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Assessing Classroom Management Skills of University Teachers: A Case of University of Malakand

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Abstract

This descriptive study analyzed classroom management skills and how it has been affected by some selected demographic variables. The researchers used a quantitative research design to explore the problem. By using a stratified random sampling method 120 university teachers were selected from nine faculties of the University of Malakand. A self-constructed questionnaire consisting of 41 Likert-type items was validated through a panel of experts and was used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument focused on three major components of classroom management skills that are content management, covenant management, and conduct management. The reliability of the instrument was established through Cronbach's alpha value which was found to be .86. The analyses of data revealed that university teachers had above-average levels of observance towards classroom management skills. Findings revealed that teachers' age, designation, and experience had a significant effect on their perceptions of classroom management skills. The results also revealed that teachers' gender, current post of service, and academic and professional qualification had no significant effect on their perceptions of classroom management skills. The study recommended that university administration with the collaboration of the Higher Education Commission may arrange in-service training opportunities to enhance their classroom management skills. For this purpose, the university may request the National Academy for Higher Education to arrange both short and long training sessions for the fresh and experienced faculty to improve their skills related to classroom management.

Keywords: Classroom Management Skills, Content Management, Covenant Management, Conduct Management, University Teachers

Introduction

Education is responsible for bringing positive change in the behavior of the students through developing their hidden abilities, capabilities, skills, knowledge, and habits. In developing and polishing all the above-mentioned characteristics, the teacher's role is very important. Teachers' responsibilities are not only to teach in the classroom but also to develop students' interpersonal, social, and creative skills. Therefore, the quality of instruction is directly related to the quality of teachers. Reid and Ali (2020) argued that quality teachers will lead to quality teaching which may lead to quality learning in the classroom. One of the major characteristics of the teaching-learning process is managing the classroom to ensure the maximum learning of the students. Classroom management is the number one component that affects the teaching-learning process and has intensively been studied (Leadwood, 2019). School discipline issues including students' disruptive and violent behavior have adverse effects on teachers' well-being, stress, and burnout. There is much research evidence that shows that managing a classroom and students' behavior is a consistent challenge for the competencies of new teachers (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

Everton and Weinstein (2006) have broadly defined classroom management as any action taken by a teacher to create a supportive and facilitative learning environment that increases students' academic achievement and their social-emotional learning. Brophy (2006: 79) has comprehensively defined classroom management as "classroom management refers to actions taken to create and maintain a learning environment conducive to successful instructions, (arranging the physical

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environment, establishing the rules and procedures, maintaining students' attention towards lessons and engagement in academics activities)". Classroom management is related to the full or overall development (which is social, emotional, and cognitive) of students and is not only related to student academic success (Everson & Weinstein, 2011). Classroom management is also connected with students' inner discipline. Due to this reason, students do not follow enforced discipline because they have to be obliged in this way in the classroom. In this way, students are given a chance to co-decide with the teachers to formulate classroom rules and be ready for the consequences of not following the rules that they have developed with their teachers (Barns & Preston, 2010).

Along with other instructional skills, teachers must grasp classroom management skills to ensure an effective teaching-learning process. Classroom management is a continuous process that compels a teacher to make effective decisions in varying situations such as what to teach to students, how to teach them effectively, where and to whom the students should sit down, how to ensure students' active motivation and participation in instruction, which and when audio-visual aids to be used, how to deal effectively with students' misbehavior etc. (Emmer & Gerwels, 2005). Teachers' self-efficacy, academic qualification, pedagogical training, and teaching experience are other variables that may affect their classroom management skills and practices. The results of previous studies (Brouwer & Tomic, 2000; Johansen *et al.,* 2011; Kaufman & Moss, 2010) revealed that teachers spend much time managing the classroom; therefore, they may be provided training in this area.

Wubbels (2011) suggested that for effective classroom management, a teacher must be a good leader as through his leadership qualities he influences the behavior of the students for the achievement of instructional goals. Similarly, a teacher must have a sense of humor because, through this valuable technique, he can make the classroom atmosphere alive. The author argued that if a teacher is equipped with leadership skills then he can manage the classroom for an improved teaching-learning process. Further, an educator leader can connect the students in a vibrant learning environment that helps them to be honest, moral, and social in their practical lives. Morally and socially developed individuals always obey their teachers and can make shine their lives.

The teacher of today must present himself as more flexible (Saban, 2009), foster respectful and positive relationships with their students (Ho & Lin, 2016) try to meet their needs (Evertson & Weinstein, 2011), and give them a voice and choice in formulating classroom rules (Barns & Preston, 2010). Jakobsen et al. (2002) suggested that both teachers and students should cooperate in creating a positive and supportive classroom climate and developing fair and respectful relationships. Jones and Jones (2015) suggested that teachers should provide such congenial conditions in the classroom through which development of self-esteem and self-control may be developed among the students.

