

# EVALUATION OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT SKILLS DURING TEACHING PRACTICE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the classroom management skills which are implemented by B.Ed. pre-service teachers to create and maintain an appropriate environment that is favourable for teaching and learning. It used a qualitative methodology. One of the universities in KwaZulu-Natal was used as a case study. Sixteen third-year B.Ed. pre-service teachers who were placed in uMkhanyakude District schools were purposively selected and observed during their teaching practice, and five subject mentors were interviewed to find out how they view student teachers' capabilities of classroom management. The findings revealed that the pre-service teachers were less confident about classroom management skills because they were struggling to manage their classrooms while the efforts by subject mentors had little impact on how classes are managed. For instance, they were not exposed to the established basic rules to reinforce the consequences of misbehaviour. This suggests that subject mentors have to step up the effort to close the gap as they are given the responsibility of mentoring pre-service teachers. They have to accompany pre-service teachers to classrooms and spend as much time as is necessary with them as part of confidence-building measures. Furthermore, the institutions in question have to upscale their classroom management programmes to ensure that pre-service teachers can cope with practical realities and dynamic conditions in the classroom to manage better during teaching practice.

**Keywords:** student teachers, cooperation, readiness, practice teaching, classroom, management

## INTRODUCTION

It is usually a moment of joy for both the learners and all the stakeholders in the school to welcome the pre-service teachers who have chosen their school in which to ply their trade. The school stakeholders expect high calibre individuals who are ready to put their management

skills into practice. One of the main expectations involves classroom management skills. As Busayanon (2018) stresses, it is a major process for developing learners' discipline and participation during teaching and learning. Collier-Meek Johnson Sanetti and Minami. (2019) explore the complex dynamics of classroom management, which includes exercising the appropriate discipline even the seasoned teachers struggle to implement consistently without the support of other teachers. Atici (2007) sees classroom management as a team effort, and contends that it is one of the most difficult tasks for both pre-service and experienced teachers. In essence, classroom management is one of the central elements of every teacher's daily professional experience Korkut (2007). According to Atici (2007), classroom management is the "deliberate actions taken to create and maintain a learning environment conducive to successful instruction". This goes to the heart of what Collier-Meek et al. (2019, 349) state: "[F]oundational practice for teachers to proactively support class-wide academic engagement for learners' long-term academic competence needs highly skilled professionals". Sanchez-Solarte (2019, 186) points out that classroom management should consider the following three dimensions:

"[T]he teacher, the planning, and the environment. The teachers' dimension includes teachers' attitudes, the roles they may assume, and the decisions they make before, during, and after the lesson. All of these are meant to foster the best possible atmosphere and conditions for language learning. The planning dimension includes course planning, lesson planning, classroom management planning (e.g. establishing routines to give learners a predictable framework), and even planning how to react in certain challenging situations. The environment dimension has to do with working on the constraints of the classroom and creating an atmosphere of cooperation, respect, and well-being so that tangible elements such as materials, equipment, tasks, and tests can be used to foster learning."

The above viewpoint suggests that learners cannot learn in a poorly managed classroom. Classroom management skills are therefore essential in the teaching profession; otherwise foreign elements can disrupt the proceedings. This means that adequate pedagogical knowledge alone is not enough to curb disruptions, but should be coupled with meticulous and highly effective classroom management skills. Teaching and classroom management skills are two sides of the same coin. When a teacher cannot create a conducive learning environment, learners feel let down, and consequently he/she finds it hard to regain the necessary trust and composure to perform his/her duties. That is why Sánchez-Solarte (2019) reminds professionals in education that sometimes it becomes hard for some teachers to set up an adequate working atmosphere to execute the lesson effectively while dealing with challenges that occur in the classroom. Classroom management skills are indispensable for managing a class, but they require teachers to be able to employ a multitude of actions to establish acceptable professional

behaviour. Martin et al. (2016) concur with Marzano and Marzano (2013) in assuming that the teaching profession requires teachers to perform multifaceted activities. That is the reason Ingersoll and Strong (2011) insist that some teachers tend to leave the teaching profession in their first five years of teaching if they fail to implement measures required to manage the class.

