, in turn, "requires standards for intellectual quality" (1996, p.281). Students' behavior depends on various factors that give space to the teachers to understand the exact deliverables for effectively maintaining the classroom. This also helps mitigate the aggressive classroom management styles, which ultimately

help maintain factors that help teachers for a better classroom environment. These factors include students' attitudes, learning processes, classroom environments, and teachers' attitudes.

### **Classroom management**

Classroom management is a term used by teachers to describe the process of ensuring that classroom lessons run smoothly without disruptive behavior from students and not compromising the delivery of instruction. It also implies the prevention of disruptive behavior pre-emptively and effectively responding to it after it happens. Classroom management is the variety of skills and techniques teachers use to keep students organized, orderly, focused, attentive, on task, and academically productive during class (Pianta, 2006). These skills and techniques are essential for maintaining educational standards, particularly when engaging students at the primary level. Students at this level are experiencing an early stage of learning new skills, and these skills also include classroom management styles. If children learn these skills at this stage, they will deliver their best in the higher classes (Pianta, 2006). In addition, students progressing to the senior classes after already attaining such skills tend to assist teachers in maintaining classroom management and other students' behavior. Teachers will then be able to shift their energies and concentration towards more productive things that would help in increasing students' knowledge.

### **Aggressive classroom management**

The teacher remains the leading authority in the aggressive classroom management style. Students are simply there to learn through aggressiveness and strictness; the focus is on passing tests and assessments. It implies that only the teacher can give students the knowledge and information they need to succeed (Sheets, 1996). This is considered a traditional method of retaining teacher's authority and leadership. As a result, they have more knowledge than students and hold a higher status than students. Classroom management is usually based on methods involving teacher-designed rules and expectations (Romi, 2011). According to this model, teachers know everything in the classroom. They are there to guide and direct their students. Students are nothing more than empty vessels designed to receive knowledge being given by the teacher. They show the students how to find information and how to understand it. The central idea is that the students learn by watching and copying what the teacher does. Teachers may use negative reinforcement to teach their students.

### **Impact of aggressive classroom management**

Aggressiveness is a psychological term and has a direct link with behavior. First and foremost, it affects the teacher-student relationship. The teacher-student relationship is the baseline for practical students' learning. The quality of a student's achievement depends on the teacher-student relationship. A supportive and positive relationship between teachers and students enhances the sense of belonging and encourages students to participate actively in classroom activities.

On the other hand, aggressive classroom management styles can hurt students emotionally, mentally, intellectually, and physically. According to the glossary of education reform engagement in education, student engagement refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to their level of motivation to learn and progress in their education (Romi, 2011). Generally speaking, the concept of student engagement is predicated on the belief that learning improves when students are inquisitive, interested, or inspired and that learning tends to suffer when teachers adopt aggressive management styles; students are bored, dispassionate, disaffected, or otherwise disengaged (Sheets, 1996). This style has a vastly negative impact on students and will develop negative behavior, such as; fear, denial, anxiety, conflict, disrespect, low self-esteem, and disruptive behaviors. This style not only affects teacher-student relationships but also negatively impacts the teachers. Teachers who adopt the aggressive classroom management style hurt themselves too.

### **Research Questions**

This study is based on the following three research questions:

1. What are teachers' perceptions regarding aggressive classroom management styles?
2. How do teachers deal with punishment methods for naughty and disruptive students?
3. What are the impacts of aggressive classroom management on teachers, students, and their relationships?

### **Methodology**

Qualitative research methodology is applied by using a case study research design for this study. The case study approach itself involves the study within the real-life context and setting. According to

Creswell (2007), a case study is a method of inquiry that helps to explore the depth of an event, program, situation, or individual. The existing research involves the perceptions of four teachers about aggressive classroom management styles, particularly in primary education and in the context of a developing country like Pakistan. The research paradigm adopted for this study is social constructivism, as the researchers focus on understanding the world through the participants' perspective. This approach helps develop different meanings to teachers' experiences and their perceptions about aggressive classroom management styles.

