

**The Efficiency of Classroom Management in  
Reducing Student Stress: A Case Study of a Public  
School in Fujairah**

دور الإدارة الصفية الفعال في الحد من توتر الطالب  
دراسة حالة تم عملها في إحدى المدارس الحكومية بالفجيرة، دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة

by

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## **Abstract (English)**

Stress management within the classroom environment is a difficult task for a teacher whose profession is ever demanding loaded with many opportunities. The level of efficiency is reflected in the performance of a teacher and pupil if the classroom environment is troublesome which is caused by disruptive behaviour and causes stress.

The objective of this thesis is to address the issue of efficiency of classroom management in reducing pupil stress by referring to the case of the U.A.E primary schools by making references to other prominent examples. Supported by secondary research sources and a qualitative research methodology of interviews with ten teachers from a primary school in the U.A.E.

Findings concludes there is room for improvement when it comes to stress management and the introduction of strategies and workshops need to be applied on an active basis. However, findings also indicate that teachers do not use any form of physical abuse or form of humiliation to handle disruptive pupils but exhibit leniency and fairness in their behaviour.

## المخلص

تعد الدارة الصفية مهمة صعبة بالنسبة للمعلم الذي تتطلب مهنته العديد من المهام، حيث يعكس مستوى الكفاءة في أداء المعلم والتلميذ إذا كانت بيئة الفصل الدراسي مزعجة بسبب السلوك التخريبي مما يولد الضغوطات في البيئة الصفية

الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو معالجة مسألة كفاءة إدارة الفصول الدراسية في الحد من إجهاد التلاميذ من خلال دراسة حالة إحدى المدارس الابتدائية في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة و كذلك من خلال الإشارة إلى أمثلة بارزة أخرى. و تم دعم الدراسة من خلال البحث و إجراء مقابلات مع عشرة معلمين من مدرسة ابتدائية في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة

توصلت النتائج إلى أن هناك مجالاً للتحسين عندما يتعلق الأمر بإدارة الإجهاد ، ويجب تطبيق الاستراتيجيات وورش العمل على أساس نشط. ومع ذلك ، تشير النتائج أيضاً إلى أن المعلمين لا يستخدمون أي شكل من أشكال الإيذاء البدني أو أي شكل من أشكال الإهانة للتعامل مع سلوك التلاميذ السيء ولكنهم يبدون تساهلاً وعدلاً معهم

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The teaching profession is a challenging one for educators who are always faced with new ideas and concepts daily in their teaching environment. There is no doubt that the pressure experienced by teachers in ensuring their lessons are well-understood and delivered is crucial to their profession. It must be noted that stress is the main driving force in creating a sense of panic and anxiety for pupils who may find it hard to grasp and fully comprehend what is taught in the classroom. Not all the pupils in the classroom will be quick learners; some may struggle to understand the first few times; meanwhile, there are others who may pick the things from the first-time. It honestly varies in the learning abilities of pupils and how the lesson is delivered and explained to them. The mode of teaching is fundamental for the learner since there are a variety of learners. Some tend to learn from visuals, whereas others learn with a balanced approach of theory accompanied by the practice which helps them translate and apply what they have learned. It is vital to note that various kinds of pupils may contribute to the stress of classroom management and its level of efficiency. For example, troublesome pupils who are bullies or may play naughty tricks in the classroom to disrupt the discipline of the classroom. It is within this context that the teacher bears a great deal of responsibility to take them and many more factors in delivering a useful class lesson.

Instead of diving into the central theme of this thesis "The efficiency of classroom management in reducing student stress" directly, it is pivotal to provide a detailed background on the critical disruptive factor, i.e. stress.

The role of stress in our daily lives cannot be underestimated, nor can it be ignored since it tends to have a profound impact on the entire well-being of an individual, regardless of their profession which makes teachers and educators no different.

According to John Medina, the founder of the website Brain Rules, stress plays the role of a villain in destructing virtually every type of cognition which exists. It ranges from destroying executive function and memory (Dahl, 2011)

Within our daily lives, we are usually exposed to stressful situations; it must be seen that interpretation and responses to incidents which contribute towards stress tend to differ for various individuals.

For instance, if someone wants to speak in a public surrounding, they may find it hard and suffer from anxiety whereas for other people it could be a delightful experience.

Nevertheless, if the stress level escalates, it can contribute to pressing social and medical issues (Lahey, 2004, p.500)

For a teacher to deliver a useful lesson is a key priority. However, one of the top priorities is to ensure there is well-maintained classroom discipline. When it comes to choosing methods to classroom discipline, some teachers tend to experience and tackle with the emerging stress from their urge to utilise educationally justifiable models, while rapidly acquiring and sustaining order in the classroom (Lewis, 1999)

In the U.A. E's environment, pupils tend to face many distractions, and the influence of social media and tablets has harmed their mental well-being to a certain extent. We cannot neglect the influence of violent video games, either that contribute on a negative basis to the mindset and behaviour of children when interacting with others in the classroom environment. It would be wrong to state that it is merely the teacher who is solely responsible for the behaviour of their pupils. Classroom discipline does not exist in isolation

as the behaviour of the pupil is heavily influenced by their internal and external environments. By referring to an internal environment, we mean their home environment where parents have the fundamental duty to ensure their children are well-behaved, groomed and disciplined. However, not all parents are successful in fruitfully executing discipline. The psychological impact of an aggressive home environment, i.e. parents fighting or arguing or domestic violence or abuse on the child can influence their troublesome behaviour. The purpose of this section is to provide an introductory background to the objectives of this thesis, rationale, research questions and an overview of the thesis, which provides the reader with clarity on the intention of why the thesis is conducted.

## **1.2. Rationale**

There is ample of research available on the significance of teacher preparation in classroom management with further research on how poor and unorganised classroom environment can result in poor learning. On the other hand, there are numerous advantages of ensuring a classroom environment is well-handled, but that requires much detailed study, which integrates strategies, creating the right environment and educating teachers and pupils so they can all work in harmony in achieving the desired goals and outcomes (Understanding our classroom management standard, 2016)

## **1.3. Research Objectives and Research Questions**

### **1.3.1. Objective**

To examine the efficiency of classroom management in reducing student stress within the context of the school in the U.A.E in the form of a case study.

### **1.3.2. Research question (s)**

The following are the research questions we focus on in this thesis:

1. What techniques/ strategies are employed by the teacher to maintain classroom discipline & stress?
2. Why is classroom discipline vital?
3. How can we define the efficiency of classroom management?
4. To what extent does poor classroom discipline have an impact on the teacher and pupil's productivity?
5. What role can parents, teachers and the school authorities play in rectifying the classroom discipline?
6. What is student stress and how does it affect the productivity of a student?

**1.4. Overview/summary of the dissertation – provide a summary of the focus of each chapter of the dissertation**

Regarding the structure of this thesis, it is explained as follows. Chapter 1 provides a background to the importance of the efficiency of classroom management in reducing student stress by examining the literature review and understanding the significance of stress. The subject of stress is not merely limited to the teacher but the pupil who makes a two-fold study of stress since it is significant to understand how a teacher would handle a stressful situation and how a pupil would react when experiencing a stressful episode. Furthermore, there are techniques and strategies recommended to resolve this unpleasant situation. The literature review sheds light on existing literature along with focusing on the U.A.E context by understanding why the need for parents, teachers and the pupils to come together to maintain a healthy and positive attitude towards classroom discipline is the backbone of success for schools. In Chapter 2, we focus on the research methodology where a qualitative approach was used. Within the context of a qualitative approach, interviews

with teachers were used to provide a clearer understanding of which techniques, strategies and challenges are faced by teachers, the parents and the pupils. This is followed by Chapter 3 where we analyse the findings from the research methodology and provide a discussion to support to what extent the findings are aligned with theory and practical examples elsewhere. Finally, there is Chapter 4 which focuses on providing recommendations and concluding our findings and summarise the critical lessons gained from the thesis research.

