

Classroom Teaching as a Parallel Therapeutic Setting: Implications for Therapeutic Effects of Learning

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ABSTRACT

Observation revealed that some primary and secondary school teachers are yet to understand how to tap and use the classroom setting to effect therapeutic change. This enkindles concern and worry, for childhood and adolescent psychological disorders that ought to have been nipped in the bud if identified early by such teachers, were left to become fully blown. In order to emphasize the need that teachers' responsibilities in the classroom should accommodate making classroom activities therapeutic, this qualitative research was embarked upon with the understanding that making early identification of learning and any other childhood and adolescence disorders will help the student get professional help and promote their active and optimal class participation. However, the perceived inadequate awareness of this untapped opportunity by teachers made it necessary that we use this study to canvass that teachers should be prepared for achieving near therapeutic outcomes for their students through their responsibilities as teachers. With this understanding we looked at different ways of how classroom teaching and therapeutic setting shared some characteristics. The implications inherent in our argument were discussed. One of our recommendations was that teachers need to be trained and exposed on how to identify disorders limiting the functionality of their students, as we observed the likelihood that classroom disruptive behaviours, for example, could be as a result of such unidentified and untreated disorders.

Keywords: Classroom Teaching, Teachers, Therapeutic Setting, Therapeutic Effects of Learning

INTRODUCTION

Formal teaching job is a noble profession often carried out in a classroom, or in some other formal learning contexts like laboratories. Teachers are the main reason that schools open and function in full, as they carry out their significant responsibilities which included transmitting knowledge, skills and values to students, giving grades, certificates and track recommendations, and evaluating and selecting for accessing the next levels of education and occupational positions (Neugebauer, 2019). In the education system, teachers are not only the key agents and the most important factor, they are central in the quality and equity seen in the system and argued to be the major cost factor, too.

Teachers are required to pursue relevant professional growth and development. Duta (2012) shared the view that teachers professionally grow from their experience and rigorous analysis of their own practice, underscoring that when teachers are professionally developing, they professionally grow by accessing opportunities to be trained by colleagues, someone external, or vicariously learn from other competent teachers who they watch do the job. They can also attend workshops, participate in professional meetings, be mentored, watch television documentaries relating to teaching or academic topic(s), and read professional journals for them to professionally grow. As teachers, they should keep learning, and be able to avail their students with what they learnt for their academic success. Teachers should be capable of effectively carrying out their professional responsibilities notwithstanding that the teaching job is emotionally laden (Meyer &

Turner, 2007). However, irrespective of how efficient teachers are, they are not the only factor determining what goes on in the classroom and what the outcome could be, students and school characteristics have been implicated (Garrett et al., 2019).

What happens in the classroom reflects an interplay of factors from the teacher, the student, and the learning environment. This makes classroom teaching goes on in a social setting. While teachers teach, they facilitate the process of change in their students, and encourage students to learn new things, unlearn old ones no longer needed, and relearn what are necessary. The possible changes that will occur is predicated on many other factors, some beyond the control of the teacher. But with due awareness of the importance of such factors in determining their success or not, it is likely that teachers will put them into consideration as they teach. This is a context where we argue that classroom teaching has almost the same characteristics seen in a professional psychotherapeutic setting, making both settings to be arguably parallel. Classroom teaching could be therapeutic if well managed. Firstly, we will be discussing some of the shared characteristics of the two settings. We will use the implications of where classroom teaching parallels with therapeutic setting to highlight how teachers could contribute in modifying behaviours and reshaping unhealthy thoughts of their students. It is our desire to enkindle or sustain the passion of teachers in nipping childhood and adolescent psychological disorders in the bud and help to mitigate the associated consequences experienced in childhood and adolescent stage, and beyond.