In the education sector, the case study approach is a popular choice for researchers. The existing research helps in highlighting different perceptions of teachers who are working with primary-level students. The case study includes a special effort to highlight the issues within the cases and finding relevant solutions to such cases (Stake, 2013). The model framework includes contextual factors and characteristics that cover the participants' traits, classroom experiences, and behavioral reactions of students and teachers.

A purposive sampling technique was used to choose participants who are mainly engaged in teaching at the primary level from four different schools in Lahore. This approach helps researchers to analyze each case study on different attributes of this framework.

The interview guide comprised of 18 open-ended questions with many margins for the respondents to answer the questions. Questions were drafted to gain maximum introspection from the four participants about their perceptions, beliefs, behaviors, experiences, and practices. These were kept centric to the research aim: to explore teachers' perceptions about aggressive classroom management style. The duration of interviews varied, with an average time duration of about 40 minutes. All interviews were recorded, followed by verbatim transcriptions to ensure nothing is missed out while documenting the responses.

Pseudonyms were given to each participant to respect their privacy by hiding their real identity and protecting their confidentiality and anonymity.

## **Findings**

### **Demographic profile of Participant 1**

Nadia is a 35-year-old Pakistani female teacher with more than nine years of experience at different schools in Lahore.

### **Dealing with naughty and disruptive students**

Nadia believed her students are brilliant, and primarily, it is the teacher's task to identify their skills and make them busy. Quoting her:

Students should not be isolated at schools; they should be rather valued. End of the day, it depends on a teacher to give maximum effort to use different teaching techniques to make their lessons interesting for students.

She further elaborated that she has never isolated her students, and she believed she always encouraged their inquisitive nature. She believed that teachers should act like mothers, and being a mother, one gives the best effort for the betterment of children.

Furthermore, she explained that disruptive children and their behavior are connected to their early age experiences, their upbringing, and the environment they are surrounded by. To deal with such behaviors, she believed teachers need to identify the origins of problems or issues that the student may be facing in their personal or academic lives.

### **Teacher's belief about punishment**

Nadia shared that she does not believe in punishment. Although she said that sometimes teachers might need to be strict to manage the classrooms' learning environment, she disapproved of any physical punishment. She added:

Teachers are called spiritual parents. Just like mothers at home sometimes do reprimand children, but that is only to guide them and not just to punish children for the sake of punishment.

She favored some of her colleagues who would show some strictness in their classes to improve students' learning. A teacher could be firm at times, and there are appropriate ways and reasons for doing so. However, some teachers change their tone of voice, and sometimes, they scold children to manage discipline in the class. She suggested that teachers should not be strict because it may demotivate children and disturb them psychologically.

### **Teacher's perception about classroom management style**

Nadia elaborated that she gives much importance to organize her classes. She said that teachers must organize their classes most appropriately, and they must also prepare all related documents. She professionally organizes her documents and files, so whenever her school administration requires any document, she has no problem retrieving it. It saves her time, potential, and energy. She always focuses on the organization and management of the class as per students' needs. She prefers a U-shaped classroom seating arrangement and a separate place for other activities.

She believed learning is a two-way process, which relies on the teacher's skills. Both teachers and students must match each other's frequency, and there has to be a strong connection among them. Quoting her:

A teacher must understand her students' psychology, and students must understand their teacher's demands. Students must obey and listen to their teacher.

According to her, a teacher must display excellent leadership qualities in the classroom, and a child-centered approach is the best recipe. However, getting over-friendly could lead to adverse outcomes. She shared her own early career experiences that she suffered quite a lot because she was too friendly initially in her teaching career. Students would get the undue advantage of being too polite and friendly, and at times, she felt they were taking her for granted. Eventually, she learned to have a balanced attitude regarding classroom discipline and to manage academic affairs. She started using reinforcement according to students' performance. Mostly, she used positive reinforcement but not any form of punishment.

### **Teacher's perceptions about aggressive classroom management**

Nadia does not appreciate aggressive classroom management. According to her, the teacher who is not well prepared for class will adopt this style. Instead, the teacher should vibrate positively to the class, and they must continuously maintain eye contact with all students in their classrooms.

