

**IMPROVING CLASSROOM BEHAVIOURS THROUGH INTRINSIC  
MOTIVATION: AN ACTION RESEARCH ON MOTIVATING  
GRADE EIGHT SCIENCE STUDENTS**

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Interpersonal relationships and students' perceptions of teachers' behaviour in the classroom are important determinants of students' intrinsic motivation. Students need an autonomy-supportive environment in the teaching-learning process. This study was carried out to improve the classroom behaviour of selected students from the Grade 8 class of a 1AB School in the Dehiowita Education Zone. Five misbehaving Grade 8 students were identified based on the information given by the class teacher and subject teachers. Constant talking with peers, verbal hostility, damaging school property, not completing homework, and not paying attention during lessons were the main misbehaviours observed in these students. The specific aim of this research was to improve the behaviour of these students through intrinsic motivational strategies. Positive reinforcement, verbal rewards, good rapport, and constructive feedback were the targeted interventions. Two intervention cycles were implemented, and during the first intervention, five well-behaved students were selected to mentor the misbehaving students. These mentors were responsible for monitoring their peers and marking a checklist over a given time period. After the first intervention, improvements were observed in the misbehaving students. Due to the positive impact of the initial intervention, a second intervention cycle was introduced. In the second intervention, student-centred teaching methods, such as debates, presentations, collaborative learning, and project-based learning, were employed. Intrinsic motivational strategies, including positive reinforcement, verbal rewards, constructive feedback, and collaborative evaluation strategies, were also applied. The misbehaving students were assigned specific duties and responsibilities within the teaching-learning process. By the end of both intervention cycles, the students' behaviour improved drastically, and instances of misbehaviour were no longer observed. As a result, the teaching-learning process became significantly smoother due to the positive changes in these students' behaviour. These interventions focused on the science subject, and it was noted that the students began cooperating more with their classmates.

**Keywords:** Intrinsic motivation, Misbehaviours, Reinforcements, Targeted interventions