This study originated from the observation that some teachers in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria are yet to utilize the opportunity teaching offers in early identification of the psychological disorders preventing their pupils and students from learning effectively. Our aim is to bridge this gap by providing the literature that will help to effortlessly know the gains involved and help teachers understand how to tap and use the classroom setting to effect therapeutic change.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to show the parallel nature of classroom teaching and therapeutic setting to encourage the attainment of therapeutic change in the classroom. The specific purposes include:

1. To show the shared characteristics of classroom teaching and therapeutic setting.
2. To emphasize the implications of classroom teaching as parallel to therapeutic setting.

METHOD

This qualitative research borne out of the researcher's experience as a teacher and practicing clinical psychologist, focused on primary and secondary school classroom teachers who teach children and adolescents. The classroom setting was used to emphasize how early identification of childhood and adolescent psychological disorders can be made by teachers, as well as how teachers and classroom setting can predispose or maintain such disorders. Available literature were used to underscore that therapeutic changes can take place in a classroom setting, whereas teachers can in addition to their teaching responsibilities, be a veritable source of promoting therapeutic change in the classroom.

Shared Characteristics of Classroom Teaching and Therapeutic Setting

We will be discussing some of the areas of similarity between classroom teaching and therapeutic setting. Though we could might not be able to exhaust their similarities, it is proposed that utilizing these similarities will help to create sustainable and healthy functioning teachers and students in a classroom. We will be considering the similarities in the description of the two settings, and look at the position that both settings utilize theoretical foundations and freely use approved styles.

This part of our paper will end with the discussion that classroom teaching and therapeutic setting are guided by ethics.

Both Are Carried Out in Given Setting

Adesua and Akomolafe (2015) described classroom setting as four walls of the classroom of a formal school system where the curriculum or the school syllabus is implemented through professional teachers with the classroom environment likely to affect the quality of teaching and learning expected to take place. This shows that classroom setting is a place designed and planned with a target, which is to facilitate learning. Such a place considers that people who learn in this environment socializes and could come from different environments (Adesua, 2014). A classroom should be devoid of unwanted variables like noise. It should be a place learners and teachers feel secured.

Carley (2009) likened classroom setting to a business location, noting that successful class atmosphere and a good business have satisfied ‘customers’ who look forward to have further lessons (repeat business). It underscored that classroom setting is not a rigidly-arranged environment, as such, the flexibility of the sitting arrangement, for example, could be contributory in attaining major accomplishments. A classroom has notable things like tables, chairs, whiteboard, projector, etc. that are used in teaching and learning. The sitting arrangement requires that the whiteboard or the projector be placed to the view of all in the classroom. Classroom arrangement is the responsibility of the teacher and what is taught emanates from the learning needs of the student as stipulated in the curriculum. With the teacher and the students forming members of the classroom, a group is formed which usually have rules not antithetical to the school rules and regulations guiding their interactions.

On the other hand, a therapeutic setting refers to the walls, the structure, or space and even the condition under which therapy is administered. In one of the 2019 documents from Sandhillscenter.org, a therapeutic setting or environment was noted to have physical, environmental, and emotional safety; interpersonal and intrapersonal boundaries; physical space; and engagement and communication. Thus, a therapeutic setting is a room or an office where a professionally and certified therapist, via treatment techniques that are evidence based and hinged on theoretical paradigm(s), are used to provide professional help to one or more persons (referred to as client(s) or patient(s) who is/are suffering. It is a setting where treatment is facilitated via verbal and non-verbal communication. In this context, the therapist and the client(s) become a group. The therapist uses the knowledge of how to use treatment techniques to effect a change help the client to learn new things, unlearn unwanted behaviours, and relearn those ones that are no longer necessary.

Therapeutic setting is always situated in a place that will ensure the safety of all parties involved, and devoid of noise. All therapeutic paradigms guiding psychotherapy pursue positive change via exposing the client to learning. Some of the materials present in a therapeutic setting for achieving this learning include chairs/couch, tables, whiteboard, projector, etc. The sitting arrangement is one that is purposely done depending on the mode of psychotherapy. In group setting where you have the therapist as the facilitator and the clients as participants, the seats are usually arranged in a circle form, or to have the seat of the therapist positioned to face where the clients will sit. Rickard et al. (2020) observed that in therapeutic setting, different sitting arrangements have been used in session, and they included face to face, side by side, and the couch, all these were instances of sitting arrangement in an individual therapy.