According to Nadia, aggressiveness is a habit being developed over time and not the nature of any teacher. However, teachers who usually opt for aggressiveness in classrooms must take serious note of its frequency and learn to quit this habit. Expressing her views about the presence of this phenomenon, she said:

In the private sector of education, aggressive classroom management is just not appreciated at all. It is highly discouraging. No one wants to hire an aggressive teacher.

She further suggested that teachers who apply aggressive classroom management waste their positive energy in the wrong direction. Teaching is a challenging profession, and children at the primary level need to be taught by heart.

### **Impact of aggressive classroom management on teachers**

Nadia shared that aggressive classroom management hurts teacher's personal and professional life as well. An aggressive teacher will exhaust them, resulting in affecting their personal lives too. She said:

Besides the subject expertise, the teacher should also know about students' psychology. They should have vital emotional intelligence. There are times when we have smiles on our faces, but we may not be happy and struggling with our own life's challenges deep inside.

In her opinion, success cannot be measured in numbers. The real success is the behavioral change in students. She said: "My homework is my strength." Nadia seemed a well-managed, organized, practical, and confident teacher. However, what seems to bother her most is the required standing position of teachers while teaching. She doesn't like that a teacher should be forced to teach while standing all the time in the classroom. In her view, "teachers are also human beings and should not be expected to act like super-beings."

### **Impact of aggressive classroom management on students**

Expressing her views about the impact of aggressive classroom management on students, Nadia said that students usually disrespect and humiliate aggressive teachers, and often they make fun of such teachers. Quoting her words:

Children lose interest in their studies and are scared of aggressive teachers. Sometimes they don't even want to be in that class, and learning is missed.

In her opinion, teaching and learning should happen in a pleasant environment. Aggression could be a killing factor for learning. Giving her examples, she said that even the tone of her voice also motivates her students to learn during the lesson. And if only she is motivated herself, she can



motivate her students. In her opinion, teachers should first work on their personalities. They have to be well-organized, proactive, and well-prepared for their classroom tasks.

#### **Impact of aggressive classroom management on the teacher-student relationship**

Nadia elaborated that aggressive classroom management has a long-term effect on students. It is directly linked with child behavior and psychology. Children start thinking about the aggressive teacher as a devil and want to rid of her. An aggressive management style never allows students to get closed to their teacher. In her opinion, when there is no relationship between a teacher and students, learning will not effectively happen.

#### **Commentary**

Although Nadia accidentally became a teacher as she never planned to become a teacher by choice, her management style has been student-centered. After adopting the teaching profession, she became aware of the sensitivity of this profession. During the interview, she stressed that a teacher must teach a child just like her own child. She strongly felt teaching should be done by heart, and only those people should join this profession who have empathy and love for children. She strongly condemned the aggressive classroom management style. On the contrary, she advocated a friendly management style in the classroom for controlling students. This could lift away any burden from the teacher, and it has the power to create the class an active learning place.

#### **Demographic profile of Participant 2**

Sidra is a 37 years old Pakistani female educator with 11 years of experience in multiple schools of Lahore with diverse environments.

#### **Dealing with naughty and disruptive students**

Sidra shared that her students are brilliant. She believed instructors need to identify and distinguish the strengths of every child and engage them accordingly, and children should never be confined. She strongly felt, "it's all the teachers' exertion and ability to engage kids effectively." She suggested that teachers at the primary level utilize various education procedures and make their lessons appealing. She said that instructors ought to act like mothers and to be a mother, it is vital for teachers to understand their individual needs. She clarified that the behavior of troublesome children depicts their childhood issues and the unfavorable environment they encompass. To deal with these behaviors, she ensured to understand their backgrounds and issues of conflict in their lives, not to judge them or segregate them but to involve them even more, and she thought she was successful because she took care of children's self-esteem.