Like Kelly (2007), Marzano and Marzano (2013, 6) stress that “teacher-learner relationships are the cornerstone for all other aspects of classroom management”, and Martin et al. (2016) concur. In this regard, a committed and passionate teacher has to adapt to a participative approach to manage the classroom and win the hearts and minds of the learners in maintaining effective learning environments (Thornton and Luthy 2019). It is the responsibility of all teachers to adopt a participative approach to enable learners to understand the value of paying special attention to classroom activities, engaging in them for the benefit of teaching and learning, and allowing learners to express their views and support them. This means involving learners meaningfully in the planning of classroom activities to produce good learning outcomes. It makes the learners feel part of teaching and learning activities. In short, teachers have to be part of the classroom environment.

Martin et al. (2016) see self-presentation to mean that teachers have the confidence to manage their classroom better and can use different methods that inspire learners. For instance, facial expressions, as well as body language, are among the important ways which one can use to manage the classroom. Good self-presentation accommodates all learners so that they may develop a passion for spending most of their time in school. Garwood (2016) points out that learners spend more time in school, and specifically in the classroom than any other place, and that learners who are learning in the rural areas regard the classroom as one of the most important settings for their emotional, behavioural, and cognitive development.

The study conducted by Sibiyi, Gamede and Aleanya (2019) points to classroom management problems in rural schools arising from various factors such as learners' family environment, community, teaching methods, and the classroom environment. The physical layout of the classroom has to be taken into consideration as it can constrain teachers from applying their classroom management skills. If teachers do not attend to these problems, learners who misbehave respond poorly to regular classroom instruction (Garwood and Vernon-Feagans 2017). That is the reason why Weistein (2007) stresses that the behavioural problem causes a big challenge in managing the classroom. Garwood (2016) concurs with Weistein (2007) when he notes that good classroom management during teaching and learning, with little disruption to contend with, is vital. Malmgren, Trezek and Paul (2005) highlight three models of classroom management, namely: assertive discipline, logical consequences, and teacher effectiveness training.

## **Assertive discipline**

According to Dustova and Cotton (2015), assertive discipline is a structured, systematic approach designed to assist teachers to run an organised, teacher-in-charge classroom environment. Kaminska (2018) and Sanchez-Solarte (2019) further state that for the learners to succeed in their learning, they have to be placed in a warm, supportive classroom environment. They believe that teachers have a responsibility to identify what is best for learners, and to expect adherence. Learners have to be controlled by the rules which have to be explained, practised and enforced consistently (Busayanon 2018). Teachers have to give clear direction and guidance for proper behaviour. It means that teachers have to be assertive to prevent disruptions in teaching and learning. Teachers are expected to make sure that no learner is disrupted from learning, and that they are not disrupted from teaching. To achieve this condition, they must be consistently assertive as to expected behaviour in the classroom.

Dustova and Cotton (2015) proposed five steps to keep assertive discipline working in class: (1) teachers should avoid unrealistic expectations about learners; (2) teachers have to practice assertive response styles which minimise opportunities for confrontation; (3) teachers have to set limits. They need to be friendly but firm with learners so that learners will learn appropriate behaviour; (4) teachers have to always follow through with all established consequences. Learners have to be taught that every action has its consequences (Busayanon 2018). They have to be taught the appropriate consequences, and teachers have to set an example; (5) teachers have to implement a system of positive consequences such as personal attention, positive notes to parents, special awards, and special privileges. It is evident that the assertive discipline model is based on the positive reinforcement of desirable behaviour, and the unwelcome consequences of undesirable behaviour (Hildenbrand and Arndt 2016).

## **Logical consequences**

It is well known that human beings naturally desire and need social recognition. For instance, to survive, to love and belong, to gain power, to be free, and to have fun (Freiberg 1996). Likewise with learners, because they are human beings too. When learners are not recognised, they tend to misbehave and disrupt teaching and learning. Dustova and Cotton (2015) call that attention-seeking behaviour. If this behaviour continues to occur, Thornton and Luthy (2019) highlight that teachers have to apply consequences that have a clear and logical connection to misbehaviour. In other words, teachers should not act out of proportion.