Obviously, in classroom setting, teachers serve as the facilitator of change via learning as the therapist does in therapeutic setting. Both teachers and therapists are trained professionals. The teacher and the students form the group members in a classroom setting like the therapist and clients in therapeutic setting. Both classroom and therapeutic settings are of physical space situated in a quiet and safe place whereas the engagements carried out in each setting is done via various styles of communication. Some of the materials

present in both settings include chairs, tables, whiteboards, and projector. In classroom setting, students who present with the challenge of not knowing is akin to clients in therapeutic setting that present with the challenge of suffering. Through rules and regulations of the school and teachers' professional ethics, boundaries are created in classroom setting, like the same is achieved in therapeutic setting through the code of ethics guiding the profession. Consequently, the two settings even though are not argued to be the same, are seemingly similar. We argue that if teachers could see it this way, it will help them to factor some of the following (like teacher-student match and academic relationship) we discussed below as they teach.

Teacher-Student Match

Reasons why people decide to become professional teachers are many. It could range from intrinsic factors, extrinsic factors, have a source of income to meet one's needs, to other kinds of rewards like status gain. In a met analysis conducted by Heinz (2018), altruism, service-oriented goals, intrinsic sources of motivations like enjoyment of teaching, job satisfaction, creativity and an interest in teaching subject(s), desire to work with young people, and the opportunity for rendering important service, were found as some of the reasons for choosing teaching profession. Nevertheless, it should not end at that, finding out if those making such choice have the required characteristics is very important. Even when they possess the required characteristics, like professional knowledge (which included content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge), well-developed capacity for self-regulation, and certain beliefs, values and goals (Kunter et al. 2013a), it is still not enough to say that they will achieve the desired outcome.

Presently, research drive in this area should not be dwelling on the characteristics of teachers or that of the students alone, for rarely will one see an ideal teacher or ideal student, rather, the focus should be on looking at the interactive quality of the duo when they meet. This is what we referred to as the teacher-student matching. In therapeutic context, for example, Berzins (1977) acknowledged therapist-client matching as "the idea that certain therapist-patient pairings are more desirable than others" (p.222). Consequently, we allude that some teachers are not to teach some students and that some students are not to be under some teachers, not that the teacher is not qualified to teach or that the student is not willing to learn, but that other personal factors like personality, differences in worldview, etc., of the pair could not afford them to work together. This will definitely hamper successful academic relationship the duo ought to have. But the questions to ask include: Can our educational system allow this to happen? Would the teachers and the students benefit more from this compared to how it is done today? Is this matching feasible?

The Academic Relationship

In a classroom setting, just like in a therapeutic setting, conscious efforts are made to establish positively impacting working relationship between or among the parties involved. Camp (2011) defined academic relationship between the teacher and student as a formalized interpersonal association between an authority figure and a subordinate who interact on nearly a day-to-day basis. Obvious from this definition is that the teacher is presented as the 'authority figure' and the student as 'a subordinate'. This underscores that such relationship is not something that happened by accident, but planned, with both parties knowing what is expected of them. Besides, such a relationship has been implicated in the academic and behavioural success of students. For example, some decades ago, Fay and Funk (1995) reported that students who do not feel they enjoy positive relationships with their teachers were more disruptive, less likely to be academically engaged, and more likely to drop out. In other studies student who enjoy caring and supportive relationships with teachers were found to significantly improve both in behaviour and academic (Baker et al., 1997) and have increased motivation to learn (Steinberg et al., 1996).