#### **Teacher's belief about punishment**

Sidra disapproved of the physical punishment given by teachers. She also believed that a good teacher might choose to be a little stricter with children regarding disciplinary issues and marinate the classroom decorum. Although Sidra was against any physical punishment at school, however, she also believed that inappropriate parenting doubles the task of the teachers at schools. She blamed mothers especially for conveniently overlooking the misbehavior of children resulting in children getting more stubborn and pampered, and this, she felt, make the lives of teachers even harder. Ruling out any physical punishment from the list of options, the teacher is left with minimum ways to deal with some children. In her words,

There are times when even the tone of voice acts as a weapon for a teacher to make the children realize that they need to behave and they are being noticed.

Sidra believed a teacher needs to be capable enough to control children and maintain classroom discipline without punishing them physically. "It requires much patience," she said.

#### **Teacher's perception of classroom management style**

Sidra shared that an instructor needs to organize their lesson to provide a strong base for effective learning in the classroom. She also believed that teachers must keep track of all their academic records, including lesson plans and assessment records. According to her,

A professional teacher can always provide upgraded versions of all the courses and cohorts that they teach. It is indeed a significant responsibility that any employer would expect from their teachers in a school.

In one of her roles as the head of a school, she recalled the reactions that she got from her teaching staff. It was hard for her to manage so much time that she could thoroughly read every lesson plan or other academic documents, and most of the time, she would have to rely on teachers to ensure everything is in place and order. "It needed a lot of her time, concentration, and focus," she added.

Sidra inclined towards the students' requirements while planning and maintaining their classroom environment. For example, she preferred a "U-shaped seating arrangement" in her classes and believed everyone in the class could keep eye contact with everyone else. Speaking about the choices of options that a teacher has for classroom management, she said:

Learning is a two-way process, and it also needs two-way preparation. Just like teachers, students also play a nuclear role in classroom-based activities. Therefore, teachers should value students' voices while managing the classroom.

According to Sidra, both the students and the teacher have their specific roles, but teachers have greater responsibility. She shared one of her classroom management experiences where she tried to follow the prescribed autocratic and authoritative style of managing the classroom, which miserably didn't work out, and later she realized it. Eventually, she learned to play a balanced role in meeting the school administration's expectations and customizing it to a decent level for accommodating students' needs and demands as per their capacity and level of understanding. This gave her much confidence and made her able to maximize her teaching and management strengths.

#### **Teacher's perception about aggressive classroom management**

Sidra did not appreciate the forceful classroom administration. According to her, the instructor must allow freedom to the class. Nevertheless, ensuring discipline in the class is also a foremost priority for any teacher. "A forceful action by a teacher may work for the very moment, but it is not a permanent solution", she added. Instead, according to her, what is most appropriate is that teachers identify the reasons why some students are not behaving appropriately. Speaking about the practices of the private sector, Sidra said:

There is no place for teachers who believe in forceful or aggressive classroom management style in the private sector. The chances of being hired with such an attitude are minimum, and even if one is hired, such teachers are very likely to be fired on account of their attitude.

She suggested to teachers who think aggressive classroom management helps that they must try to change their behavior instead of forcefully changing students' behavior.

#### **Impact of aggressive classroom management on teachers**

Sidra shared an aggressive attitude displayed by teachers significantly spoils their reputation. Not only does it hamper their professional lives, but it does harm teachers' personalities too. They become habitual of displaying arrogant and stubborn behavior, which is a lifetime issue. Quoting her:

It is the utmost responsibility of a teacher to possess and sustain the habit of self-control. If you cannot control your anger or aggression, you can never teach this to young children.

Instead of employing any rigid or inflexible practices in the classroom, she proposed that instructors oversee minor issues in class. "End of the day, they are only children and not adults, and we should treat them as children," she said. She also added that the actual achievement affects students' behavior and adds to their knowledge, which needs to be done swiftly. Furthermore, behavioral changes do not occur in a day. It is an evolutionary process, and teachers need to have a higher level of patience.