## **Teacher effectiveness training**

In the teacher training, Dustova and Cotton (2015) underscore the importance of intensifying

pedagogical training targeted at managing learners' behaviour and discipline. This training is likely to empower learners to conceptualise and focus on much-needed activities in class (Sanchez-Solarte 2019).

This study seeks to assess the extent to which student teachers improve the level of discipline and behaviour of learners in classrooms during teaching practice. Understandably, behaviour management is one of the main grey areas which poses a challenge to most pre-service teachers when they are in schools for a practice teaching programme (Beare Torgerson Tracz & Grutzik 2012). Hildenbrand and Arndt (2016) identified key behaviour that should be carefully observed when dealing with classroom management:

1. Teachers setting clear rules and expectations for the class with the involvement of learners so that they can own those rules.
2. Informing learners of the consequences of breaking the rules.
3. Involving the learners when setting the teaching goals.
4. Exhibiting assertive behaviour.
5. Establishing a good relationship with the learners.

It is clear that with these rules discipline will get much-needed attention and be thoroughly maintained so that learners will be likely to make better decisions in becoming responsible for their learning (McDonald 2010). This is one significant realisation in dealing with the challenges teachers, especially the pre-service teachers, encounter in schools as part of classroom management techniques. Marais (2016) posits that all teacher training programmes should offer programmes aligned with these principles to assist pre-service teachers in dealing with classroom dynamics. In practice, these principles will help them gain the skills and confidence they need in their practice in schools. Clement (2010) avers that pre-service teachers face a multitude of problems linked to classroom management as observed by resident mentors, who voiced their displeasure at student teachers' lack of basic knowledge when it comes to classroom management because of the shortage of sources which deal with it. They depend on their experience.

### **Theories of classroom management**

There have been several classroom management theories linked to this study that are worth discussing. These are categorised into three broad areas to reflect briefly on the focus and goals of classroom management. The first regards the classroom as a discipline. This principle maintains that the teacher has absolute responsibility for maintaining classroom control,

discipline before instruction, and consequences must exist for unwanted behaviour (Hardin 2008). This model notes that learners obey the rules because they are rewarded for doing so, but severe consequences should be applied if the rules are broken. This model has been widely used by all teachers as it is easy to use, and seen to be effective.

The second model linked to classroom management is a system which emphasises the significance of classroom management that is systematic. In this model, teachers are required to “plan and organise engaging activities for their learners. In the main, they must organise this to ensure minimum disruptions and defiance during these activities” (Hardin 2008). The main purpose of this model is to prevent the problem from occurring instead of just reacting to it. It simply advocates certain actions to be deliberately instituted as one measure to contain possible disruptions. There are two major aims to achieve desirable behaviour in the classroom by using this model: promoting responsibility in learners rather than obedience, and (2) articulating expectations and empowering learners to reach those expectations (Charles 2008).

The third category of classroom management is identified as an instruction. This one focuses on teaching “appropriate behaviour and social skills, with the focus being on helping learners to develop positive interactions throughout their lifetime rather than on behaviour at a particular moment” (Hardin 2008). Landau (2004, 114–115) clearly articulated six steps to be followed to achieve this model: State the problem: Using an “I” message, the teacher tells the student what he or she sees happening.

- i. “Ask for the student’s perspective on the problem. Listen carefully and without judgment to what the student says in response.”
- ii. “Listen actively: Active listening means teachers nonjudgmentally restate the explanation offered by the student.”
- iii. “Problem-solving: What possible solutions fit within a teacher’s professional responsibilities and, at the same time, meet the students’ educational needs?”
- iv. “Agree to the terms. Agreeing to the terms applies to both teacher and student.”
- v. “Follow up. Teachers can check in with students later, and ask how their solutions are working.”