In therapeutic relationship, the following makes it to work: a) Both parties are aware of their roles as well as the goals guiding their interaction (same can be said in the academic relationship between the authority

figure and the subordinate); b) It is entered into voluntarily, and initiated by the client and accepted by the therapist (as seen in school setting where students are voluntarily enrolled into the school, and teachers who they were assigned to accept to teach them); c) It is guided by moral and ethical codes (as obtainable in academic relationship); and d) Therapeutic alliance is formed between the therapist and the client, whereas they pursue the goal of inducing the client to behave in a manner which both the therapist and the client consider to be more desirable (as seen in the classroom setting where both parties pursue the goal of facilitating effective learning for the students) (Bernstein & Nietzel, 1980).

Both Accommodate Theoretical Foundations and Usage

Teaching is a well-coordinated exercise predicated upon a theory or theories. Teachers engage their teaching style on a specific learning theory suitable to achieve the lesson goal. We have different learning goals and one theory cannot serve them all. Chaudhary (2013) reported that Burner (1964) defined the theory of teaching as the explanation of “general methodology of teaching”, and that Smith (1969) argued that a teacher should be theoretically trained but anyone who is not will “interpret events and objects in terms of common concepts that have come from the experience of the race permeated without model ideas about human behaviour”.

Importance of theory in teaching can never be overemphasized. According to Chaudhary (2013), such theories provide answers to how teachers behave, why they behave as they perform and with what effect, and explains, predicts and controls the ways in which the teacher-behaviours affect the learning of students. Waseem and Aslam (2020) stated that behaviourism which is a psychological theoretical paradigm historically dominated such theories. These scholars went on to allude that most educational theories emanated from different other psychological paradigms that included cognitivism and humanism. Even the constructivism argued to be the modern face of learning paradigms (Waseem & Aslam, 2020), have known psychologists as the proponents. Take for example, Shunk (2012) alleged that Lev Vygotsky and Jean Piaget were central in defining the basic principles of constructivism approach. Also, the application of effective teaching theory espoused by Chen (2017) is embedded in psychologically underlined principles.

On the other hand, different therapeutic paradigms applied in a therapeutic setting stemmed from theoretical assumptions. Like obtainable in a classroom teaching, theoretical formulation of a given therapy is highly important in providing the background to understand the psychological issues the client is having as well as how the technique(s) of choice will be used to address such issues (Gladding, 2007). Corsini and Wedding (2005) estimated that over 400 different theories of counseling and psychotherapy are in use. Prerequisite to psychotherapy is that the psychotherapist must see that the technique(s) used in treating a client is embedded in a theory. Instances of these therapies include psychoanalytic therapies (embedded in psychoanalytic theories), behaviour therapies (embedded in behavioural theories), cognitive therapies (embedded in cognitive theories), cognitive and behavioural therapies (embedded in both cognitive and behavioural theories), and humanistic therapies (embedded in humanistic theories).

Generally, theory gives substance to psychotherapy. It provides the vehicle upon which psychotherapy is executed. It further substantiated the position of psychotherapy as a discipline focused on helping people change, whereas it ensured that idiosyncratic influences are better managed in application of psychotherapy. Even though those different theories inform different techniques of psychotherapy, all are geared towards fostering change as was obtainable with theories used in classroom teaching.

Our argument is that both settings agree that theories form the bases of the professional practice. They are in agreement that whether teaching or psychotherapy, formulation of what and how to identify and solve the needs (learning needs or treatment needs, as the case may be) must be predicated upon a theory. Both professions acknowledged the importance of theory in propagating learning exposure which yields the desired change. Theory and practice are two sides of the same coin, the professions by the importance

attached to theories, alluded that there will be no practice devoid of theoretical foundations.