### **1.5. Conclusion: develop a short conclusion section for this chapter**

The teaching profession is a challenging, innovative yet multifaceted given the number of responsibilities experienced by the teacher who is consistently faced by a set of new situations to work with. Managing a productive classroom environment which is trouble-free is one of the leading duties which entails a combination of applying effective strategies and methods positively influencing pupils to think critically and productively. Also, providing them with the guidance to work in the form of group work and describing the concepts and boosting their self-esteem which would make sure their learning process is a fruitful one (Kapur, 2018)

## **CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND & LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This section will focus on providing a background on the significance of the teaching profession, faced by examining the different cultures around the world and how they all face challenges which commonly bind them. The order of this chapter is presented in the following format: we provide a literature review which refers to a combination of various articles, researches, academic and scholarly resources referring to various cultures including the U.A.E. Furthermore, a theoretical background which will help in understanding the fundamentals of classroom management, the disruptive behaviour experienced in maintaining a healthy classroom environment and what techniques or strategies can be applied to ensure a healthy environment is maintained.

### **2.2 Background & Literature Review**

When I was growing as a child I observed a lot of things whether in the media or first-hand that in the olden days when the Industrial Revolution had not totally reached out to many countries in the sub-continent, Africa, Asia-Pacific, and the Middle East, the limited resources and lack of adequately qualified teachers meant teachers who were somewhat educated were used as teachers as there was no other option.

The depiction of teachers in the rural areas and villages especially in developing countries by media is that of someone who is well-learned and could never make a mistake. However,

there has been a lot of physical and verbal abuse which was treated as usual because the teachers felt they were able to control the pupil by hitting them whether it was in the form of a slap, hitting them with a cane stick or any hard object. This example is illustrated in the Electricity Board Junior High School for Girls, Anpara in Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh (India) who announced a stress position (i.e. used within corporal punishment) to nearly 15 8<sup>th</sup> standard pupils and compelled them to run on the playground without their skirts. It must be noted that in Delhi (India) such cases and complaints of corporal punishment are limited and primarily emerging from government schools. It must be noted that there are frequent seminars and discussions organised to deal with corporal punishment, teachers are educated that this is a serious offence which can be punished and there is no room for violence (Corporal punishments: How schools can teach kids without harsh penalties, 2017)

It is interesting to note that uncivilised behaviour is not limited to the developing countries but even takes place in our modern world which has been reported by the media over the years. For example, the controversial case of Peter Harvey, a teacher who hit a 14-year-old boy in a high school in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, U.K. At the heart of this attack is poor classroom discipline and management which started during a science lesson when pupils were experimenting with what kind of materials would be ideal for safeguarding an ice-cube from heat. During this process, pupils started humiliating Peter Harvey by calling him rude words, i.e. "psycho" and "bald-headed" to name a few. Despite the fact the teacher was liked by his colleagues and pupils, he lost his patience and tried to wrestle a Bunsen burner stand from a 14-year-old boy who used derogatory words to trigger Peter Harvey. The findings showed the boy was the root cause in triggering this entire troublesome situation. He was previously sword fighting with a ruler and playing volleyball with scrunched up paper.

Furthermore, he was found to have caused disturbance during lessons at the school at least nine occasions in a single year (Carter, 2010)

By referring to the Peter Harvey case we can learn that effective classroom discipline is needed, and disruptive pupils should be punished but not physically or humiliated. The purpose of classroom management as mentioned earlier is a twofold one. Firstly, to develop a peaceful and harmonious environment which would allow pupils to participate in meaningful learning in a subject. Secondly, the role of classroom management is a fundamental one since it contributes to the pupils moral and social growth. It must be emphasised that during an early stage, classroom management asserted pupil behaviour and discipline which originated in a behaviourist understanding. It is within this context that a referral to the theoretical background will be necessary and add a great value to this thesis since it would help understand the origins, behaviour and its correlation to discipline (Postholm, 2013)

### **2.3 Theoretical background: Behaviourism & Constructivism**

When referring to the background of behaviourism and constructivism, two notable theorists within this context, Skinner and Watson are known as the prominent names of the behaviourist school. On the other hand, Piaget and Vygotsky gained popularity in their constructivism theory. As per Watson and Skinner, behaviour was something which could be speculated and managed (Skinner, 1974). On the other hand, as per the constructivist school of thought, Piaget and Vygotsky defined the components which assisted speculate what children comprehend at various phases (Rummel, 2008).

According to the behaviourists, they firmly believe that it is only the observable, measurable and outward behaviour which is worth undertaking for scientific research (Bush, 2006, p.14). It is, therefore, their emphasis on learning was impacted by modifications in

behaviour. They reached a conclusion that provided there are the correct environmental influences; all learners would gain the same comprehension and that all pupils could learn. A behaviourist is someone who remains persistent in exploring the information that needs to be learned and the influence of the environment once the learning takes place (Bush, 2006)

On the other hand, the constructivists vary in their thoughts because they perceive learning is in the quest for meaning. They state the construction of knowledge takes place by the learner and that it is the learner who will be responsible for developing their comprehension which is only possible via experience.

Furthermore, they are keen on discovering the way the learner is trying to develop meaning (Bush, 2006)

Hardesty (2018) believes teacher oriented behaviourism is ineffective within the context of a classroom because pupils are taught to receive a reward and gratify the teacher instead of teaching them how they can learn and become self-disciplined learners who would appreciate the process of learning new things and accomplishing an activity as the reward instead of a star put next to their name on the classroom wall.

Furthermore, since the reward and punishment system at present is a teacher-oriented one, it tends to favour the teacher instead fulfil the needs of the pupil and the teacher which is unfair. As a pre-service teacher, she supports the notion of a person-oriented system which focuses on fulfilling the needs of the learner and the teacher by creating such a balance. She refers to a detailed review of 119 people/student centred learning studies which stretched out to 56 years indicating there has been a positive change within cognitive learning: math skills, self-esteem, enhanced originality, talent, and critical thinking. Furthermore, there has been a reduction in students dropping out, improved attendance and less severe behaviour. It is within this context that such a system is beneficial for pupils and the teachers. Not only

were the pupils learning far more but they were also gaining self-esteem, and they were less deviated and had better behaviour which reduced the burden from the teacher.

Within a constructivist environment, a teacher's role is to develop a learning environment which is informative, interaction, invigorating and immersive. A student-oriented environment is applied within a constructivist environment when it comes to the learning part. Maor (1999) refers to the significance of studies which were achieved within the context of constructivist-oriented techniques to learning and teaching which have corroborated the significance of modifying the role of the teacher within the learning process. Maor (1999) points out that the teacher would become the coordinator or mentor. They do not have all the knowledge, generously enabling it to stream down to the considerable resources of the learner. It is within this context that this could be the reason contributing towards apprehension for teachers since ambiguity emerges and enfolds their new responsibility (Schwier & Cey, 2001)

It must be emphasised that the constructivist teachers need to develop opportunities for peer scaffolding and teacher-oriented scaffolding; a procedure that enables engagement which stimulates knowledge development and nevertheless bridges differences of knowledge levels within a classroom environment. Conventional teachers would usually be unhappy with such kind of exchange (Jarvinen 1998, Cohen, 1993)

Now coming towards classroom management and the issue of stress which applies to the teachers and students. As seen, the constructivist theory best applies for creating a positive learning environment which can probably influence towards competent classroom management. Before we proceed and examine the various literature on classroom management and strategies to reduce stress, a brief introduction to classroom management is pivotal.