To improve teachers' capacity to manage classrooms effectively and efficiently, the focus should be given to teachers' preparation and in-service professional development programs. Particularly novice teachers face a lot of problems when they manage the classroom. On the contrary to this, studies revealed that experienced teachers have classroom management skills. However, such studies are less in numbers which indicates that teachers learn over time how to manage classrooms efficiently and effectively. Those teachers, who did not learn classroom management skills, simply have left their profession (Baker, 2005).

Fowler and Sarapli (2010) argued that classroom management is the single most important factor that affects the teaching-learning process. It is worth mentioning that classroom management skills are notably important to those who have not yet started their career in the field of education. Effective classroom management is the most important factor in the teaching-learning process which in turn leads to positive outcomes in terms of students' academic achievement (Domike et al., 2017). Oliver and Reschly (2010) stated that classroom management plays a significant role in establishing positive and constructive interactions between teachers and students that support successful classroom environments for the teaching-learning process. Cothran et al. (2019) stated that classroom management is an effective teaching strategy concern for most of the teachers as well as for students while providing important teaching approaches. Kayikci (2009) stated that the majority of discipline problems in the classroom occur because of the incompetence of teachers in classroom management skills.

Many studies have found that teachers' classroom management skills and behavior management significantly influence the persistence of new teachers in teaching careers (Ingersoll &

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Smith, 2003). It is a fact that novice teachers face problems while handling disruption in the classroom and managing the behavior of the students (Browers & Tomic, 2000). Those teachers who do not possess effective skills in managing students' behavior and handling discipline problems efficiently are usually in the grip of stress and burnout problems (Browers & Tomic, 2000). Those teachers who are experienced and well-qualified tend to teach effectively and believe that they have full classroom control; while on the other hand, less experienced teachers face problems during their instruction and believe in sharing responsibilities between teacher and students in classroom control (Unal & Unal, 2012).

Previous studies have been conducted on the relationship between classroom management and other variables. Few studies have investigated the relationship between classroom management and creativity (Azimifar, & Abedini, 2018; Mirzaee, & Rahimi, 2017), classroom management skills and students' academic achievement (Adeyemo, 2012; Nisar, Khan & Khan, 2019), classroom management and its association with students' behavior (Gage *et al.,* 2018). Other studies have found the effect of classroom management on students' motivation (Adedigba, & Sulaiman, 2020) and students' engagement (Parker, 2017). Unal and Unal (2012) concluded that there is a significant difference between the perceptions of more and less experienced teachers regarding behavioral and instructional management subscales of classroom management.

Classroom management has remained a significant contributor to students' learning and is significantly associated with students' inner discipline (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). Therefore, this issue must be addressed at all levels of education. Many studies related to classroom management have been conducted at the school level but at the college and university level, the issue has not been adequately addressed. Moreover, the results of these studies could not apply to higher education levels. Therefore, to fill this gap the current study investigated the perceptions of university teachers towards classroom management skills and how teachers' gender, age, teaching experience, and academic and professional qualification affect their classroom management skills.

Statement of the Problem

Classroom management consists of all actions and strategies adopted by teachers to manage the classroom to create and maintain a safe and supportive learning environment in the classroom to ensure the maximum learning of the students. For this purpose, the teacher will have to develop a behavioral protocol to manage the behavior of the students during the teaching-learning process. They will have to establish routines, schedules, and procedures and adopt time management strategies during the teaching-learning process. They will have to manage space, materials, and the movement of people and effectively execute the lesson plan in the classroom. They will have to make decisions about what to teach, how to teach, and how to assess whether actual learning is taking place. So that they must be able to manage their classroom effectively and efficiently. The present study aims to analyze the perceptions of university teachers toward classroom management and how some selected demographic variables affect their perceptions of classroom management skills.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Many factors affect the teaching-learning process at school. Classroom management is the number one factor that affects the teaching-learning process in the classroom (Leithwood et al. 2019). Therefore, classroom management is essential for the smooth running of the teaching-learning process. Well well-managed and disciplined classroom leads to the maximum learning of the students (Ahmad et al. 201). Maintaining good management in the classroom is one of the most difficult tasks faced by inexperienced and novice teachers (Nisar et al. 2019). Effective classroom management involves teachers being prepared to teach lessons, organizing activities, motivating students, providing and maintaining proper and effective discipline, making students feel comfortable, facilitating students, building student self-esteem, and designing productive and interesting lesson plans (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). Besides that content management which may include designing of classroom environment and seating arrangement, conduct management (behavior of teachers and students), and covenant management (building warmth and trustworthy relationship between teachers and students) are essential components of classroom management that are not only learned but learned by daily practice (Brophy, 2006). Therefore, this study is based on various theoretical aspects proposed by various experts in the field of classroom management skills. The conceptual framework of the study included the three very important components of classroom management i.e. content management, conduct management, and covenant management, which are essential for a teacher

whether he is teaching at the school level or college at the university level. Therefore, the current study aims to assess classroom management skills at the university level.