Both Enjoy Unlimited Freedom of Using Approved Styles

Obvious thing is that all teachers and therapists are not the same. Individual differences are clearer when considering the preferred ways of teaching among professional teachers. We are aware that other factors such as personal, environmental, cultural, and circumstantial, among others, could determine a way to teach the teacher may adopt, but our emphasis is that both teachers and therapists are similar in expressing the freedom of how best to apply the chosen technique used in carrying out their professional practice. Both teaching and therapy application of these techniques are art even though embedded in scientific method. Professionals in these two fields enjoy unlimited freedom in how to carry out the demands of a chosen technique but should ensure that they operate within the purview provided by the technique.

Specifically, Sheikh and Mahmood (2014) defined teaching style as a multitask phenomenon that illuminates how teachers teach knowledge; accomplish classroom work, and supervision of students. According to Gillet et al. (2010), from significant environmental and social factors teaching styles influence motivation and performance via satisfying the need of belongingness in classroom. We are aware that there are different frameworks for classifying teaching styles (e.g., Fischer & Fischer, 1979; Pratt, 2002 cited in Frunza 2014). Frunza (2014) maintained that teaching styles represent a constant concern in the area of education. Moreover, teachers' teaching style affecting students' performance have been found by Ahmed et al. (2020) and Inayat and Ali (2020). Some of the unique features of teaching style include that it shows the teachers' preferred way of solving problems, behaving in the classroom, managing classroom environment, and choosing instructional methods (Gafoor & Babu, 2012)

Of the importance of styles in psychotherapy was emphasized by the stand that psychotherapist must show a paradigm alignment. Psychotherapists use paradigm alignment embedded in theories to guide their practice (Halbur & Halbur, 2010). Such styles determine what forms the areas of problem identification and treatment focus. Treatment styles inform how therapist carry out the treatment process from start to finish. In looking at such styles in the area of creating therapist-client matching and therapeutic alliance, for example, Doorn et al. (2020) maintained that the importance of language style cannot be underestimated for it has some benefits such as offering unique opportunities for the examination of therapist– client interactions, especially those 'implicit aspects which elude conscious awareness of the therapist, client, or outside observer, that nonetheless exert an influence on treatment outcome'.

Both are Guided by Ethical Code and Practicing License

Worthy to recognize is that different countries pride with their ethics code for professional teachers (e.g., Professional Code of Ethics for Teachers in Nigeria), unlike American Psychological Association (APA) (2017) ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct adopted by different countries. We will use Association of American Educators (AAE) code of ethics (see <https://www.snu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/CodeofEthicsforEducators.pdf>) to engage in this discussion. Via this code of ethics, their mission which, among others, is to advance the profession, and promote professionalism, is pursued.

A look at this ethics code revealed that those behaviours expected from teachers are enshrined in the principles laid down. Teachers are to relate with their students in an ethically approved way, same goes with their practices and performance, how they relate with their professional colleagues, and the parents of their students and community. Findings showed different levels of compliance by teachers to such ethics code.

In a study to look at the teachers' awareness and compliance to Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) Act (2005), Agih (2013) reported that the school principals had greater level of awareness and

compliance than other teachers.

Akinwarere (2020) concluded that effective compliance by teachers to such ethics code and conduct promotes an environment of academic integrity.

Teachers need to be licensed to be eligible to teach. This add to the basis that becoming a professional teacher have a lot to do with being ethically compliant. Teacher's licensing is inclusive in ways to ensure quality control functions. Licensure of teachers is based on statute or law; therefore, it will be illegal for one to assume the role of a teacher without being licensed. Accordingly, it is the government who has the prerogative to issue teachers' license, but before that could happen, the supposed teachers must have met the requirements. We argue that the goal of the requirements is to ensure objectivity and competency of the teacher. With licensing, teachers are considered not harmful to the public who will be at the receiving end and as well reach the conclusion that they know their duties and are willingly to carry them out. Consequently, if and when a teacher is not licensed, it may not be safe for them engage with the public via classroom teaching.