## **2.4 Classroom management: a brief introduction**

When you think of classroom management, the first thing that comes to your mind is a teacher or a class monitor who oversees ensuring there are peace and an orderly structure where everything is going as per a specific task or order. From the effective delivery of class lectures to activities to ensuring all the pupils are paying complete attention to the classroom activities, it is all inclusive of what defines classroom management. In a nutshell, it is ensuring discipline has been maintained and handled if things go out of control. Since teaching cannot exist in isolation and would require a peaceful environment to support and most importantly the attention given by pupils to the lesson taking place. It is therefore pivotal that classroom management is not underestimated as a routine activity or an insignificant component of teaching whereas it forms the crucial element and foremost. The term classroom management can be described as the techniques and strategies a teacher would employ to sustain a classroom environment which helps ensure the pupil excels and learns. One of the leading factors that contribute to their success is the environment which will help accomplish their desired goals (Classroom management definition, n.d)

Classroom management includes various kinds of skills and methods which are used by teachers to ensure pupils are behaving in an orderly manner, paying attention, focusing on the given activities and task and performing in an academically productive manner within a classroom setting. (Classroom management, 2014) If classroom management strategies are applied efficiently, teachers will reduce the behaviours which impede learning for individual pupils and groups of pupils. On a general level, competent teachers would exhibit strong classroom management expertise; while the hallmark of the inexperienced or less competent teacher would show a poorly organised classroom which is full of pupils who are not paying any attention and not producing academic results through the tasks they are given (Classroom management, 2014)

On the other hand, if there is a poorly structured classroom where routines and expectations are absent, it would become hard for the teacher to conduct her job efficiently. Pupils will be lost as to what to follow and what to exactly do which may trigger them to cause chaos in a class by bullying or fighting or engage in another disruptive behaviour. We must remember that it is the teacher in fact who continuously redirects pupils or handles behavioural problems; when this happens, she ends up losing her most important time to teach. It is therefore imperative to have in place effective strategies which will ensure everything is going on in a systematic manner (Why classroom management is important, n.d)

Nazzal (2015) notes the case of U.A.E where classroom management can be a major problematic task since it becomes hard to discipline badly behaved pupils with the emergence of online videos during 2015 highlighting how teachers were brutally hitting pupils in U.A.E schools. As a result of these shocking videos, methods of how to handle disruptive pupils have come to light and concerned the society. The initial video was published on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015 which showed a sixth grader constantly slapped by a teacher in an Ajman school on his neck and head. Two days later, there was another video which surfaced showing a laboratory assistant kicking and hitting a student in an Al Ain school. This was followed by a third video (two days later) that showed a teacher in Fujairah who was punishing a pupil by hitting on the head. The reaction from the public was shocking, and they were unable to believe such things were happening in U.A.E schools. It was regarding the cases, Dr Saliha Afridi, a Clinical Psychologist and the Managing Director at Lighthouse Arabia explained there were three fundamental reasons why a pupil may not comply with discipline (Nazzal, 2015). Firstly, there is the family atmosphere- since some children grew up in a home atmosphere where there is a lack of structure, discipline or expectations, the child does not conform. This is followed by defiance where some children suffer from a disorder known as “oppositional defiance disorder” which is shaped by

children who are continuously insolent, reckless, uncooperative and combative towards authoritative figures and adults. It is within this context that such children require individual and family therapy which would help them treat their disobedience. Lastly, deep lying issues about learning problems or emotional issues. (Nazzal, 2015)

The Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA), a Dubai education regulator highlighted the significance of bad behaviour and handling bullying oriented issues in schools in U.A.E by asking parents and teachers to work as a team collectively. This move took place after a study showed shocking results that thousands of pupils felt insecure in their classroom. A total of 64, 686 grade 6 to 9 pupils at 168 schools supervised by the KHDA discovered that 11% felt unsafe in school (Rizvi, 2018)

## **2.5 PROBLEM: CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT CAUSED BY STRESS: The impact of stress on teachers and pupils & how it impacts them**

The teaching profession is not exempt from stress since it requires a lot of effort from the teacher to be well-organised, patient and thick-skin in many aspects when addressing and dealing with a classroom full of pupils. However, understanding the depth of stress impacting teachers and pupils and its impact on the overall efficiency of the classroom is necessary since poor behaviour can result in poor academic performance which is terrible news for teacher and their teaching career. On the other hand, if there is a classroom which is well-managed and is focusing on the classroom lectures and paying attention to the instructions of the teacher, the likely results are positive. Lutoff (2018) points out that the challenges experienced by teachers cannot be neglected since they contribute to immense stress. As per the research study sponsored by the University of Missouri, 93% of teachers questioned said they were experiencing high levels of stress. Not to forget it is the students who are experiencing it significantly as well, recording the highest stress levels which are

resulting in low grades along with troublesome behaviours. Such results confirm that teacher stress can directly impact the performance and well-being of pupils. Regarding the causes of teacher stress, the research notes that teacher stress is mainly caused by one of three factors; these are namely- time management, performance evaluation and student behaviours (Liftoff, 2018)

The referral of the term “bad behaviour” generally applies to pupils behaving in a disruptive manner which includes not doing their coursework, classwork or tasks on time and not paying attention.” In terms of the impact it has on pupils, if they behave in such a manner, it would only make the entire atmosphere of the classroom unpleasant and destroy the focus of rest of the classmates including the teacher who may lose her or his rhythm to teach (Liftoff, 2018). In addition to this, there is a security concern if some form of violence may take place; such activity increases the level of worry and causes a great deal of stress. From an impact perspective, schools are becoming extremely vigilant when it comes to taking the necessary measures to handle fearful parents, teachers, and pupils (Liftoff, 2018)

There is also the concern by teachers who emphasise on time management as a continuous challenge. Considering the fact there is a boom in the security regulations and new testing protocols, and the new age teachers are faced with an ever-increasing and necessary array of meetings and training sessions. Such demands are encroaching more than ever on personal time which results in teacher burnout. Pupils are impacted by this as well. If the teacher is highly stressed and experience, they are overloaded with work, they would have restricted time to pay attention to pupils and the lessons. Due to such time limitation in the classroom results in emotions of worry and insecurity amongst pupils (Liftoff, 2018)

Walker (2018) refers to the research conducted by Keith Herman and Wendy Reinke, professors at the MU College of Education and doctoral student Jal’et Hickmon-Rosa; their

findings showed that 93% of elementary school teachers reported they were undergoing a high level of stress. A total of 121 teachers (teaching kindergarten till 4<sup>th</sup> grade) in an urban Midwestern school district to complete self-report measures on their levels of stress, efficacy, coping and burnout. Emphasising on how educationists excel or fail in handling their role pressures. For instance, within the burnout category, it refers to most teachers are unable to manage in the classroom which comes to down in terms of how they make the changes.

During the early 1970s, the concept of burnout surfaced which can be described in numerous ways. Gold and Bachelor described burnout as a function of the various stresses experienced by individuals in their social life and professional life. On the other hand, Edelwich and Brodsky (1980) describe it as an advanced loss of enthusiasm, motive, idealism and worry due to work. Furthermore, burnout can be described as a syndrome of sentimental tiredness, decreased achievement and depersonalisation that is a particular danger for individuals who work with other people in some capacity (Maslach & Leiter, 1997)

The role of self-efficacy is important and is related to teacher burnout. As described by Bandura (1995), self-efficacy is a cognitive procedure where one construct beliefs about one's abilities to structure and apply courses of action needed to generate given achievement. From a recommendation perspective, individuals who see themselves as worthy would try and successfully apply activities or tasks.

Furthermore, individuals with high efficacy beliefs persisted with the activity even at the time of hardship and accomplished higher results with lower levels of stress. It would not be wrong to state that self-efficacy helps in making a noticeable difference in the way people experience a low sense of self-efficacy which is linked with worry, helplessness and

depression. Various researchers mention the correlation between teacher efficacy beliefs and teacher burnout. For instance, Schmitz and Schwarzer (2000) discovered a negative correlation between burnout and self-efficacy. Similarly, Chwalisz, Altmair and Russel (1992) noted that teachers who scored low in self-efficacy reported a higher amount of burnout as compared to their counterparts who score high in self-efficacy. On the other hand, Brouwers and Tomic (2002) discovered self-efficacy attitudes of teachers were prominently and negatively connected to the depersonalisation and emotional tiredness aspects of burnout and prominently undoubtedly associated to the personal achievement dimension of burnout.