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Pre-service teachers not only need to have an understanding of core theoretical classroom management strategies, but they also need to have a technical understanding of practical classroom realities expected of them during the practice teaching to manage a classroom. Previous studies conducted with the pre-service teachers have identified common challenges facing these teachers during their teaching practice (Beare et al. 2012; Hildenbrand and Arndt

2016). Some of the serious challenges identified were: poor judgment to deal with learner discipline, failure to promote a positive concept, failure to ensure an improved cooperative learning atmosphere, and struggling to have a good relationship with learners in a class. Other studies pointed to insufficient supervision of pre-service teachers when they start their teaching practice (Hildenbrand and Arndt 2016; Garwood and Vernon-Feagans 2017). This study sought to determine if those challenges persist when pre-service teachers are assigned mentors to support them to implement effective classroom management strategies during teaching and learning. The statement of the problem is that pre-service teachers are at a distinct disadvantage in terms of dealing with classroom management in comparison with their experienced counterparts. In this regard, mentors have a huge responsibility for providing much-needed support to the pre-service teachers during teaching practice to deal with discipline problems, promoting positive self-concept, improving cooperative learning, and building relationships with learners.

The reports compiled by most researchers seek to suggest that most pre-service teachers fall short when they have to manage their classroom discipline (Beare et al. 2012). If this issue does not receive the necessary attention it deserves from university advisers and school mentors, pre-service teachers are likely to develop a negative attitude towards teaching practice. The conclusion from most of these reports points to one important solution: pre-service teachers need support from both mentors and university lecturers. In essence, effective classroom management plays a vital role in the teaching and learning process. However, the majority of the pre-service teachers who are placed in rural schools during teaching practice encounter many challenges linked to classroom management. This shortcoming was well explored by Garwood and Vernon-Feagans (2017) when they found that most of the learners who perform badly academically are the ones who have a behavioural problem, and this problem emanates from their background. This study explored the classroom management skills of pre-service teachers under the supervision of mentors in rural schools during their teaching practice sessions.

### **Research questions**

1. What are the basic classroom management skills needed by pre-service teachers to enable them to cope during teaching practice?
2. How do pre-service teachers implement classroom management skills in rural schools?

### **METHODOLOGY**

A qualitative method was adopted for this study. Vaismoradi Jones Turunen and Snelgrove

(2016) opine that the main aims of the qualitative approach are to provide an in-depth, socio-contextual and detailed description and interpretation of the research topic. Williams (2007) regards qualitative research as a holistic approach which deals with the discovery of truth which is not easy to quantify, such as observations of non-verbal discussion and interview transcripts. Instead, a qualitative research approach describes the life-world of the people who participate. The researchers have therefore chosen to use qualitative research to get an in-depth understanding of pre-service teachers' classroom management skills used in rural schools during teaching practice. The participants included five B.Ed. pre-service teachers in one of the Southern African universities who were undergoing teaching practice in rural schools in uMkhanyakude district. Five subject mentors also participated because they are the ones who spend the most time with pre-service teachers in schools during teaching practice. All in all, the participants in this study were 10. These participants were purposively selected because they were considered suitable to reveal appropriate results that were required by this study.

## **DATA COLLECTION TOOLS**

Observation and interviews were the instruments used to gather data to explore the effectiveness of pre-service teachers' classroom management skills. The researchers observed pre-service teachers teaching and later interviewed them to better understand whether they could manage their classes. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the subject mentors to find out from them whether the pre-service teachers were capable of managing classrooms when they taught. Interview data were recorded verbatim using a tape recorder to capture the exact statements made by the subject mentors. Notes were also taken to supplement data generated by the tape recorder. The researchers were careful to ensure that the interview schedule and taking of notes were not clashing. The nonverbal behaviour of the subject mentors was also captured.

Two instruments were designed to explore the effectiveness of classroom management skills by pre-service teachers. The first one was an observation schedule which was used when the pre-service teachers were in the classroom teaching. The second instrument was the interview schedule which was used to gather data from the subject mentors and pre-service teachers.

Participants' consent to proceed was sought and obtained, and all participants were informed that the information they provided was to be treated with the confidentiality it deserved, and assured that their identities would not be revealed. As part of the effort to protect their identities, pseudonyms were used: mentors were coded as M1–M5 and pre-service teachers as Pr1–Pr16.