In the therapeutic setting, professional practice of clinical psychologists is guided by ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct of American Psychological Association (APA) (2017). The ethics code is applicable to only the activities of psychologists considered part of their scientific, educational, or professional roles. Generally, APA (2017) ethics code declared that it covers, though not limited, the areas of clinical, counseling, and school practice of psychology; research; teaching; supervision of trainees; and educational counseling, among many others. APA (2017) acknowledged that if a conduct is not conspicuously addressed in the ethics code, it should not mean that it is necessarily either ethical or unethical. This stand followed the view that ethical standards are not exhaustive. As such, the major goal the ethics code pursue is to establish rules that will guide the conduct of psychologists which can be enforceable. The ethics code was detailed and specific in varied areas it covers, including the areas of education and training and therapy.

It is very unlikely to be considered a professional psychologist if one failed to fulfil the required educational training and acquire the certifications. Similarly, one is not qualified to practice as a psychologist if one is not properly licensed by the psychology board, or other state or federal agencies. Usually, practicing license is issued on state basis, and the requirements for that differ from one state to another. This becomes a way to maintain professionalism and eliminate quackery. Accordingly, practicing psychologists renew such license every year whereas their application for renewal can be turned down if there is official report that they failed to comply with the ethics code. It is by so doing that the image of the profession is endeared.

We want to at this point reemphasize that we are not suggesting that classroom teaching and therapeutic setting are the same, for their differences abound. Teachers and psychotherapists differ in the nature and type of training they receive, their professional associations and ethics code guiding their practice, required academic degrees to obtain to be eligible for licensing to practice, and state licensing boards in charge of their licensure. Our focus is to use this study to underscore that if teachers share the understanding that they can foster prevention of psychological issues through their services as teachers by not serving as enablers through their actions or omissions – use of critical comments, becoming overly involved in the affairs of their students, and expression of hostility (subtle or not); unpleasant emotional expressions (Rodrigo-Ruiz, 2016) with anger as the most predominant and frequently expressed (Prosen et al., 2011), and negative behaviours (Baloglu, 2015), they will be conscious and always behave as people with emotional knowledge and skills and work effectively with students. Rodrigo-Ruiz (2016) also found that teachers' expression of negative emotions provokes negative effects on the students. Since teachers are not infallible, we propose that making them aware that their negative emotional or behavioural expressions could elicit behavioural and psychological issues on their students who could model them or vicariously become reinforced from such negative expressions, would engender healthier way of reacting to unwanted behaviours of the

students, like lack of discipline (Prosen et al., 2011) and disruptive classroom behaviours (Hawe et al., 2000). This will more importantly make classroom teaching not to be a source of vulnerabilities for having learning difficulties or acquiring maladaptive behaviours, unhealthy interpersonal relationships, or poor school adjustment. Students share the likelihood of practicing what they learnt in school, including those unhealthy ones modeled by their teachers or vicariously reinforced from them, in the other domains of their lives.

We are not asking teachers to assume any of the ideal teacher's image of calm and emotionally expressive teacher (Hosotani & Imai-Matsumura, 2011). Calm teacher upholds that expression of unpleasant emotion in the classroom is inappropriate, making them suppress such emotion. Prosen et al. (2011) maintained that such suppression could evoke feeling of guilt over why they experienced anger in the first place. Then, emotionally expressive teacher will always try to express all emotions which will end up provoke emotions in the students. Moreover, some teachers admitted losing their temper and genuinely express anger towards students while others confirmed expressing joy authentically or as a way to influence the student's behaviour (Hosotani & Imai-Matsumura, 2011). We canvass for balanced and genuine expression of emotion for teachers before their students (for emotions have an important adaptive function, Lazarus 1991); emotional expression obviously linked to the event and not a transfer of aggression; emotional expression equal to the event and easily associated to the event by their students; and emotional expression done bearing in mind that children, not adults, are the recipient. The same should go with how teachers behave in the classroom. Teachers should always be aware of how significant and impactful their figure and what they do in and out of the classroom is to their students. Hence, in addition to carrying out their teaching responsibilities, teachers should by their role as a significant figure in the lives of their students, be ready to pursue and achieve some benefits close to those outcomes attained in a therapeutic setting. We will then discuss below what it could imply if classroom teaching is parallel to therapeutic setting.

