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**Classroom Management Training, Teaching Experience and Gender: Do These Variables
Impact Teachers' Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Classroom Management Style?**

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Abstract

This study represents a continuation of research efforts to further refine the Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) Inventory. The purposes of this study were to investigate the: 1. impact of classroom management training on classroom management style, 2. differences in attitudes toward classroom management between novice and experienced teachers, and 3. differences between male and female teachers beliefs toward classroom management.

Data were collected on line from a total of 163 participants via the Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) Inventory and a demographic questionnaire. Results revealed significant differences between males and females and between novice and experienced teachers on Instruction Management subscale scores. There were significant differences regarding the People Management subscale scores between novice and experienced teachers, and those with and those without training in classroom management. Implications for future research and practice are discussed.

Classroom Management Training, Teaching Experience and Gender: Do These Variables Impact Teachers' Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Classroom Management Style?

Creating the best learning environment possible is the primary focus of the classroom teacher's responsibilities. A huge undertaking, no doubt, this is a difficult objective to achieve. In addition to developing and organizing the curriculum, the teacher's role involves a myriad of tasks including, but not limited to, efficient management of the classroom as a whole.

Classroom management is one of the primary areas of concern expressed by both beginning and experienced educators (Johns, MacNaughton, & Karabinus, 1989; Long & Frye, 1989; Weinstein, 1996; Weinstein & Mignano, 1993; Willower, Eidell, & Hoy, 1967). However, a sizeable body of research indicates the beginning and experienced teachers differ in their approaches to classroom management. Kagan's (1992) synthesis of the learning-to-teach literature points to the idealism of student teachers and describes their ideological evolution during the student teaching semester. Although student teachers began their experience by focusing on quality lesson planning, later they began to consider pupils as the "enemy." They were overly concerned with class control and shifted the focus of lesson planning from activities designed to encourage learning to those likely to discourage disruption (Kagan, 1992). Kagan concludes that teachers focus on pupils and their learning only after they have developed an image of themselves as teachers. In an effort to survive, inexperienced teachers may resort to practices that cause the learning environment to suffer (Huling-Austin, 1990; Martin & Baldwin, 1996).

The facets of classroom management may also vary as a function of the teacher's gender (Martin & Yin, 1997; Martin, Yin, & Baldwin, 1998). Although there are a number of studies that consider how teachers differ in their responses to male and female students, few consider the

teacher's gender in these interactions. Still, a fairly small body of research indicates that male teachers are more controlling than their female counterparts (Martin & Yin, 1997; Martin, Yin, & Baldwin, 1998). In addition, related research reveals that males are more likely to take control of conversation by choosing the topic, interrupting more, and speaking for longer duration (Grossman, 1990; Zaremba & Fluck, 1995). Women, on the other hand, are more likely to use helplessness as a way of influencing others (Johnson, 1976; Parsons, 1982). Girls are more polite and less competitive while boys tend to be more assertive, aggressive, and dominant than girls (Grossman, 1990).

In addition, research suggests that classroom management training can impact teachers' attitudes toward classroom management (Martin, Yin, & Baldwin, 1998). Teachers across the nation have received instruction in a wide variety of classroom management "packages" that encompass a full range of theoretical beliefs. School districts invest a great deal of energy, time and money in this area of professional development under the assumption that this training makes a difference. In fact, Martin, Yin, and Baldwin's (1998) study revealed that teachers instructed in Lee Canter's behavioral model of classroom management scored significantly more interventionist than those coached in Cooperative Discipline, a more interactionist approach.

This study represents a continuation of research efforts to further refine the Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) Inventory. The purposes of this study were to investigate the: 1. impact of classroom management training on classroom management style, 2. differences in attitudes toward classroom management between novice and experienced teachers, and 3. differences between male and female teachers beliefs toward classroom management.

Theoretical Framework.

Glickman and Tamashiro (1980) and Wolfgang (1995) conceptualized a framework to explain teacher beliefs regarding child development. Based on a combination of psychological interpretations, the underlying continuum of control illustrates three approaches to classroom interaction: non-interventionist, interventionist, and interactionalist. The non-interventionist presupposes the child has an inner drive that needs to find its expression in the real world. At the opposite end of the continuum are interventionists – those who emphasize what the outer environment does to the human organism to cause it to develop in its particular way. The non-interventionist is the least directive and controlling, while the interventionist is most controlling. Midway between these two extremes, interactionalists focus on what the individual does to modify the external environment, as well as what the environment does to shape the individual. Interactionalists strive to find solutions satisfactory to both teacher and students, employing some of the same techniques as non-interventionists and interventionists.

Within this study, classroom management style is defined as a multi-faceted construct that includes three broad, independent dimensions – instructional management, people management, and behavior management. It is operationalized as behavioral tendencies that teachers use to conduct daily instructional activities. These tendencies reflect the teacher's discipline, communication, and instructional styles, as well as the classroom spatial management. All of these manifest in the teacher's preferences and efforts to attain desirable educational goals.