#### **Impact of aggressive classroom management on students**

Sidra believed aggressive teaching primarily at the primary level is responsible for damaging the personality of students. They stop asking questions, and it also damages their critical thinking. Instead of giving respect to teachers, students avoid teachers with an aggressive attitude. Some of the children make fun of teachers with such an attitude. In some cases, according to Sidra, children are frightened to even go to school if they have not done the homework or any other task assigned by teachers with an aggressive attitude. Ultimately, the most important outcome of the whole education, 'learning,' is badly affected.

In her views, "instruction and learning happen in a conducive environment". Hostility is the enemy of learning, and aggression by a teacher is not acceptable. She believed the teacher's behavior play a vital role in connecting the students with the subject and with the school and with aggressive behavior, this connection weakens the students' ties with the education process, and in some instances, students even drop out because of not being treated fairly and in a friendly environment.

Sidra thought that teachers could control students with their tone of voice and even with how they look at those students who are creating any disturbance in their classrooms.

### **Impact of aggressive classroom management on the teacher-student relationship**

Sidra expounded that forceful classroom administration has a long-term impact on the relationship between students and teachers. In her views, this is straightforwardly connected with child behavior, not only at the primary level but also when children are promoted to a higher level of education. She said:

Children lose the element of love and affection towards their teacher, and instead, they consider the instructor with aggressive behavior as a demon.

In her conclusion, she highlighted that effective learning would never happen in the classroom when there is no cordial relationship between an instructor and learners. The primary responsibility in this regard, according to her, remains under the aegis of the teacher, who must provide students with a positive response at all times. She also believed unrealistic homework and excessive home tasks could also be one form of aggressive behavior of a teacher, which she believed is unfair with students, especially at the primary level of education.

### **Commentary**

Sidra has enjoyed various positions and roles in multiple private schools in Lahore. Her experiences have taught her to align her teaching practices and strategies under the school's policy; however, she seemed to have learned to follow a balanced line of action when dealing with students. She firmly believed that all teachers should have standardized practices in a school, and it is also a significant responsibility of the school management to give an appropriate vision to its teaching staff. The school rules and policy act as the guideline for teachers, but harsh and unfriendly behavior of teachers undermine students' interest in learning. She believed that a strict management style might help a teacher achieve the school goals, but it will negatively impact the student's personality and reputation, which will not result in a win-win situation. She experienced a teaching role in which the teacher-centered management style prevailed and reflected on that experience by stressing that teachers avoid aggressive classroom behavior.

### **Demographic profile of Participant 3**

Fatima is a 30-year-old Pakistani female teacher with more than five years of teaching experience at different schools in Lahore.

### **Dealing with naughty and disruptive students**

Fatima believed that a teacher needs to keep a balanced frame of mind. For example, when a teacher is bound with no other choice but to punish students, and at times, it is more important for the teacher first to identify the root causes and then guide students accordingly. She further explained that disruptive children and their subsequent behavior depend on their upbringing, personal experiences, and the environment they are surrounded by. She said:

I don't have a fixed rule, whether to punish children or not. It depends on the situation and the type of issue under discussion. What is more important is to sort the problem and teach the student to avoid it in the future.

Fatima suggested that a teacher should not lose their peace of mind and should not behave abruptly. She claimed she has never been unfair with her students, and she has never isolated any of them because of any minor disruptions in the classroom. She also mentioned one strategy that she followed by separating students and dispersing the group of students if she noticed any disruptive activity. She believed changing students' seats in the classroom serves the purpose most of the time.

### **Teacher's belief about punishment**

Fatima firmly believed that punishing a student is an option for the teacher, but it is not the only option. She suggested that teachers must try out remaining options first and only if they think the punishment is the only option left, they should do it.

She also thought the primary purpose must not be ignored. In her words,

Punishment is a method of deterring negative behavior passed down through generations, and teachers should opt for it only if they think it is unavoidable.

### **Teacher's perception about classroom management style**

Fatima said that a teacher should be polite to the students, but the teacher also has to ensure that the lesson objectives are fully met. She believed a significant role that the teacher plays is that of a guide. "It is the guidance that could rectify negative behavior of students in classes," she said. She also believed that if punishment is one option, rewards should also be another option for teachers. Quoting her:



My definition of a successful teacher can get all objectives of the course sorted. If you punish someone for being lazy or disruptive, you must also reward those who work hard and remain attentive in the classes.