The level of teacher's sense of efficacy is connected to the teacher's classroom management and instructional strategies (Smylie, 1989). It is within this context that Henson (2001) explored the correlation between teacher efficacy and classroom attitudes of control. From the results, it is apparent that the more efficacious teachers use positive strategies for classroom management. Furthermore, Emmer and Hickman (1991) recommended that instead of ranking teachers on a low or high scale in their entire teaching efficacy; perhaps it would be better to explore their efficacy in critical sub-areas, i.e. classroom management one of them.

According to Linsin (2011)'s interpretation of teacher burnout, it occurs when the level of mental tiredness and stress would exceed its usual limit. This is a condition which impacts many thousands of teachers annually. Stating as the number one cause of stress for teachers in their attempts to convince pupils to behave appropriately. Not to forget, debating, threatening, lecturing, scolding and discussing misbehaviour tend to be ineffective and highly stressful. One of the most common cause for a teacher's burnout is the limited time they must prepare lectures properly, sit and collate their thoughts in an organised manner.

Now that we have examined the stress experienced by pupils, we now focus on the stress experienced by teachers and how that is correlated to pupils. According to the report published in the journal “Social Science & Medicine,” researchers evaluated the burnout levels of 17 teachers of fourth till the seventh grade. In addition to this, they evaluated levels of cortisol (the stress hormone) in their pupils (about 400) by taking samples of saliva at three various times during the school day. From the findings, researchers found that pupils had higher levels of cortisol if their teachers reported higher burnout levels. The outcome will be an ineffective teaching session and poor classroom management; with less connection to pupils and less satisfaction with their work. There is no denying that classroom teachers are responsible for multitasking roles for elementary school pupils which includes: role model, parental and mentoring roles which means they end up spending a great deal of their time in the school interacting where they end up burned out, and this ends up impacting the pupils through the transfer of the stress from the teacher to the pupil (Sifferlin, 2016)

In an article titled: “The Teacher Burnout Epidemic” Rankin (2016) observes that in the U.K, the Education Staff Health Survey found 91% of the school teachers were experiencing stress in the past two years whereas 74% suffered anxiety and 91% experienced an overburdening of workload as the primary cause. Even though the working conditions and demands tend to differ from country to country, however, if a country has developed an educational system, it means most of its teachers will be suffering from burnout.

According to an article titled: “Teacher stress and health” published by the Pennsylvania State University (US), the adverse outcome of stress is not confined to teachers alone but also impacts the level of academic achievement for pupils and higher costs for schools. As per a New York City research study; there was a higher teacher turnover which resulted in

lower fourth and fifth-grade pupil accomplishment in language arts and math. It was estimated that the cost of teacher turnover was more than \$7 billion per annum (Teacher stress and health, 2016). In their report, they (the Pennsylvania State University) state there are five causes of stress which can be classified as follows:

1. School organisation: culture, leadership and climate: if there are unsatisfied relationships with fellow teachers, pupils, school staff, administrators and principal, this can contribute towards increasing the level of the teacher's stress, weak commitment to pupils and reduced job satisfaction. Furthermore, there is a correlation between principal turnover and teacher turnover. Once leadership is changed, it can have a dangerous impact for schools who are in high poverty areas or low-accomplishing schools and schools which have a poorly qualified or experienced staff of teachers (Teacher stress and health, 2016).
2. Job demands: Due to the ongoing high demands for teachers is a primary predictor for teacher stress. For instance: increased use of high stakes testing on the district and state levels which can be exacerbating such an issue by restricting the control of teachers over the material and speed of their work. Not to forget the escalating dangers of teachers terminated and the closure of the school. Handling pupils with behavioural issues and working with hard parents are two additional demanding interpersonal issues which generate chronic stress and result in teachers experiencing their vulnerability towards depression (Teacher stress and health, 2016).
3. Teacher's resources and social, emotional competence: due to the increasing high job demands and stress merged with low social-emotional competence (SEC) along with classroom management skills, attrition and poor teacher performance escalate. It must be emphasised that a teacher's own SEC along with well-being are primary factors which influence pupil and classroom results. However, very little teachers

have an opportunity to undergo training and to develop their own SEC. Consider a teacher not able to handle their stress properly, their delivery of instruction will suffer which would result in impacting pupil well-being and accomplishment (Teacher stress and health, 2016).

4. Teacher stress affects their physical health: Their physical and psychological health suffers profoundly due to increased workload and stress. The psychological stress and physical stress are interrelated (Teacher stress and health, 2016).
5. Teacher stress is associated with poor teacher performance and poor pupil results: as per a longitudinal study, elementary school teachers who suffered from high levels of stress and showed more symptoms of depression developed classroom atmospheres which were less productive to learning. As a result, there was poor academic performance amongst pupils. Pupils who started the school year with poor math skills and had a teacher suffering from depression or its symptoms resulted in the lowest rate of accomplishment (Teacher stress and health, 2016).

## **2.6. Conclusion**

This chapter focused on providing background on classroom management, its importance, the proposed strategies and methods which can be used by teachers and students within a disruptive environment and how they battle stress. The findings show that stress is responsible for increasing the workload of the teacher and it becomes difficult to maintain law and order in a classroom because that deviates the entire attention on additional work and creates an unpleasant environment amongst the students. It is a loss in productivity and unable to achieve goals per session. Proposing solutions and implementing them would help in alleviating the situation because this way teachers are aware of what accurate measures must be used and how to handle a stressful classroom environment, especially disruptive students.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, research methodology is discussed and examined. The chosen research methodology to conduct our desired research is a qualitative method of interviewing teachers. One of the primary reasons for choosing qualitative method is because we are unable to get detailed information from quantitative research (i.e. surveys) since that would only provide us with statistics or a general set of information. However, with qualitative methods, we can get detailed information by evaluating the various angles of the same subject. Such exhaustive input helps add original information which builds on to existing knowledge and literature.

### **3.2 Qualitative research method**

Number of interviewees: 10

Location: Fujairah, U.A.E.

### **3.3 Context of study**

The educational system in the U.A.E is segmented into private schools, public schools and higher education. It is the duty of the Ministry of Education (MoE) to manage all the UAE based education councils and authorities if outlined by the ADEK (Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge). The ADEK was founded in 2005 (it was previously known as the ADEC: Abu Dhabi Education Council) who was mainly in charge of the administration and authority of the Abu Dhabi's public schools. It must be seen that the education field remains as a top government goal and of great importance for the U.A.E. As per the U.A.E Vision 2021 that was launched in 2010 it stresses the growth of a first-rate

education system. It is worth noticing that the education sector has consistently developed rapidly. The Education 2020 Strategy which has created by the UAE's Ministry of Education (MoE) aligned with the Vision 2021 is created to raise the education sector towards improvement (United Arab Emirates: Education, 2019)

### **3.4 Research design, Sampling and Data collection**

A qualitative research method was used for the research methodology where a series of interviews were conducted with teachers from a public secondary school in Fujairah based on my personal teaching experience and the fact, and I am familiar with the schools in Fujairah I chose it for ease of information and contacts. The purpose of choosing this method was to evaluate their approaches towards classroom management and how they would reduce stress for themselves and the pupils. The interviews were conducted by email due to time limitation. The nature of the questions was designed to get an understanding of how effectively or ineffectively they were used interventions and strategies to handle the situation. Using a qualitative method was ideal for this thesis because I wanted to get a detailed understanding of their methods and ways of dealing rather than only focus on getting common answers and figures which could not be achieved by a questionnaire. Also, the limitations of a questionnaire in this context are that it would only provide a generic set of answers or favourable and non-favourable choices or preferences used by teachers.

**Research design:** the purpose of a research design is to make sure that the proof acquired allows one to efficiently focus on the research problem in a logical manner which is clear. Acquiring information appropriate to the research problem usually consists of narrowing the kind of proof required to test a theory, assess a program and to precisely define and evaluate the meaning associated with a particular problem or situation that is of interest to research.