Objectives of the Study

This study was based on the following objectives:

1. To analyze the perceptions of university teachers toward classroom management skills
2. To find out the effect of gender, age, experience, academic qualification, and professional qualification on perceptions of teachers towards classroom management skills.

Research Questions

The study focused on investigating the following research questions:

1. How do university teachers perceive classroom management skills?
2. Whether gender, age, teaching experience, academic qualification, and professional qualification affect perceptions of university teachers toward classroom management skills?

Research Methodology

This study adopted the quantitative research approach. A descriptive (survey) design was used for the collection and analysis of data. The population of the study consisted of all teachers (259) working in the University of Malakand during the academic session 2022-23. By using Raosoft online sample size calculator 120 teachers were selected as the sample of the study at a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error. The researchers constructed a questionnaire to assess the perceptions of university teachers towards classroom management skills based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" through a review of related literature. The questionnaire covered three important components of classroom management i.e. content, covenant, and conduct management. The questionnaire consisted of 41 items which were further divided into three groups "content management" "behavior management" and "covenant management". The content management consisted of 14 items, behavioral management consisted of 16 items and covenant management consisted of 11 items. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. In the first part, the respondents were asked to provide information about their demography which included gender, age, and teaching experience in years, academic qualification, and professional qualification. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of classroom management skills in which the respondents were asked to select the most appropriate choice among the five options. The questionnaire was validated through a panel of experts who consisted of professors and associate professors who had long teaching experience in the subject of education. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated through the inter-item consistency items method and the values of Cronbach's alpha for the content, conduct, and covenant management components were found to be .886, .889, and .883 respectively. The reliability of the entire questionnaire was found to be .860 which was found to be greater than that of the threshold value .70 (Mills & Gay, 2019).

Data Analysis and Findings

Table 01

Demographic Analysis of Sample Teachers

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	80	66.67
	Female	40	33.33
Age	Greater than 30 Years	91	75.83
	Less than 30 Years	29	24.17
Teaching Experience	Less than a Year	25	20.83
	1-5 Years	30	25.00
	6-10 Years	45	37.5
	Greater than 10 Years	20	16.67
Academic Qualification	MA/MSc	25	20.83
	MS/MPhil	47	39.17
	PhD	58	48.33
Professional Qualification	B. Ed	38	31.67
	M. Ed	40	33.33

The above table depicts the results of a demographic sample profile of university teachers. Among 120 sample teachers, 66.67% were male and 33.33% were female; 75.83% of teachers' age was found to be greater than 30 years while 24.17% of teachers' age was found to be less than 30 years; 20.83% of teachers had less than a year teaching experience, 25% had 1-5 years of teaching

experience, 37.5% teachers had 6-10 years of teaching experience and 16.67% teachers had greater than 10 years of teaching experience; 20.83% teachers had master degree holders, 39.17% had M. Phil degree holders and 48.33% had PhD degrees; 31.67% teachers had B. Ed degree holders and 33.33% of teachers had M. Ed degree holders.

Table 02

Perceptions of University Teachers of Classroom Management Skills (content, conduct, and Covenant Management)

Components of Classroom Management	Mean	SD	Rank
Content Management	4.16	.450	1
Conduct (Behavior Management)	3.42	.434	3
Covenant Management	4.06	.521	2
Overall Classroom Management Skills	3.88	.741	

The above table 02 revealed that university teachers have above-average levels of observance for three components of classroom management skills. The results revealed that university teachers know about content and methodology (content management) followed by how to manage a trustworthy relationship with their students (covenant management) and followed by how to manage students' behavior and their behavior in the classroom (conduct or behavior management).