Fatima believed a pleasant classroom environment was always thriving, and there needs a culture of teambuilding in the classes, where the teacher also plays their role as part of the team. Giving too much homework or taking surprise quizzes or tests with excessive home tasks will not help in sustaining this team culture. Teachers need to work along with students instead of always being a threat to them.

She also believed that effective teachers always have obedient students who listen to their teachers and never make them angry or disappointed.

#### **Teacher's perception about aggressive classroom management**

Fatima shared that she usually did not appreciate aggressive classroom management. In her view, the role of the teacher is immense in creating the personality of their students. "An aggressive classroom management will turn students more stubborn", she said.

Teacher plays a vital role in academic achievements of students. She also related the type of classroom management in building the attitude of students. In her own words:

A teacher should be a role model for students, and always having an aggressive classroom-style may hamper their attitude permanently. Furthermore, it can result in students always do their work only when they are aggressively commanded.

Fatima suggested that teachers who adopt this style waste their positive energy in the wrong direction, and according to her, these are teachers who join the teaching profession to earn their bread.

#### **Impact of aggressive classroom management on the teacher-student relationship**

Fatima elaborated that aggressive classroom management has a long-term effect on students. For example, students tend to stay far from their teachers in an aggressive management style and hesitate to communicate with the teachers frequently.

In her opinion, when there is no relationship between teachers and students, they cannot learn effectively. Of course, a teacher has daily meetings with students, and this rendezvous is unavoidable. But, she said, "Students will never be comfortable with a teacher who has mood swings or who is fond of aggressive classroom management". Her definition of a successful teacher implies how well the teacher is prepared for an interactive lecture where students do not feel threatened to ask questions, and this is only possible when both parties enjoy a comfortable relationship.

#### **Commentary**

Fatima is a firm believer in identifying the root cause of any problem, and she claimed that she has always manifested this in all her teaching experiences in multiple schools. She is a believer in practicing 'student-centered lessons. According to her, it is not inappropriate to blame students for disruptive behavior unless the teacher makes an effort to analyze the child's behavior. She also believed that punishment is not compulsory, but sometimes teachers opt for it, and the teacher's intention must be focused on the betterment of students. She encouraged teachers to stay polite and friendly with students to get the best out of them.

#### **Demographic profile of Participant 4**

Mehak is a 29 years old Pakistani female teacher based in Lahore, with ten years of teaching experience at different schools in Lahore.

#### **Dealing with naughty and disruptive students**

Mehak believed her students are more intelligent, and over the years, she has witnessed kids getting more intelligent than before. In her opinion, teachers must identify the hidden potential of students to engage them in classrooms. "Ignoring the students' talent and isolating them can be the biggest mistake of a teacher", she added. Instead, she proposed that teachers use multiple ways and methods of teaching to avoid disruptions in the classrooms.

Discussing the ways a teacher could handle disruptions, she said:

Students will only create nuisance in the classrooms if they are fed up with learning or concentrating, and this should be the biggest challenge a teacher could face.

Mehak further explained that children involved in any destructive activity or disruptions in the classrooms must not be ignored. "The sooner the teacher deals with the child, the better it is.", she stated. She also pointed to children's environment and personal experiences at their homes to be mainly responsible for their behavior at school.

### **Teacher's belief about punishment**

Mehak firmly shared that she did not believe in punishments and that she has never done it. At times, she said she becomes strict with students and only manages the learning environment. She was a firm opposer of corporal punishment. Yet, she viewed those teachers who happen to do it and must have reached 'the peak of their tolerance level.' Commenting further, she added:

Parents at home sometimes punish their children too, and good teachers should also perceive their role as if they are parenting these children. Still, instead of physically punishing them, teachers should show their rigor to improve students' learning.

Sharing her experiences, Mehak said, she changes the topic sometimes and changes the directions of disruptive children. Her voice tone helped her in getting the attention of her students as well.