A detailed design is relevant for researching the chosen set of respondents since these best suits the nature of the research work for this thesis. Within a descriptive design it assists in offering answers to the specific questions, i.e. what, where, who, how and when connected to a specific research problem (i.e. in this case examining how the efficiency of classroom management helps in decreasing student stress) (Organizing Your Social Sciences Research Paper: Types of Research Designs, n.d)

### **Sampling**

A total of 10 interviewees were contacted to undertake the interviews which would help in adding value to the existing knowledge and literature available. Also, we wanted to focus on teachers in Fujairah to understand how their practices were mainstream and to what extent they were aligned with the effective classroom management techniques

### **Data collection methods**

A combination of mixed data collection methods was used to construct and conduct this thesis; i.e. primary and secondary methods where primary research was conducted in the form of the interviews organised and conducted with teachers from the secondary school in Fujairah. Such research was descriptive since we acquired original information via direct communication with them. An online interview took place with them in order to save time and make it easier for them to answer since there was limited time, it was not possible to organise a face to face interview which would have been far better in providing detailed information. On the other hand, the secondary data used included the existing literature review that builds on the theoretical and existing literature to provide us with clarity on what aspects are covered and what is missing in this regard.

### **3.5 Findings / Interview findings**

1. Did you ensure the learning environment (the classroom) was offering an appropriate environment from a psychological and physical perspective?

Answer: Most of the teachers stated that they would ensure the furniture of the classroom was put in the right order, and there were no unnecessary hanging items or equipment or rubbish which may cause any accidents from taking place. Also, they wanted to make sure the internal environment was vibrant so they used colourful paintings or artworks created by children that would spread positivity. All of them agreed they would get children involved in activities and question their ideas and opinions to make them feel valued and essential. According to one of the English teachers of 5<sup>th</sup> grade, she ensured the classroom environment was well-balanced in terms of proper discipline and visually appealing. “I wanted to make sure the classroom had a positive and welcoming atmosphere rather than a boring physical appearance which would discourage students from focusing on the lectures.”

2. How do you deal with a disruptive child?

Answer: Most of the teachers replied they would try to control the situation by saying nicely that it is not to behave like that and create problems because it spoils the environment. Some of the teachers said they would use clear behaviour rules which are mentioned on the notice board of the classroom which makes it clear what is acceptable and what is not. Only a few of them would punish the disruptive child by making them sit in the back of the classroom bench, so they feel excluded.

3. Do you take any actions and decisions before you start your lesson?

Answer: Most of the teachers agreed they would come organised and ensure they have the material for the daily lesson. Also, they will make a list of who the troublesome children are in the class so they can keep a watchful eye over them.

4. Do you keep a friendly atmosphere in the classroom?

Answer: A positive attitude and environment are maintained by most of the teachers who say they make a genuine effort to prepare children to look forward to learning and enhance their knowledge and respect the teacher as an authority. However, some teachers say they prefer to keep a dangerous environment and want to be respected by behaving strictly. They grade them correctly and maintain fairness, but they do not exhibit too much niceness in their emotion as most of the teachers do.

5. How to ensure there is effective teaching in your method?

Answer: Some of the teachers said they preferred a memorisation or repeating method whereas others said they wanted to use the teach and show in practice on the blackboard or through a concrete example so the child can understand instead of making them repeat and not understand what the teacher is talking about. One of the art teachers explained: "Being able as a teacher to manage your classroom and your students successfully and what is more important is providing a safe environment for all my students. Managing students' behaviours, managing your materials and strategies. As well as, time management in order to achieve your goals in a positive environment."

6. What is the most relevant method to classroom management in your case?

Answer: All the interviewees said they used a comprehensive approach to classroom management that included finding a solution to the problem and know how to avoid it

before it happens. Also, they do not use any physical form of punishment to hurt or insult the child. According to the history teacher of grade 6: "I aim to demonstrate the behaviour I would like to see in the classroom. For instance, I make eye contact when talking." This view is shared by the Arabic teacher of grade 4 who says: "I ensure there is no interruption in the classroom during lectures." Furthermore, the grade 6 Maths teacher believes in making a class interesting: "I do not like to see my students which is why I like to use an engaging curriculum which I consider is an excellent tool that helps a teacher manage the class well."

7. How do you handle stress due to classroom management problems?

Answer. Most of the respondents said they would meditate or go for a massage or switch off their phone to stay away from any more stress. However, others said they would speak to a colleague or the administrator or a friend to release their stress. Almost, everyone agreed they reported a disruptive or stressful episode but also requested for new methods and strategies to improve the situation. One of the science teachers mentioned that it is "the lack of discipline in the classroom is the main reason on student's productivity, which effect on teacher's performance. Teachers always try their best to provide their students with new information and new experience in a safe environment. However, finding yourself as a teacher in a missy classroom makes you feel hopelessness. Also, the teacher will lose trust in her ability to manage the classroom. Therefore, teachers will feel nervous in the classroom, and at that time her focus will be on covering the materials without thinking about other students who want to learn."

8. Do you call the parents of a disruptive child (children) frequently or do you explain the problem to them?

Answer: All of them agreed they would speak to the parents, but they would then have a meeting with the principal, and then an appropriate solution was recommended, i.e. therapy for the child which would enable the parents to understand the situation. Also, the teachers would ask the parent about the home environment to understand whether the child was experiencing any emotional problems or was disruptive at home as well so they can study a pattern of behaviour

### **3.6. Conclusion**

From the interview findings it is visible there are like minor differences in the opinions of teachers when it comes to their understanding of the common problems experienced within the framework of classroom management. They expressed their concern about how they wanted to search for new methods to ensure they implemented effective methods of classroom management. Continuous efforts are made to address and solve any hurdles they face in their teaching experience.

## **CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATION & CONCLUSION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Within this chapter, discussion, recommendation and conclusion are presented which will build on the findings from the interviews conducted with the teachers from the school in Fujairah. Also, the findings will examine to what extent they answer our research questions. Furthermore, a plethora of recommendations is provided since it would help in shedding light on the variety of methods or strategies which can be used to improve the problem of disruptive behaviour and maintain efficiency through peaceful measures. The strategies are applicable to teachers and students because both need to work as a team, and they coexist; both cannot take place in isolation. However, original proposed ideas of managing stress are addressed, followed by common measures of resolving the issue and how the school authorities can be actively involved in implementing a positive culture.

### **4.2 Discussion of findings**

From the findings of the interviews conducted with 10 of the teachers, it is apparent that they are fully equipped with the latest knowledge and strategies however not all of them are following them as they should. Findings show there is no physical abuse or hitting involved and that teachers demonstrate a sense of empathy for the child and do not humiliate the child to demoralise them. Also, the necessary measures are taken to make them feel an essential part of the classroom. Stress management strategies need to be provided proactively through awareness or training which is the responsibility of the school's principal. The use of recommending therapy for troublesome children is a good idea because they focus on solutions rather than excluding the child from the surroundings of the school. Also, the inclusion of parents is a good sign that parents must be involved in understanding the fundamental problems their child may be experiencing at school.

Furthermore, if they are unaware of their child's problems in school, this gives them an opportunity to focus on them and understand whether something at home is going on. Not a lot of importance is given to stress management techniques in these schools which means there is a market gap that needs to be closed and the Government in the U.A.E needs to facilitate and make it necessary to encourage the stress management workshops for teachers and pupils respectively. One of the teachers stated the importance of group work and the techniques they can use to motivate pupils: “Group work, giving each student a role in the group, group motivational chart, be a model role, respect my students, give them high expectations, trust them, positive feedback and involve parents in their students learning.”

On the other hand, when talking about the significance of discipline, one of the English teachers said: “If there is discipline, all my students will get a chance to learn and express themselves. There will be no gaps between students and teachers; students will be happy and relax in receiving information; teachers can meet all students' different needs. Students will be able to notice their improvements.”