## THE RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### **School mentors' understanding of how classroom management should be handled**

The understanding is that classroom management is a top priority for teacher training and development, and the results show that mentors give classroom management great attention. One of the most fascinating narrations came from a mentor following a lengthy interview. "It would be stupid of us as school mentors to expect too much from these students. Instead we need to hold their hands and show them light."

M4: "Giving pre-service teachers intellectual skills is not enough, but we are also expected to provide guided practice and feedback in implementing both preventative and corrective behaviour in class."

It was clear from these results that attention must be given to instructional strategies that prevent academic and behavioural difficulties. Paying special attention to those areas that breed disruptive behaviour, and focusing more attention on those that enhance academic achievement is one of the school mentors' biggest contributions.

### **Disciplinary measures to promote effective classroom management**

The role of a pre-service teacher is to act as a classroom manager by ensuring that effective teaching and learning take place. Most participants declared that no teaching and learning could take place in a poorly managed classroom. Their responses corroborated what was observed by the researchers. The following are their responses, which showed the disappointment of the subject mentors with the conduct of some of the pre-service teachers who were working in an environment where learners were disorderly and disrespectful, and there were no apparent rules and procedures guiding their behaviour.

M3: "I have learned to understand how learners' mindset works: when they see weakness in your voice. They take you for a ride and start to undermine everything you are doing, inadvertently promoting chaos and a toxic environment for everyone."

M2: "My take is that it depends on the nature and character of the pre-service teacher. In most cases, they struggle to teach, while learners learn much less than they would under normal circumstances."

### **Pre-service teachers' ability to promote a positive self-concept**

There was a mixture of good and bad reflections about the conduct of the pre-service teachers. Some conduct gave a glimmer of hope arising from observation in the practical classes set by

school mentors. Notwithstanding that many missteps are to be expected when any pre-service teacher is learning and is under surveillance, the nature of a positive self-concept was evident to a few students. These pre-service teachers were observed doing extraordinary work as part of their preparation before the period began, two of the participants reported that the pre-service teachers were able to create an environment that was conducive to teaching and learning. The interviewed subject mentors reported as follows:

M1: "Classroom management is fine. However, some learners like to disrupt them when they are teaching, but they manage to control them. They can create a positive learning space."

M2: "Yes. As with the arrangement of desks, they make sure that all learners see what is written on the board."

M5: "Well-managed classrooms provide an environment in which teaching and learning can flourish. In my 15 years of experience, the well-managed classroom doesn't just appear out of the blue sky. Instead, hard work behind the scene is all it takes to create a positive self-concept in class for the pre-service teacher."

These kinds of praise were given when pre-service teachers worked hard to demonstrate to their mentors how much they were worth. The responses from two participants concurred with the researchers' observation that good lesson preparation improves self-esteem and confidence for pre-service teachers. It has been demonstrated on many occasions that pre-service teachers' preparation for effective teaching is related to their teaching confidence (Darling-Hammond, Chung and Frelow 2002). The majority of mentors stated that pre-service teachers were timid in most cases when the learners were disrupting their lessons. They reported as follows:

M3: "The pre-service teachers' voices should be audible to drive the lesson forward. That is the challenge which they have, and it is their inaudibility that causes the learners to disrupt their classes."

M5: "He used to write names of the learners who disturbed him in class, and submit the list to me."

The researcher observed that most of the learners are inspired by highly confident pre-service teachers in their willingness to learn. Teachers' confidence about their ability to teach a subject indicates familiarity with social learning theory (Bandura 1977). There is a positive correlation between teachers' expectations of their teaching efficacy and their teaching practice (Berger 2010). In instances where pre-service teachers perceive their content and pedagogical knowledge as being high, they tend to build confidence and self-efficacy.

### **Creation of a co-operative atmosphere**

The majority of participants highlighted several complexities that disrupt a good atmosphere

for many pre-service teachers, which can be dealt with by applying good planning and preparation. Some of the pre-service teachers identified good planning and preparation as a solution, but took this a step further by advocating the planning of activities which involve arranging learners' seating pattern, ensuring enough teaching and learning material for every learner, and avoiding unexpected confusion by occasionally consulting the lesson plan when needed.