### **Teacher's perception about classroom management style**

Mehak explained that she always considered it a top priority to organize her lectures. Lesson plans and supportive documents are her priority while preparing her lessons. She stressed school administration and principals to ensure all teachers get their documents ready, and "these should be auditable," she added. Answering her preferences of the classroom furniture layout and seating arrangements, she said:

I do not believe in a single style of seating arrangement. It depends on the activity, and a change in seating arrangement also becomes helpful in positively changing the mood of students.

She suggested that teachers follow global practices to keep upgrading their views about classroom management styles.

"Learning is a two-way process, but the side that teachers hold becomes fundamental in upskilling this process," Mehak said. She also believed that the teacher should adjust and re-adjust their ways of managing classrooms with the students' nature. The teacher must understand the psychology of students, and students must understand the teacher's expectations. She advocated the servant leadership style of management in classrooms. She also emphasized that teachers should use positive reinforcement more often to motivate students.

### **Teacher's perception about aggressive classroom management**

Mehak disagreed with aggressive classroom management. In her view,

Teachers who practice aggression in classrooms need training. Such incidences should be closely monitored by the school administration as these are indicators of the critical gaps and training needs assessment for teachers.

In her perspective, students at the primary level of education need empathy, love, and acceptance, and aggressive behavior in the classroom could only deteriorate the scenario. She suggested a trained teacher will get the same purpose served only with how she would gaze at students. "Our body language greatly helps us controlling the kids." Aggression, according to her, is not a strength but a sign of weakness for teachers.

Mehak also added that the validity of this argument is regardless of public or private schools. It is a deadly habit and must not be encouraged, whether the school is publicly owned or privately run.

### **Impact of aggressive classroom management on teachers**

Mehak viewed classroom management's aggressive style as the unhealthiest and inappropriate practice a teacher may do. She thought teachers who kept practicing such behavior develop a negative attitude, which affects them professionally and personally. They tend to spoil their relationships as well. She added:

Teachers are human beings, and just like normal human beings, if we keep on doing something regularly, this will become our habit, and habits are displayed everywhere, at school and work.

She also suggested that the school administration train teachers on their emotional management. She emphasized that a teacher can only attain success in the classrooms if they never lose their temper. In her views, success cannot be measured by numbers, and real success is evident in the positive change in students' behavior. Finally, she reiterated that teachers should not practice power or authority upon young children.

### **Impact of aggressive classroom management on students**

Mehak strongly thought that students despise and humiliate aggressive teachers and often make fun of such teachers, and eventually, they lose interest in their studies. Aggressive classroom management is responsible for creating fear among students, and as a result, children lose their self-confidence. She said:

It may take years for a young child to develop confidence, and at the same time, even a good student can lose confidence just because one of the teachers at school unnecessarily deploys this aggressive management.

She shared, "I watched a movie and remembered a scene from the film where the teacher whistled and ran around the school at the time of the breaks to ensure children are safe. The memory of this scene is still vivid. It appealed to my emotional side."

To Mehak, teaching required dedication and hard work, and only those who feel they have what it takes should opt for this profession.

### **Impact of aggressive classroom management on the teacher-student relationship**

Mehak clearly expressed that aggressive classroom management has a long-term impact on students. Students in the early years in the primary level of education are volatile, and aggression can only make them rigid, inflexible, bored, or even rebellious.

According to her, students will dislike the teacher who practices aggression but will start disliking the subject, and in some instances, children may start disliking the school, which must be a solid reason to ponder by the management. Sharing her personal belief and opinion, she said:

As adults, when we look back and try to remember teachers who played an important role in building our lives, we think of those teachers who listened to us, took care of us, and showed their genuine concern about our academic progress.

### **Commentary**

Mehak believed in caring about children at the primary level. She seemed very sensitive about handling their issues, and she is a strong advocate of a student-centered approach to be followed by all teachers. She reflected on her personal experiences and memories of being kindly treated by her teachers back when she was at the primary education level. She also believed that teachers must be trained not only on teaching skills but also on emotional and anger management. She felt exercising power and authority on students was an unethical act on the teachers' part. She also believed the teacher and the whole school are responsible for taking care of children and giving them the best educational environment.