In this entire classroom management efficiency and stress relationship, it is pivotal that the role of parents, teachers and the school authorities is not ignored since they are essential in rectifying the classroom discipline. One of the Arabic teachers stated: “Teachers, parents and authorities are all important in maintaining classroom discipline. However, the teacher is the main person in my opinion who is consistently searching for new ways to improve their teaching methods and implement a peaceful environment in the classroom.” Another English teacher agreed: “Teacher is the person who spends the time with students in the classroom and teachers can take parts as a parent in the classroom. Moreover, some students cannot be managed by teachers in the classroom, so parents and authorities must be involved in solving this issue.”

The English and Arabic teachers have described student stress in a similar manner, and they explain: "It is when a student is unable to pay attention to their homework and produce the high-quality work expected from them." On the other hand, the History teacher mentioned: "For me, if a student is experiencing anxiety or feeling bullied, they will be going through stress."

### **4.3 Recommendations**

How can teacher's, pupils and school authorities reduce stress & improve classroom management?

According to Doris Santoro of Boiwodon College, teachers are demoralized merely by a changing profession as they are burned out by its demands. It is, therefore, the responsibility of policymakers and school communities for restoring what has been taken away from the profession. It is within this context that Herman acknowledges that the level of stress experienced by educators is an alarm to the country about the state of the profession but supporting their use of potent coping strategies need to be considered as a potential resolution which is recognised by educators. Even though individual coping is significant, pragmatic, sustainable success is not possible if there is no complete school dedication to develop a healthy and productive environment for staff members and pupils. It is the duty of administrators who set the tone in their building for how teachers are seen and assisted. The priority of a teacher's well-being and offering higher rates of acknowledgement and positive feedback to teachers in comparison to criticism and judgment play a central role in setting a positive tone as noted by Keith Herman (Walker, 2018)

Linsin (2011) recommends a simple yet effective solution, i.e. arriving at school early and getting to work when a teacher is faced with burnout. It is vital to free the mind which would enable one to be organised which can be regarded as the “ultimate de-stressor”. Having a good idea of where the information is kept (including the lesson plan and idea) and how to access that rapidly would give peace of mind to the teacher. Secondly, ensuring the room is well-organised in terms of seating, getting rid of any obstacles, unnecessary boxes, equipment and old projects. A clutter-free classroom is a key to creating an attractive and productive atmosphere which would speed up the learning. Having such an open space would free the mind of the teacher to remain focused on their lecture. Thirdly, when the school lessons are over, it is best the teacher leaves the thoughts at school rather than take that extra baggage of thoughts and go home which would contribute towards anxiety and a bad night's sleep. Finally, having a proper diet which is significant in ensuring the intake of energy is correct; considering a small yet straightforward diet with small meals which helps sustain energy. Cutting down on the consumption of sugary foods, fatty foods, white flour and saturated fats is vital (Linsin, 2011)

Wilson (2017) takes a student-oriented approach in suggesting ways pupils can cope with stress with regards to classroom management. First, unstructured time is a big obstacle, for instance: lunch time or passing periods which can contribute to excessive worry for pupils. Within a classroom environment, a pupil can clearly communicate and put forward their questions; however, at times it becomes hard to engage with each other without the structure of class supporting their conversation. It is the duty of the administrator or the teacher to ensure pupils are not impacted during unstructured times and if they are, they should be fully equipped to deal with the situation to ease the inconvenience accordingly. For instance: adding some structure if the pupil is asked to

work on a task during lunch hour or permitting them to eat in the classroom with a teacher instead of the cafeteria.

Secondly, transitions. It is hard for pupils to get from one class to another on time; this is mainly the case for middle and high school pupils who may have various peers in every class. When they are expected to change classes frequently, this can cause anxiety in pupils. Within this context, the use of lockers can help in decreasing the number of textbooks a pupil is expected to carry since the use of textbooks for each class varies and poses a great issue for most pupils who perseverate on whether they would remember the lock combination or have enough time to get there and back. The solution, in this case, is to practice several times to make sure the pupil has the necessary confidence to open the lock and the locker. Not to forget that if a pupil wrote it on their backpack or school bag or purse, it would act as a reminder so they know they can access the information provided it is handy (Wilson, 2017)

Thirdly, social pressure. Despite a small class, pupils will experience a tough competition with each other for getting the teacher's attention. They would work as group members and compete at various times of the year since they build strong friendships along with retracting. It must be observed that pupils who are preoccupied with social tasks or activities which do or do not involve them are usually distracted in the classroom setting. Even though some pupils are naturally energetic and friendly, there are other pupils who experience social weirdness which ranges from shyness to an authentic disability with understanding conversation and body language (Wilson, 2017)

Fourthly, organisation. If a pupil is a careless type who ends up losing their things at school or home, this will contribute to their worry and stress. Such a reason can be easily seen when a pupil is searching through a stack of things without finding the right one.

The application of an organisation can help reduce this unwanted worry for many pupils who may require assistance outside from a family member or a teacher to learn and apply methods for remaining organised (Wilson, 2017)

Fifthly, class participation. There is a great deal of stress experienced by pupils due to the consistent fear about whether they would be called upon by the teacher to solve a question, especially the one they do not know. Note another example, when pupils are awarded points for their active class participation, some pupils deliberately make a choice to relinquish those points instead of speaking up or asking a question in front of fellow pupils (Wilson, 2017)

If the teacher observes a situation where a pupil's health or grade is suffering due to the phobia of class participation, it is important the pupil talks to the teacher about organising a private signal or making an agreement only to call on the pupil if pupil agrees to answer. By taking such an action, the pupil would be aware they are not blindsided which would motivate greater engagement from pupils who choose to keep a lower profile. Furthermore, some teachers may appoint a question beforehand which would enable hesitant learners to take part. For instance: if the teacher announces the class that she will call a specific pupil to share their answer for question 5 by the end of the class, the pupil will have all the night to practice and prepare an answer to that question. Sixthly, supplies. Some pupils tend to forfeit points or refuse to submit their coursework that does not meet the specifications the teacher has provided. For instance: if a project needs to include tabbed dividers to segregate every part; the pupil who forgot the dividers must be motivated to turn in the project and get at least partial credit for the work they have done. By doing so, teachers at times are not aware of the stress they are causing when pupils miss a specific colour of pen or other supplies which they think are obligatory for class. Seventhly, change in routine. If a pupil is accustomed to the usual

school schedule, i.e. events such as assemblies and fire drills which disrupt that routine, it can become hard for a pupil to retain their confidence along with their schedule to be properly followed. In order to tackle this situation, it is best to announce known changes well in advance or at least recognise from time to time that something unexpected could happen, so it does not come across as shocking when it occurs (Wilson, 2017)

Homework is another area that requires attention. Typically, homework must take place at home; however, there may be pupils who experience difficulties in completing their homework tasks which contribute to embarrassment when they do not hand it in on the submission date. Their embarrassment and annoyance can be compounded in classrooms where papers are exchanged for peer grading. It must be seen that teachers can play an important role in this case since they can decrease the extra worry which pupils experience by developing a designated drop-off-location for coursework instead of collecting it by using the conventional methods (publicly visible in the classroom). By bearing this in mind, the teacher would provide an advantage of providing a pupil with the reminder to submit their completed coursework by questioning them about passing coursework forward which can be accomplished by giving a reminder by the end of the class. For instance: "If you have not submitted your project on your way in, please drop it in the basket when you are making your way out." (Wilson, 2017)