Dimension one, Instructional Management, includes aspects such as monitoring seatwork, structuring daily routines, and allocating materials. The manner in which these tasks are managed contributes to the general classroom atmosphere and classroom management style (Burden, 1995; Kounin, 1970; McNeely & Mertz, 1990; Weinstein & Mignano, 1993). Nowhere is this better documented than in Kounin's classic (1970) study of orderly and disorderly

classrooms. Concepts such as smoothness and momentum of instruction were consistently found to be characteristics of well-planned lessons that prevented off-task behaviors. More recent research has revealed similar findings (McNeely & Mertz, 1990).

The People Management dimension pertains to what teachers believe about students as persons and what teachers do to develop the teacher-student relationship. A large body of literature indicates that academic achievement and productive behavior are influenced by the quality of the teacher-student relationship (Burden, 1995; Glasser, 1986; Ginott, 1972; Gordon, 1974; Jones & Jones, 1990; Evertson, Emmer, Clements, & Worsham, 1997; Weinstein, 1996). As Weinstein (1996) explains, ". . . teachers are good when they take the time to learn who their students are and what they are like, . . . when they laugh with their students, . . . and when they are both a friend and a responsible adult" (p. 76).

The third dimension, Behavior Management, is similar to, but different than, discipline in that it focuses on pre-planned means of preventing misbehavior rather than the teacher's reaction to it. Specifically, this facet includes setting rules, establishing a reward structure, and providing opportunities for student input. Emmer, Evertson, and Anderson's classic (1980) study documented one of the primary differences between effective and ineffective classroom managers was the manner in which they formulated and implemented classroom rules. Still, classroom rules are of little assistance if students are not motivated to follow them. As Weinstein and Mignano (1993) explain, ". . . classroom order is like conversation: It can only be achieved if both parties agree to participate" (p. 88). Establishing an effective reward structure and encouraging student input can be useful tools in the prevention of misbehavior and the maintenance of order in the classroom environment. Although the original theory delineated these three factors, more recent research indicates a two-factor model is more appropriate. Our

own data also suggested a two-factor model. Therefore, the data analysis was conducted using the two-factor model in this study.

Method

Sample.

Data were collected via the Internet using the Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) Inventory and a demographic questionnaire. Subjects were 163 certified teachers employed by public school districts in the southwest. The majority of the subjects (85.9%) were female. Participants ranged in age from 22 to 62 with an average age of 37.5 years. Years' experience ranged from zero to 40 with a mean of 10.2 years. The majority of subjects (47.9%) reported being certified at the elementary level; 38.7% were certified at the secondary level; and 12.3% were certified all-level. The subject pool was composed of 1.2% African-American, 73.6% Caucasian, 22.1% Hispanic; 3.1% were of other ethnic origin. Because of a relatively small sample size, the items in the ABCC were not subjected to factor analysis since it may generate unstable factor solutions. Instead, subscale scores were calculated using the two-dimension solution by Henson et al (2005).

Instrumentation.

The Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) Inventory, an instrument designed to measure teachers' perceptions of their classroom management beliefs and practices, originally consisted of 26 Likert format statements and three scales: Instructional Management; People Management; Behavior Management (Martin et al, 1998). However, more recent research has suggested that the ABCC may actually comprise only two dimensions: instruction management and people management with the third subscale (behavior management) absorbed

by the people management subscale (Henson, 2003; Savran & Cakiroglu, 2003). Therefore, results presented in this study were based on the two-dimensional construct of the ABBC.

A four-category response scale for each item was used. Beliefs were classified on the continuum originally suggested by Glickman and Tamashiro (1980) that reflects the degree of teacher power over students. Higher scores are indicative of more interventionist (controlling) ideology.

The ABCC Inventory has been shown to be a reliable, valid instrument useful in the empirical examination of classroom management styles (Martin, Yin, & Baldwin, 1998). Reliability coefficients for the subscales ranged from .69 to .82 (Martin, Yin, & Baldwin, 1998).

Results

Analysis of Covariance by gender (male vs. female), years of teaching experience (novice vs. experienced), and classroom management training (yes vs. no) was used to examine the differences on the instruction and people management subscale scores with adjustment for age. Within this study, novice teacher was defined as those with zero to five years' experience, and experienced teachers were those with 6 years or more experience. Only significant interaction terms were retained in the final models. The significance level was set at $\alpha = .05$.

There were significant differences between males and females, and between novice and experienced teachers on Instruction Management subscale scores. (See Table 1.) Females scored more interventionist ($M = 2.18$, $SD = 0.40$) than males ($M = 2.04$, $SD = 0.33$). Experienced teachers scored significantly more controlling ($M = 2.24$, $SD = 0.44$) than their novice counterparts ($M = 2.11$, $SD = 0.38$). There were no other significant differences.

There were significant differences regarding the People Management subscale scores between novice and experienced teachers, and those with and those without training in classroom

management. (See Table 1.) There was also a marginally significant interaction ($p < .08$) between gender and classroom management training such that males with no classroom management training tended to score more interventionist ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 0.47$) than those who had some classroom management training ($M = 2.07$, $SD = 0.28$), whereas females did not differ whether they experienced training in classroom management or not. There were no other significant differences.