- M3: "One of the most exciting pre-service teachers was quick to dismiss the notion of them struggling with classroom management. 'Hey, our lecturers always warn us of the pending situation if you leave planning late. For us, as pre-service teachers, we know in advance that it becomes a serious threat if you allow it to overwhelm you'."
- M5: "This issue does pose a major threat to your psychological wellbeing, I am telling you, but we are told to develop very basic rules and procedures to shield ourselves from having to shout at our learners while in the process exposing our weakness to them."
- M5: "One thing that all pre-service teachers should do is to try and employ multiple strategies, and to be skilled at learning when the practices are not working, and quickly switch to an alternative strategy without learners noticing."
- M2: "It is very pleasing to have a pre-service teacher with style and a negotiator of note, a manager who maintains a calm face amid storm and adversity, the one who exhibits a strong character, who anticipates danger and applies preventative, supportive and corrective management techniques to finally establish positive outcomes for his/her class without my intervention."

Despite high praise coming from participants for certain groups of pre-service teachers, there were many who failed dismally to perform coordination as a basic minimum standard of classroom skills. In essence, most of these candidates were confused about where to start in setting up their classrooms and dealing with disruptive learners. Instead, they were pretending the situation was normal when chaos was reigning supreme.

The main source of some of the challenges was the lack of confidence in themselves because they had inadequate classroom management skills. That led to poor coordination and unnecessary disturbance during teaching and learning. The pre-service teachers did not apply any of the techniques for minimising the noise. They kept on teaching as if everything was normal. This denotes that pre-service teachers are not given a proper orientation before going to teaching practice, or they take these important steps lightly. They are also not exposed to micro-teaching to make them gain enough confidence during the real exercise of teaching in schools. Both lecturers and cooperating teachers should, therefore, work collaboratively to help pre-service teachers to be able to manage their classes, because if the class is unmanageable no teaching can take place, and the quality of teaching and learning is compromised.

## The focus on building a relationship with learners

This theme kept coming back from both pre-service teachers and mentors. The main skill you have to maintain all the time as a teacher, in general, relates to building healthy learner-teacher relationships for the entire class to thrive. Linked to this dimension is the ability to handle defiant learners who also want to assert their authority. Both the researchers and the subject mentors realised that pre-service teachers were unable to adjust to the rural teaching environment. Here are some of the responses from the subject mentors:

- M2: “Even though the pre-service teachers were trying to establish a relationship with learners, they failed. The problem is that they are dealing with people of their age. Our learners see their boyfriends and their girlfriends. If students try to establish a friendship with them they get a chance to ask things which are irrelevant to what is being taught.”
- M4: “It is difficult for student teachers to establish a good relationship with our learners because they do not know their backgrounds. Some of the learners keep absenting themselves from school because they have to go and collect children’s grants, while others have to take cattle to dipping tanks (*idipha*). So student teachers who are not acquainted with rural life will find it hard to understand the situation we are working with.”

Both the researchers and the subject mentors realised that one needs to map certain achievable practical stages for academic success for everybody in one’s class. The individual interviews with pre-service teachers took the researchers where they never thought they were in terms of their professional development as Pr2 and Pr4 made the following remarks about how relationship are developed:

- Pr2: “As a pre-service teacher you have a huge responsibility to make learners believe in your work by building rapport. As a pre-service teacher, it is important to always take the time to talk to learners as a whole class or one-to-one. Simple efforts, like greeting learners outside the classroom before the start of the day, pay outsized dividends.”
- Pr4: “I would like to add to what my colleague has said. I always meet them at the door and we do a ‘high-five, chicken-five’ touching elbows with a wing.”

From these important results, it was clear that most pre-service teachers understand their roles very well, but it becomes difficult to implement them because of the environment in which they find themselves. They noted that a teacher’s ability to balance warmth and strong boundaries is key to successful relationships and classroom management. It is worth praising the practice that gives these complicated activities face and remaining vigilant by staying in your lane, but flexible as a young teacher. Some of these learners in class saw them as parents, and they have to love such learners unconditionally, said the pre-service teacher, but at the same time hold them accountable. It was clear that pre-service teachers have learned through practice that they

are leaders in their classes, therefore they are expected to give learners a voice while being the leader at the same time.