Table 03

Effect of the Perceptions of university teachers' gender on classroom management skills (content, conduct, and covenant management)

Classroom Management Skills	Teachers' Gender	n	M	SD	Std. Error Mean	t	p
Content Management	Male	80	4.07	.435	.053	.624	.534
	Female	40	3.98	.535	.148		
Conduct Management	Male	80	3.42	.444	.054	.236	.814
	Female	40	3.38	.395	.109		
Covenant Management	Male	80	4.10	.481	.058	1.514	.134
	Female	40	3.86	.682	.189		
Overall Classroom Management	Male	80	3.87	.390	.048	1.026	.308
	Female	40	3.74	.504	.139		

The above table revealed the results of the perceptions of teachers based on their gender and their classroom management skills. For this purpose independent samples t-test was applied. The values of t statistics for all the components (*content, conduct, and covenant management*) of classroom management skills were found to be greater than that of the value of level of significance (p>.05), therefore, no significant effect of gender was found on classroom management skills (*content, conduct, and covenant management*).

Table 04

The effect of age on content management, behavior management, covenant management, and overall classroom management perceived by teachers

Categories of teachers based on age	Categories of Classroom Management	n	M	SD	Std. Error Mean	t	p
Less than 30 years	Content Management	38	3.91	.400	.091	1.651	.103
Greater than 30 years		82	4.10	.458	.059		
Less than 30 years	Conduct Management	38	3.24	.412	.094	1.977	.052
Greater than 30 years		82	3.46	.430	.055		
Less than 30 years	Covenant Management	38	3.89	.522	.119	1.656	.102
Greater than 30 years		82	4.11	.513	.065		
Less than 30 years	Overall Classroom Management	38	3.68	.391	.089	1.872	.075
Greater than 30 years		82	3.90	.404	.052		

The above table revealed the results of the perceptions of teachers based on their age and their classroom management skills. For this purpose independent samples t-test was applied. The values of t statistics for all the components of classroom management skills were found to be greater than that of the value of the level of significance (p>.05), therefore, no significant effect of age was found on classroom management skills (*content, conduct, and covenant management*).

Table 05

The effect of teaching experience on content management, behavior management, covenant management, and classroom management perceived by teachers

Categories of Classroom Management	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	p
Content Management					
Between Groups	1.491	4	1.491		
Within Groups	14.336	116	14.336	1.924	.115
Total	15.827	120			
Conduct Management					
Between Groups	.531	4	.133		
Within Groups	14.368	116	.192	.693	.599
Total	14.899	120			
Covenant Management					
Between Groups	3.583	4	.896		
Within Groups	17.904	116	.239	3.752	.008
Total	21.487	120			
Overall Classroom Management					
Between Groups	1.617	4	.404		
Within Groups	11.506	116	.155	2.600	.043
Total	13.123	120			

The above table revealed the results of the perceptions of teachers based on their teaching experience and their classroom management skills. For this purpose, One-way ANOVA was applied. The values of F statistics for content and conduct management of classroom management skills were found to be greater than that of the value of the level of significance ($p > .05$), therefore, no significant effect of teaching experience was found on classroom management skills (***content and conduct management***). On the other hand, the values of F statistics for covenant management and overall classroom management skills were found to be less than that of the value of the level of significance ($p < .05$), therefore, a significant effect of teaching experience was found on classroom management skills.

Table 06

Effect of Academic Qualification on content management, behavior management, covenant management, and overall classroom management perceived by Teachers

Categories of Classroom Management	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	p
Content Management					
Between Groups	.661	3	.220		
Within Groups	15.166	75	.202	1.090	.359
Total	15.827	78			
Conduct Management					
Between Groups	.601	3	.320		
Within Groups	13.146	75	.212	1.085	.309
Total	14.813	78			
Covenant Management					
Between Groups	.609	3	.203		
Within Groups	20.879	76	.275	.738	.532
Total	21.487	79			
Overall Classroom Management					
Between Groups	.255	3	.085		
Within Groups	12.869	75	.172	.495	.687
Total	13.123	78			

The above table revealed the results of the perceptions of teachers based on their academic qualification and their classroom management skills. For this purpose, One-way ANOVA was applied. The values of F statistics for content, conduct, covenant, and overall classroom management skills were found to be greater than that of the value of the level of significance ($p > .05$), therefore, no significant effect on the academic qualification of teachers was found on their classroom management skills (***content, conduct, covenant, and overall classroom management skills***).