Table 1. Analysis of Covariance: Gender (male vs. female), Years Teaching Experience (novice vs. experienced), and Classroom Management Training (yes and no) & ABCC Inventory Subscales*

		Gender		Experience		Training	
		Male	Female	Novice	Experienced	Yes	No
Instructional Management	Mean	2.04	2.21	2.11	2.23	2.16	2.23
	SD	0.33	0.43	0.38	0.47	0.39	0.47
F (1,158) =		4.35; $p < .04$		4.09; $p < .05$		1.31; n.s.	
People Management	Mean	2.26	2.34	2.41	2.27	2.32	2.39
	SD	0.43	0.41	0.40	0.42	0.40	0.44
F (1,158) =		1.44; n.s.		4.07; $p < .05$		6.71; $p < .01$	

* $F(1,158) = 2.84$; $p > .09$ for gender x training interaction

Summary & Discussion

Within this study, classroom management was defined as a multi-faceted construct involving three broad dimensions – Instructional Management, People Management, and Behavior Management. However, recent research indicates the likelihood that only two-factors exist (Henson, 2003; Savran & Cakiroglu, 2003). Therefore, the two-factor model was used in this study.

A continuum of control (proposed by Glickman & Tamashiro) underlies each dimension. At one extreme, the interventionist believes we are shaped by our environment. Non-interventionists, on the other hand, believe that rules tend to stifle development. The child develops best by finding his or her own way. Mid-way between these two points lies the

interactionalist perspective that posits quality child development occurs as an outgrowth of the adult-child (or, in this case, teacher-student) relationship.

The purposes of this study were to investigate the: 1. impact of classroom management training on classroom management style, 2. differences in attitudes toward classroom management between novice and experienced teachers, and 3. differences between male and female teachers beliefs toward classroom management. To that end, data were collected on line from certified teachers in grades K-12.

Results revealed significant differences between novice teachers and their more experienced counterparts on both the Instructional Management and the People Management subscales but in opposite directions. Experienced teachers – those with six or more years' experience – scored more controlling on the Instructional Management sub-scale but less controlling on the People Management sub-scale. These results indicate experienced teachers may have more realistic expectations regarding how to effectively manage their classrooms. That inexperienced teachers scored significantly less interventionist on the Instructional Management dimension suggests that they may naively believe that students and teachers are always working toward the same goals. The fact that they scored more interventionist on the People Management dimension reflects that they may overly rely on teacher control and survival skills to manage children.

Indeed, perhaps *because* they are less skilled regarding the Instructional Management dimension, they may be more likely to be in a controlling, reactive mode when it comes to the and People Management dimension. That is, they seem to be lax on Instructional Management issues because they may not have developed the art of creating smoothness or maintaining momentum (Kounin, 1970) in their lessons. Seasoned teachers, however, seem to present a

mirror image of the beginning teacher. Because experienced teachers take more control in establishing suitable classroom routines, monitoring seatwork, etc., they are able to take a less controlling stance regarding People Management.

No significant differences regarding gender were ascertained on the PM sub-scale. Perhaps, the teaching setting is more of a factor than gender in determining one's beliefs regarding how to interact with students. The IM sub-scale yielded significance regarding gender with female teachers scoring more controlling than males. The findings on the IM sub-scale should be interpreted with caution as they are not in keeping with previous research (see Martin & Yin, 1997) and may be a function of a relatively small percentage (14%) of males in the study.

Teachers trained in classroom management scored significantly less controlling on the People Management sub-scale than those who reported no training. These results suggest that training in classroom management does have an impact on how teachers perceive their relationships with students. This is important as school districts invest a great deal in professional development in the area of classroom management. Training did not yield significance on the IM sub-scale. Perhaps, experience is the only teacher that impacts this dimension of classroom management.

An interaction effect between gender and training approached, but did not reach, significance ($p < .08$) on the PM sub-scale. Males who had received some training in classroom management scored less controlling than those who had not been exposed to professional development in this topic. There was no difference between females who had and had not received training. Again, it is important to interpret this information with caution since the interaction effect did not yield statistical significance.

As data collection continues, many questions remain unasked and unanswered. Do ethnic and cultural differences exist? What is the "best" style for managing the classroom? Do teacher perceptions of their classroom management style match their behavior in the classroom? What is the nature of the relationship between classroom management and student achievement?

There can be little doubt that teachers encounter a variety of experiences in the classroom. Their beliefs regarding these experiences and the manner in which they approach them work together to create a unique and individual style of classroom management.

A more clear understanding of the facets of classroom management will hopefully facilitate the process of university level instruction of pre-service and experienced teachers. Because of the lack of an empirically derived body of information, a systematic means of measuring these factors seems to be a fruitful one for future study. The Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control Inventory appears to be a timely and useful tool for additional research in this area. Future studies should also examine the relationships between classroom management styles and student classroom performance, using the ABCC.

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