Lastly, the role of extracurricular activities. For a pupil being involved in an extracurricular activity is a bonus to their academic life. They are encouraged to attend school due to such activities which include a plethora, i.e. arts, sports, swimming, badminton, cricket, table tennis, volleyball, basketball, baseball, culinary skills, and many others. There is no doubt that the majority of such activities are highly competitive, expecting years of hard work, effort and practice which make one eligible for participation during their high school days. The list does not end there since the pupil is expected to commit

a constant number of hours or time where they can undergo training. Most sports activities expect on-going training and conditioning even during the off-season; which means pupils are seldom permitted to complete a break. It is within this situation that pupils experience stress not simply due to the continuous hard work or making that extra effort in their extra-curricular activities to achieve the top position but also due to the fact their performances are usually at public events. If an athlete misses a major event, they are held responsible for the failure of the team. Similarly, artists who exhibit their work are immediately open to accepting misinterpretation and constructive criticism. Such things drive towards building stress that results in creative and talented pupils from withdrawing from tasks and things they otherwise enjoy, or they end up suffering on an academic level when their attention and time is dedicated on that specific extra-curricular activity (Wilson,17)

Starbuck (2017) suggests having a good understanding is the backbone in ensuring the classroom management is effectively managed and lectures delivered. When stress is in question, it becomes a major challenge for a pupil because they would not know how to deal with it right away. Learning as a process consists of emotional, behavioural, cognitive and physical symptoms which consist of namely: the fast heartbeat, a sense of isolation or loneliness, unable to focus, nausea, binge-eating or eating little, short-temper and troublesome sleep. Such symptoms must be mentioned as the key symptoms which pupils must keep an eye out for when they are experiencing a stressful episode. Also, by doing so, it would provide them with an opportunity to get the necessary support and advice so they can remain composed. Exhibiting stress towards pupils can be a stimulus also a motivator for action by motivating them to drive this energy and converting it into something positive and conducive. Assisting them to set practical, timely and step by step goals for their homework or revision. When pupils see small challenges, it helps

develop their confidence because they can then feel they can deal with bigger problems (Starbuck, 2017)

If a pupil makes a mistake during the learning process, this should not be mocked since our brain develops when we are making and thinking about a mistake. It is at the heart of the learning process to make a mistake, however, the majority of the pupils' fear making a mistake. It is, therefore, a must the teacher demonstrates to them that failing is not always a negative thing. Teachers must justify why mistakes are significant, motivating mistakes when allocating work and providing an example of how pupils can enhance by prompting them to ask reflective questions where they can conduct their self-evaluation (Starbuck, 2017)

The passing on of the pressure is a chain which tends to pass on when the teacher or the team leader is experiencing stress; this should be prevented. It is obligatory to avoid from passing this on and instead motivate positive thinking in pupils. Furthermore, practising mindfulness reaps numerous advantages for adults and children alike. For instance: in a school in the U.S, detention is substituted with mindful meditation- the outcome has been significant with better behaviour and attendance. As per a study on US Marines which highlights the significance and value of mindfulness; the results show that the purpose of the study was to prepare for deployment were the ones who attended mindfulness training and practised those exercises, i.e. focused breathing resulted in better working memory and moods. The practice of hours of meditation would not be practical within a school's setting but it is a good idea to have a minute breathing exercise where pupils can close their eyes and listen to every sound, they can for 30 seconds. Beneficial outcomes were noted by Starbuck (2017) where pupils were calm and brought their complete focus into that specific moment, to the teacher and the lesson.

#### **4.4 Interventions: collective and individual interventions**

There are three interventions suggested by Pennsylvania State University (US). Firstly, organisational interventions: this is a technique that emphasises on modifying the organisation's culture which would avoid stressful episodes from taking place. Secondly, organisation-individual interface interventions: this is a method which consists of developing workplace relationships and support. Lastly, individual interventions: in this context, it refers to a technique which educates individuals on how they can practice methods to handle stress (Teacher stress and health, 2016).

In their report, they (the Pennsylvania State University) state there are solutions to handling teacher and pupil stress. Firstly, the role of the school organisation: culture, leadership and climate: if there is supportive school culture, a principal auxiliary leadership and a cooperative, collegial environment are linked with higher job satisfaction amongst teachers whereas for newcomer teachers their ambition is to carry on with their teaching career. It is pivotal for a high level of teacher trust to be maintained and fulfilled in their leadership and colleagues which are connected to lower levels of stress and burnout (Teacher stress and health, 2016). Secondly, organisation-individual interface interventions: such a technique is aimed at emphasising on developing co-worker social support and expert training for pupils and teachers. Within this context there are three proven programmes which are under this classification, which are mentioned as follows:

1. ***Teacher induction & mentoring programmes*** which assist teachers & pupils excel: Such a programme is designed to offer technical and social assistance to teachers who are starting their teaching career via guidance, mentoring and orientation programmes.

2. Regarding the everyday activities included, these are namely: mentoring from teachers who belong to the same subject area, regular opportunities for supportive communication with administrators, workshops, seminars, team building and time-management (Teacher stress and health, 2016). According to the research (as of 2016), teachers who had mentors in their respective subject area had common planning time in their subject area and grade level followed by regular communications with their principal who had improved retention rates. Furthermore, detailed and more extended induction supports were highly beneficial (Teacher stress and health, 2016).
3. ***School workplace wellness promotion programmes & strategies*** which can save schools money and assist in enhancing teacher's health: within this context, one system-wide method to tackling teacher health and well-being refers to the application of workplace wellness programs. For instance, these include programmes which cater to lifestyle changes to decrease health risk behaviours and expenses (Teacher stress and health, 2016). As per the early proof of the advantages of workplace wellness programs in school; within the context of the U.S, one school district's wellness programme which started in 2011-2012 integrated administrative planning, insurance benefits and behaviour change initiatives/campaigns. More than half of the employees took part (Teacher stress and health, 2016).
4. ***Programmes focused on student behaviour and social and emotional learning (SEL)*** advantage to teachers and support classroom learning: within this context, can be seen that there is evidence to validate that programmes which were designed to enhance student behaviour and student SEL have resulted in positive results for pupils. In addition to this, it contributes to improved teacher functioning (Teacher stress and health, 2016).

5. ***Individual interventions:*** these are catered for individuals so they can use these methods to deal with their levels of stress. It must be observed that these interventions consist of psychological meditation, goal setting and cognitive behavioural methods to enhance active coping skills. Under this category, the following are the interventions suggested:
  
6. ***Stress management programmes:*** for teachers (focusing on mental & physical health): this includes stress and mindfulness-based professional growth programmes to help teachers maintain and improve their concentration. Also, they can pay attention to the current moment in a non-reactive way; linking their own experience to others with patience, humbleness and ease. The skills which are taught with the aid of sequenced activities, i.e. breath awareness, meditative movement, body scans, greater emotional awareness and the attainment of positive sentiments towards self and other people (Teacher stress and health, 2016).

#### **4.5 COPING STRATEGIES & STYLES FOR STRESS**

There are various coping strategies and styles as seen with the theories of Lazarus & Folkman (1984) where the focus is laid on the coping actions which take place, the effort to cope instead of the consequence. Furthermore, they stress on the fact that coping is a procedure which modifies over a period due to the individual and the environment which are consistently in a dynamic, mutually influential relationship. Such form of coping is known as “transactional model of coping”.

It must be pointed out that Folkman (1997) amended the original theoretical model of stress and coping recommended by Lazarus & Folkman (1984) mainly because positive psychological states needed to be incorporated. Within the amended model, transactions with the environment are appraised as dangerous or challenging; whereas stress is regulated

by sentimental focused strategies, designed to decrease the worry and handle the problematic situation. Such strategies could result either in an unfavourable resolution, non-resolution or a resolution. As per this model, the sentiment is produced three stages, namely; appraisal, coping and consequence. It is within this context that the three pathways are included.

During the first pathway, it is led by positive psychological states which provide meaning to the situation and result in revising objectives and planning objective oriented problem-focused coping (Folkman, 1997, p.1216). This is followed by the second pathway which is the reaction to the worry instead of the state which contributed towards creating it in the first place. It is within this context that it takes into consideration the co-occurrence of negative and positive conditions. Also, the negative conditions could be due to the only enduring worry which could result in the individual in trying (either consciously or unconsciously) to explore a confident understanding of the episode. Finally, the last pathway emerges from the favorable psychological conditions which emerge from the coping procedures per se and can assist the individual to be motivated once again, regain their energy and get involved again in goal-oriented tasks.

