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TEACHERS' VIEWS ON THE INFLUENCE OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT ON QUALITY EDUCATION

By

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DEDICATION

To my husband Phillip and daughter Ninette.

SUMMARY

This study explores teachers' opinions and views on classroom management and quality education. Society expects learning results from the school, whereas results in education are achieved in a specific place within schools, namely the classroom.

In the policy on Whole School Evaluation, 2000, the Minister of Education expressed concern for the apparent poor quality of teaching and learning at school and classroom level and urged for an overall improvement in levels of achievement. Teachers, therefore, need to focus on aspects of quality in their classrooms. Quality, however, is an elusive concept in education, and there may be as many definitions of quality as there are teachers. In an attempt to gain understanding and insight on the possible influence of classroom management on quality education, I firstly conducted a review of published literature, which provided the conceptual framework of this study. Secondly, I asked three school principals to select experienced teachers on their staff, who would write their opinions and views on the topic, in essay format. The essays, which are written documents, provided the raw data, which was organised in categories according to Creemers' comprehensive model of school effectiveness. Aspects of classroom management, which were referred to most by teachers, are discipline, planning, and preparation.

From the data it appears that effective and consistent discipline forms the foundation of classroom management. Some teachers are of the opinion that classroom routine positively contributes to effective classroom discipline.

Thorough planning and preparation appears to enhance discipline as well, because a well prepared teacher knows which learning outcomes need to be achieved in the lesson, is familiar with the learning content, has structured the transfer of knowledge and accompanying learning activities, and exercises effective control in the classroom. Some teachers are of the opinion that the entire classroom management process begins with and depends on planning and preparation. Furthermore, important aspects such as group composition and grouping procedures, the educational and aesthetic appeal of the classroom, classroom atmosphere, and effective time management, the accessibility of resources and homework, were also emphasised by teachers.

Teachers who did not focus on the probable relationship between classroom management and quality education, however, limited the data interpretation. Aspects of quality were not referred to in the data, and the kind of quality teachers had in mind is not clear. I wonder about the reasons for this and believe that it could warrant further investigation.

In conclusion, a number of researchers have focused on students in classrooms in developed nations, in an attempt to identify the most powerful determinants of student academic achievement. The results of these studies show that, among others, variables such as composition of the student body, academic emphasis of school time and the home-school relationship are consistently related to student achievement. It could be deduced, therefore, that some aspects of classroom management probably influence the quality of education.

LIST OF KEYWORDS

1. Classroom management.
2. Quality education.
3. Planning and preparation.
4. Group composition.
5. Classroom atmosphere.
6. Discipline.
7. Accessibility of resources.
8. Time management.
9. Homework.

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