## **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Considering the results related to the pre-service teachers' classroom management skills, they show that indeed pre-service teachers do not have adequate classroom management skills. Furthermore, they are also frustrated with the demand of the rural environment when it comes to enforcing classroom management. This became evident when some of the subject mentors mentioned that the learners do not take pre-service teachers seriously when they try to establish a good relationship with them. The results support the study by Freiberg (1996), who emphasises that if teachers do not make frequent use of praise, whether verbal or non-verbal, it leads to inadequate classroom management. Dustova and Cotton (2015) highlight that learners are natural attention-seekers. However, the pre-service teachers did not take that into consideration. That is why some of the subject mentors stated that because of their timidity, some of the pre-service teachers' voices were not audible. That led to the disruption of teaching and learning. It has also been noted that most of the subject mentors were not effective if pre-service teachers continued to encounter challenges in managing their classes. In essence, these mentors are not effective in helping the pre-service teachers to improve in their careers because they give the wrong impression. Ell and Haigh (2015) confirm this assertion when they state that both "false positives" and "false-negatives" are problematic decisions because they either create the impression that the pre-service teachers have adequate competence, and thus deprive the learners of their right to have a quality education, or they deprive the pre-service teachers' of their right to enjoy good quality teaching.

Although most of the learners showed a Hawthorne effect, the pre-service teachers did not use that opportunity to their advantage. For instance, they were supposed to apply one or other of the classroom management models to manage behaviour the first time they were given a chance to teach learners. Instead, they showed that they reacted badly to the unfamiliar environment. For example, most of the pre-service teachers did not have confidence in their teaching, leading to the researchers sounding an alarm about the effect of the disciplinary measures taken. Moreover, some of them did not discourage learners who were responding simultaneously to their questions. Some learners became so excited when there was a question asked that they kept on calling out to the teacher when they wanted to respond to the question. It was also observed by the researchers in one of the schools visited that the pre-service teacher never realised that some learners seated at the back were not concentrating. For example, they did not open a book when the teacher instructed them to do so. This showed that most pre-

service teachers lacked the appropriate skills for managing the classroom. The researchers observed that most of the learners were indeed inspired by highly confident pre-service teachers. This implies that teachers' confidence about their ability to teach a subject showed the influence of social learning theory (Bandura 1977). There is a positive correlation between a teacher's expectations of his/her efficacy, and his/her teaching practice (Berger 2010).

Hence this study recommends that pre-service teachers have to visit the schools for orientation before teaching practice sessions begin in order to minimise the reality shock which they get in classrooms when teaching learners for the first time. This finding is confirmed by the similar findings of the study made by Korthagen, Loughran and Russel (2006), which reveal that the main causes of the shock are not addressed adequately during teaching practice sessions. Aworanti (2016) and Yang (2016) mention the causes of the inadequate management skills of pre-service teachers. They highlight that this inadequacy is caused by the lack of confidence in establishing a strong teacher identity. When pre-service teachers have no confidence in themselves, obviously teaching and learning are affected. The subject mentors have to accompany the pre-service teachers to the classroom most of the time until they feel comfortable being alone with the learners. The young teachers have to be allocated classes to supervise as class managers in order to spend time with and learn more models of and approaches to classroom management.

From the above information, it is evident that pre-service teachers, especially in rural schools, are facing growing complexities in managing learners during the teaching practice sessions. However, teaching practice should pioneer efforts to devise strategies in how to instil classroom management skills in pre-service teachers, as it is a common notion that an integral part of effective classroom management is to build relationships with learners. Hence learners have to be viewed as allies who are expected to cooperate for the good of all. It is also evident that their cooperation depends solely on the management skills which are displayed by teachers. The pre-service teachers who were observed did not display adequate classroom management, which is why learners were uncooperative, and at worst disruptive. The misbehaviour of learners is aggravated by the decline in learners' motivation to learn from teachers, resulting in a poor relationship between teachers and learners.

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