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Table 07
The effect of professional qualification on content management, behavior management, covenant management, and overall classroom management perceived by teachers

Categories of Professional Qualification of Teachers	Categories of Classroom Management	n	M	SD	Std. Error Mean	t	p
B. Ed	*Content Management*	32	3.95	.488	.122	.116	.909
M. Ed		20	3.98	.646	.204		
B. Ed	*Conduct Management*	32	3.48	.387	.096	.874	.390
M. Ed		20	3.30	.646	.195		
B. Ed	*Covenant Management*	32	4.03	.471	.117	1.355	.188
M. Ed		20	3.71	.771	.232		
B. Ed	*Overall Classroom*	32	3.82	.409	.102	.536	.597
M. Ed	*Management Skills*	20	3.71	.649	.205		

The above table revealed the results of the perceptions of teachers based on their professional qualification and their classroom management skills. For this purpose independent samples t-test was applied. The values of t statistics for all the components (***content, conduct, covenant, and classroom management skills***) of classroom management skills were found to be greater than that of the value of the level of significance ($p > .05$), therefore, no significant effect of professional qualification of teachers was found on classroom management skills (***content, conduct and covenant management***).

Discussion

The study found that teachers have positive perceptions of classroom management skills. They perceived that they knew what to teach and how to teach (content management). They also perceived that they strive to manage their behavior and students' behavior (conduct management) in the classroom to run the teaching-learning process smoothly. Similarly, they also believed that they foster a respectful environment in the classroom to establish a strong relationship with their students to ensure their maximum learning (covenant management). The study also found that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of male and female teachers regarding classroom management skills. Teachers' age has no significant effect on their classroom management skills. The study found that teachers' teaching experience has a significant effect on their classroom management skills. The more experienced teachers have good time management skills as compared to less experienced teachers. Both academic and professional qualifications of teachers have no significant effect on their time management skills.

Classroom management is the number one factor that affects the learning of the students in the classroom (Leithwood, 2019). Many research studies have investigated the issue at different levels and examined its relationship with other variables (Oktan & Çaganaga, 2015). Similarly, the issue has also been explored based on teachers' gender but the results were mixed. No clear evidence has been found on whether male teachers manage classrooms well or their counterparts (Ahmad et al., 2018). The current study also testified to the findings of these previous studies.

Previous research studies have found no significant difference between male and female teachers regarding classroom management skills and competencies (Ilhan, 2011; Rahimi & Asadollahi, 2012). The study by Matin and Yin (1997) concluded that male teachers were found to be more rigid, authoritarian, controlled behavior, aggressive, and assertive behavior in the classroom than their female counterparts. On the contrary, Nejati, Hassani, and Sahrapour (2014) proclaimed that male teachers have better student engagement skills while female teachers are better in instructional strategies. The reason behind these mixed types of results might be the cultural differences and differences in classroom environment. The gender roles vary from society to society and societal responses also vary as per cultures.

The results of previous studies revealed that an increase in age and teaching experience has positively affected the attitudes of teachers towards controlling the dimension of classroom management (Martin & Shoho, 2000). More aged and experienced teachers have greater control in the classroom than young and less experienced teachers. The results of this study also verified the findings of the previous studies. Other studies have found a significant effect of academic qualification, work motivation, and work experience on the performance of teachers regarding classroom management (Kristian & Lian, 2019). The results of the study conducted by Ganji and

Sejzehie (2022) revealed no significant difference between male and female teachers regarding classroom management skills, however, they found that variables like teachers' age, experience, academic qualification, and teaching context have a significant effect on teachers' classroom management skills.

Conclusions

It was concluded that teachers' gender had no significant effect on the content, behavior, covenant management, and overall classroom management skills of university teachers. Both males and females performed the same activities in classroom management. The study concluded that age has no significant effect on content management, behavior management, and covenant management. The study also found that teachers' teaching experience has a significant effect on their classroom management skills. More experienced teachers managed their classrooms better as compared to less experienced teachers. Moreover, it was concluded that there is no significant effect of academic and professional qualifications on content management, behavior management, covenant management, and overall classroom management skills. Furthermore, it was concluded that there was no significant effect of professional qualification on content management, behavior management, covenant management, and classroom management skills.

Recommendations

The study recommends that university teachers may provide training in the areas of classroom management and in-service refresher courses may also be arranged for them to enhance their classroom management skills to ensure the maximum learning of the students. The study also recommends that the teachers distribute syllabi on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis so that students can prepare for it in advance. For this, they may prepare content that suits the level of the students. Teachers may arrange the physical resources of the classroom in such a manner that teachers can be easily available to all of the students. Teachers may adopt the appropriate teaching methodology keeping the level and background of students in mind, the available resources, and the environment in which they are teaching. The teachers may design the content in which students are involved actively and connect this content to real-life experiences. For this purpose, they must prepare a lesson plan in which many activities must be designed for the students. The study also recommends that further studies be conducted in other universities with larger samples. Similarly, the current study is quantitative in nature; the same study may be conducted using a qualitative or mixed-method approach to assess the classroom management skills of teachers.

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