### **Discussion**

The participating teachers of this research study did not adopt the teaching profession intentionally and by choice. All of them joined this field accidentally. One participant said that she wanted to join the national airline company, but after not getting permission from her family, she joined the teaching field just because of the reduced duty hours. She is inexperienced and even does not know how to teach and how to control the class professionally. She tried to explain how she developed her teaching practices merely through her experiences. She added that a few issues irritate her in her teaching career, and one of them is the "prohibition of usage of teacher's chair during teaching." The participant said that there was no formal institution that gives teaching licenses to teachers. She added:

Just like we have driving licenses in our country, we must introduce teaching licenses as well. This way, we can discourage the entry of accidental teachers.

Teaching is a two-way process. The teacher has to focus on learning. Everything depends on the teacher and their skills. They must not say that teachers have to adopt one of these management styles, but the teachers have to tune their students up to them to understand teachers' expectations.

A teacher must prefer an encouraging leadership style and management practices that lead towards the child-centered approach. In starting her career, one of the participants shared that she did not have enough knowledge about classroom management, so she suffered a lot during her early career. At some places, she was too strict, and at some, she was too lenient. Eventually, she started using primarily positive reinforcement instead of punishment. She set definite rules for those who follow these to get the benefit for it. It was interesting that this participant initiated her school to apply her learned knowledge and strategies.

The other three participants slightly agreed with the notion of punishment. They use to isolate their disruptive and naughty students but only for maintaining their classroom discipline. The everyday things in all four participants were none of them in the teaching field by choice but by chance.

As discussed in the literature, aggressive classroom management focuses on reactive rather than preventive procedures, and therefore teachers prefer to have better classroom management styles (Romi, 2011). The overall content of the classroom is established through discipline rules and routines because what is expected will be enforced (Romi, 2011).

Within various management styles, importance needs to be placed on the positive teacher-student relationship, as this relationship directly affects students' academic achievement and behavior. A positive relationship between teachers and students is the fundamental aspect of quality teaching and student learning which only happens in social classes. Teachers also need to give attention to understand their students' individual needs. For example, a teacher must understand that there are significant differences in aggressiveness and discipline.

Both teachers and parents have a pivotal role in understanding children's psychology, and effective parenting is also required to discourage children from disruptive behavior. The experiences and environments that children share at home cannot be ignored while assessing their behaviors at school.

It is suggested that a teaching license should be compulsory for all teachers. Classroom management subjects should be a part of teachers' training programs, and teachers certainly need training on managing stress, anxiety, anger, and aggression. There should be a proper check and balance system to check teaching and classroom management styles, and the school administration has to play a vital role in it.

### **Limitations and Recommendations**

Based on the findings from the four cases, the following are some of the limitations that would help the researchers to explore future research areas:

- There is a need to explore the current findings by collecting data from different educational institutes: the public and private sectors.
- The themes mentioned in the current research are limited to some extent. More themes should be explored by analyzing data from the different perspectives of the teachers.
- The current research is limited to the primary education level; it is required to deepen the understanding of secondary and higher-level education.
- The data collected was limited to one context geographically, and there is a need to explore the current research area in different contexts and settings.
- It is recommended to analyze the current research area using quantitative research designs to generate more generalizable findings.

In light of the findings from the four face-to-face interviews with the teachers of different schools, the following recommendations for policy and practice are suggested:

- More focus on the teachers is required to understand the aggressive classroom management styles, their reasons, and their impact.
- Counseling sessions should be arranged for the students and parents to prevent disruptive behaviors at schools.
- Training needs to be provided to teachers who have anger and aggression issues.
- Top reasons must be found to mitigate the aggressive behavior of students that affect the student-teacher relationship.
- Licenses should be awarded to those who seriously wish to take up teaching as their profession.
- The school administration needs to closely monitor teaching practices and performance of teachers, specifically in their approaches towards classroom management

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