According to Dr Saliha Afridi, a Clinical Psychologist and the Managing Director at Lighthouse Arabia, if the home and school atmosphere vary, the child is unable to confirm and seems to challenge this. It is therefore significant for a parent to work hard on developing a home atmosphere which complies with the school atmosphere (Nazzal, 2015)

The dire need for an inclusive and integrated approach is necessary to ensure that disruptive pupils are taken care of and the classroom and school environment are secure

for everyone. As Hind Al Mualla, the chief of creativity, happiness and innovation at KHDA stated that teamwork was required where parents, decision makers and schools work collectively to handle poor behaviour of pupils. Since it is the duty of all the stakeholders (i.e. parents, operators, policymakers and teachers), maintaining a secure and happy atmosphere is a key priority. Given a situation where parents detect their child is behaving in a negative or bullying manner, they can keep a watchful eye on the symptoms since it is the responsibility and goal of schools to make sure it is a healthy and safe space for everyone, especially pupils (Rizvi, 2018)

Al Shoraty (2014) suggests there are two key methods of classroom management. Firstly, the proactive method that emphasises on using all possible methods, policies and processes that result in refraining and avoiding classroom issues via effective elimination of their root causes and objectives which would foster learning. On the other hand, the second approach is the remedial one that stresses on searching for solutions to classroom issues once they have taken place. In a way, it is a sensitive method which is based on the teacher's response to their pupil's classroom behaviour. It ignores the use of initiatives or preventive methods to stop classroom disorder before it gets out of hand.

In an article titled: "Managing an Emirati Classroom: advice and admonitions", the writer lays a greater emphasis on how pupil misbehaviour was one of the major obstacles for new teachers in the U.A.E. He says the cultural factor is one of the issues to bear in mind and he provides an array of advice for teachers teaching an English course to an Emirati audience. He suggests building rapport is the backbone especially during the first week which would enable the teacher to know their pupils. It is important to maintain a balance by seen as an approachable, friendly yet an authoritative figure which would make pupils respect others. It is within this context that failing to deliver this image would mean pupils do not take you as a serious character which can

brew trouble at a later stage when there is chaos in the classroom. Not to forget the motivation element which is important and instead of creating a lesson in the conventional boring manner or a teacher-oriented one which limits to academic points only; it is a good idea to utilise communicative language teaching techniques when planning the lessons which will enable pupils to interact (Managing an Emirati Classroom: advice and admonitions, 2014)

When applying discipline in schools, teachers would choose from a variety of models and methods. Some of the factors which influence their selection are linked with the supposition elemental contending methods; the impact of various models on pupil's accomplishment and behaviour; followed by the comparative range to which the purpose of the disciplinary interaction is to develop order and to instil values (Lewis, 1999)The decision to use a specific method for classroom discipline for a teacher could result in handling rejection or tensions emerging from their goal to utilise educationally acceptable techniques of discipline. However, they aim to simultaneously and rapidly acquire and sustain the quantity of order within the classroom which is fundamental if subject learning needs to take place and teachers and pupils must feel safe from any disruptive behaviour and sentimental danger. It is also possible that the teachers may not be successful in disciplining the class in the manner they had anticipated (Lewis, 1999)

When examining the Group Management, a discipline model, we can note that teachers handle classrooms by structuring pupils by enabling them to be able to decide for themselves. They permit to enable power to reside with the pupils and teacher as a group where everyone is entitled to equal rights to contribute toward the decision of behaviour guidelines/standards. Furthermore, rules and outcomes are described at classroom

meetings where the teacher plays the role of a team leader. Also, the teacher selects not to use more power than any other team member to determine classroom strategy. After the strategy is created, the teacher will comply with it and use it. There is another model for discipline, known as the “Influence model” where teachers influence every pupil where they can decide to behave well. The teacher would motivate pupils to learn in their method of behaving with least adult supervision and bargain with fellow pupils on a one to one basis but select not to compel their opinions on them. In addition to this, they permit pupils to experience the natural outcomes of their behaviour, so they can select to amend the way they act (Lewis, 1999)

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis was to conduct a detailed study of understanding the efficiency of classroom management in reducing student stress. A variety of articles, reports, news sources and research papers were used for the literature review section. One of the key reasons for choosing this as our primary subject for research is due to the mounting number of shocking cases which took place in U.A. E's schools where children were found to be victims of cruelty at the hands of their teachers. The research is a double issue which focuses on teachers and pupils suffering from stress in the classroom. Resolution wise to propose strategies which can be effectively used to manage a classroom well.

There is no denying that teaching as a profession is a noble yet demanding one which requires multitasking and playing the role of a mentor, coach, parent and much more especially for pupils in primary to the elementary level. Stress is a part of our daily lives, but the endless number of significant responsibilities a teacher is faced with daily can contribute to a higher level of stress. It is a combination of everything ranging from the working environment, conditions and classroom management. From planning a lesson to checking the homework and maintaining an orderly class lecture are just some of the duties named. On the other hand, stress is not confined to a teacher only, but a pupil will suffer from it as well due to various reasons as discussed in this thesis. Some reasons include bullying, lack of organisation, poor time-management, shyness or an introvert personality, lack of participation and many others. Management of any form of stress taking place in a classroom can be toxic for the teacher and the learner. The relationship between a teacher and a learner is very closely linked when it comes to the transfer of stress. Let us say the classroom management is poorly managed, and this would mean that if one pupil or a group of children have started a disruptive behaviour; the rest of the

class will suffer. The lesson delivery will be delayed, and the teacher will be stressed, worried and have problems in managing everything as per the schedule and timetable. In order to ensure disruptive behaviour does not repeat, it is the responsibility of the policymakers, parents, team-leaders and teachers to come up with effective measures that can discourage this from repeating as pointed in the literature review, the views of Dr Afridi, a clinical psychologist in Dubai who stated that in order to deal with this situation, a collective approach is required. Essentially, understanding the troublesome behaviour of the child in question because without knowing the root problem, the problem will be an ongoing one. Punishing a disruptive child by physically abusing them in the form of violence is not the right way forward and neither will it tame or make the child obedient. In the U.A.E culture, children are not hit and while there may be cultural differences between the Western world or other cultures in comparison to the Emirati culture, but the fundamentals are pretty much the same. As pointed earlier there are numerous interventions which can be employed by the school to motivate teachers to reduce their stress. Also, individual interventions which help not only pupils but even teachers since both are important for a school.

There are various ideas available to help decrease stress in the classroom. I believe the teacher can post a daily schedule so she can decrease any doubts in her mind. Secondly, the classroom needs to be kept neat and clean, and it must be well-organised (i.e. all the furniture is in the right place/optional equipment is removed to avoid any accidents). Thirdly, reacting to disruptions calmly and privately. So instead of the teacher becoming angry or losing patience, she can talk to the disruptive pupils in private. By using privacy as an element, she is reducing any possibility of the accused disruptive children from being publicly humiliated in front of the rest of the class. The motive should be to confront them peacefully, so they realise their mistake not to get provoked and make

things worse. Fifthly, sustaining a confident and secure learning environment. Fourthly, ensuring pupils are given breaks to process learning. Lastly, teaching and modelling stress management skills in the classroom; this way not only can the teacher benefit from it but even the pupils who help achieve a balance of harmony. The teacher should be an approachable individual who is open to talking to pupils about extending the use of stress management to various areas of their lives (Dahl, 2011)

Overall the findings from the research methodology conclude that behaviour of teachers with their pupils is a positive one even though there is room for improvement in educating the teachers about the stress management strategies which they can learn about through training and workshops which will benefit them. Also, the punishment of excluding a child from the main bench if he or she is disruptive is not the right way because this may inject a negative feeling towards the teacher and the disruptive behaviour may cause stress in the future again.

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