Implications of Classroom Teaching as Parallel to Therapeutic Setting

What happens in a therapeutic setting is treatment of psychological, emotional, or behavioural illnesses by a trained and licensed professional who creates a connection with one or more patients so as to change or eradicate the presenting symptoms and facilitate healthy living via treatment techniques that are evidence based and hinged on theories. On this basis, we will be agreeing with Bernstein and Nietzel (1980) who proposed that evaluating what goes on in a therapeutic setting involves three different audiences – therapist, client, and society, whereas each of them has their own values that influence their criteria in making such evaluation. Applying this position in a classroom setting, it involves that what happens in the classroom teaching should accommodate looking at it from the angles of the teacher, the student, and the society or whoever that is interested in what happens in the classroom teaching. Our focus in this study is on teachers.

In therapeutic setting, the therapist makes considerable investment in psychotherapy to clients and should be interested to know if their efforts are effective or need to be modified in any way. The same applies to classroom teachers who we expect to overtime evaluate their efforts to see if they were effective in transmitting knowledge, skills and values to students, or they need to modify them in some ways. Studies have looked at effectiveness of teachers (e.g., Aina et al., 2015), suggesting that teachers should be interested in knowing if they have effectively impacted knowledge or otherwise. The implication of knowing this is to identify those factors that sabotaged their efforts or those that enhanced it. Knowing the source of such factors is expected to provide information needed for improvement or modification. The idea that such factors could come from their characteristics, characteristics of the students, school environment, or circumstantial factors, make it necessary for them not to limit their view of where such factors can come from.

For example, importance of this in a therapeutic setting is that it helps the therapist to know if such factors are predisposing, maintaining, or perpetuating the presenting symptoms. Hence, teachers should find out

what factors are contributing or perpetuating their effectiveness, or otherwise.

Generally, if teachers consider classroom teaching as parallel to therapeutic setting, it will dispose them to go beyond their assigned responsibilities to include picking interest to identify possible limitations of their students that influence their ability to learn, how they learn, and what they could learn. Psychotherapist often make the connection of how the presenting symptoms pose functional limitations to their client. Teachers should be interested in knowing how each student is academically ready and insightful of what academic responsibilities are required of them. Without achieving such insight, client in a therapeutic setting is limited to benefit from the therapy, same goes for students who may be limited to benefit from classroom teaching by such. Teachers should always be aware of possible presence of learning disorder, family issues, school-related matters (like bullying) or other psychological issues that trouble their students and hamper their learning ability and capacity.

Effectiveness of psychotherapy is not alone determined by how knowledgeable the therapist is or how insightful the client is, rather, therapeutic alliance is significant. This is core to successful treatment outcome in psychotherapy. It increases client's level of motivation to attending the treatment sessions and carrying out the homework and assignments given by the therapist. Accordingly, teachers should value the relationship they share with each student. They should be conscious of how authority figure they are could be preventing the students from disclosing to them all they should know as their teachers. Thus, teachers should always be approachable and accessible, non-judgmental, and non-vindictive. Among the characteristics of teachers found by previous scholars is that teachers are empathic (Aldrup et al., 2022), show positive regard (Cohen et al., 2020), and genuine (Malm, 2008). These were some of the characteristics of the psychotherapist that elicit clients' trust. As teachers, they should not demean their students or victimize them. Psychotherapists encourage their clients to be themselves and teachers should equally do the same and not encourage an atmosphere where their students will be scared of being themselves before the teacher. Besides, the authority figure of the teacher has placed the students in a disadvantage position in the academic relationship, teachers should not capitalize on this and be taking undue advantage of the students like exploiting them sexually, or using them as their domestic servants. Obviously, the ethics code clearly spelt out how teachers should relate with students, so we canvass that teachers should adhere strictly to this.

In some instances, teachers' outbursts are elicited by students' classroom disruptive behaviours. We observe that instead of reacting to such by expressing negative emotions which has negative effects for both the teacher and the student, it is better to first apply brief relaxation technique prior to responding such students. We note that relaxation technique which is simple to use will help the teacher to achieve a calm state and give them time to think and act more rational. They can use deep-muscle relaxation technique which involves tensing the muscle, holding the tension for a few seconds while focusing on the tense feelings, relax the muscle, and notice the difference between the feelings of tension and relaxation and focus on the pleasant feelings of relaxation. Doing so will grossly reduce possible impulsive response from the teacher. Thus, psychotherapists are reflective in their engagements with their clients, teachers will by using this technique to think through their actions before acting them.

Among the techniques used by psychotherapists to address clients' presentations in a therapeutic setting are reinforcement and token economy. Both can effectively be used in classroom teaching. In using reinforcement, teachers will administer reward (e.g., praising the student) when the student behaves in an approved way, or remove those things (e.g., unfounded fears, bullying) that prevent the student from behaving in an approved way, to elicit, sustain, and perpetuate the desired behaviours. For example, shaping, which is the use of reward to encourage each step made to behave in an approved way, can be used by teachers to motivate their students to begin to express classroom approved behaviours (for those that do not), while token economy and fixed-ratio reinforcement schedule can be used to sustain and perpetuate the

desired behaviours teachers expect from their students. These treatment techniques can be used by teachers to reduce and completely eliminate undesired classroom behaviours, including those disruptive ones.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We have highlighted some of the ways classroom teaching and therapeutic setting shared some characteristics, and showed some of the implications associated with the view of classroom teaching paralleling with therapeutic setting. It is from those identified areas that we present the following recommendations.

1. Following the observation that some teachers may be unskillful in identifying learning and other childhood developmental challenges or disorders troubling their students, we recommend that teachers should be exposed on how to assess and identify any type of learning disorder or other child and adolescent disorders students may have. Our premise is that some of these disorders could be behind the actions of students that make teachers label them 'stubborn students'. They could still be responsible for other undesired and disruptive classroom behaviours.
2. By understanding how beneficial therapist-client matching is in achieving effective psychotherapeutic outcome, we propose that it is time such be introduced in the school setting. We recommend that each school should develop their indigenous assessment tools for knowing the characteristics of their teachers and students and used the knowledge gained to match-make them. We argue that it will benefit both the teachers and the students, as well as all those that are interested in what happens in the classroom. For example, such relationship will help the teachers to truly know their students and observe on time any psychological issue the student is battling with. Early identification of disorders could easily translate to good prognosis.
3. Being human, teachers respond to stimuli present in the classroom including the disruptive behaviours. We argue that teachers in some cases overreact to such stimuli from the classroom and expose themselves and the students to danger or harm. While we recommend an expression of genuine emotions in the classroom, we still maintain that doing so without considering how the age of these students could influence how they perceive and emulate such unregulated emotional expressions, could be very limiting. We suggest that teachers should be exposed to how to healthily manage emotions elicited from classroom and those unrelated to classroom but expressed or transferred to students in the classroom. Being emotional intelligent and having good emotional regulation will help, for example, to bridge the associated challenges students face when relating with the authority figure, the teacher. This we argue will also improve the confidence and self-esteem levels of their students.

CONCLUSION

Classroom teaching is a serious business. It contributes in shaping young minds expected to be the leaders of tomorrow in different spheres of life. We understood that teaching is not an easy job. That is why we considered how classroom teaching can be improved upon if teachers perceive it as an opportunity to prevent some behavioural disorders of children and adolescents they teach. By classroom teaching paralleling therapeutic setting, it suggests that at least near therapeutic outcomes can be achieved. This study stimulated more interest in seeking for ways to improve teachers' interest in the therapeutic nature of classroom teaching.

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