

# Application of “Catfish Effect” in Classroom Management

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**Abstract:** Applying the “catfish effect” into classroom management can solve some of the current problems. By placing “catfish” in the classroom, pressure is exerted on the students to create competition and cooperation. During this process, communication between teachers and students should be enhanced to ensure that the process runs smoothly. “Catfish effect” plays an important role in promoting individual competitiveness and creativity in the classroom, strengthening the sense of honor in the classroom as a whole, and developing critical thinking in students. This effect can be used as an effective management tool for teachers.

**Keywords:** “Catfish effect”; classroom management; criticality

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## 1. Introduction

Classroom management is directly related to the development of students. As a measure of economic management, the “catfish effect” can be applied into classroom management. Most scholars only combine it with the selection of classroom leaders or analyze it together with other psychological effects. The “catfish effect” can be applied into classroom management to develop both individuals and the whole, not only for the superiority of class leaders.

## 2. Background

### 2.1 Status of classroom management

Classes are the cradle of students’ growth and success, and class management is an important part of teachers’ management. The leading person in classroom management is the teacher, who guides students in the classroom to systematically learn all subjects, develop creativity, and form a correct world view and good ideological quality.

Students learn in the classroom, and individual personalization and individual socialization processes occur. And there are many problems in the class at present, which urgently need to be solved by the teacher using more flexible tools. For example, class students’ misconceptions about competition, students’ low sense of creativity, lack of classroom activity, and the slackness and wrong modeling that occurs among class leaders.

### 2.2 Analysis of the current situation of classroom management

First of all, the class itself needs the existence of competition, but many students misunderstand competition and only show its negative side, seeing it as a means of hooking up and chasing after fame and fortune. They fail to compete and chase each other in order to better themselves and grow in the competition. Second, due to today’s Chinese education system, most teachers sing monologues, which suppresses students’ creativity and makes them afraid to show their characteristic specialties, and students’ creative consciousness is worn out by traditional education, and their innovative consciousness is not strong, which is also reflected in classroom activeness. Thirdly, in large classes, due to the large number of students, the advantages of the classroom system cannot be exploited, and the traditional education

system makes the classroom less active, and only the teacher is teaching in a “duck-filling” way. Finally, class leaders, as the leaders of a class in addition to the teacher, have a great role to play in the development of classroom morale and culture. However, due to the low turnover of class leaders, many of them are slack, inefficient, and even “bureaucratic”, which is a negative demonstration for classmates and is not conducive to class management.

### **3. Theoretical basis of catfish effect**

#### **3.1 Catfish effect**

The "catfish effect" comes from the story of a fisherman, that is, the use of active catfish to stimulate the quiet sardines, thereby improving the survival rate of the latter. It is later cited in management and evolved into the famous "catfish effect". The catfish effect is a means or measure to stimulate members of an organization to become active in the market and actively participate in the competition, thus activating enterprises in the same industry in the market, which is essentially a motivational tool. When applying into teaching activities, it is a good way to drive the interest of the whole class, active classroom atmosphere, and stimulate other students, thus improving the quality of teaching. Catfish are divided into two categories in this paper, one is the excellent class "backbone", and the other is the active elements with specialties.

#### **3.2 Significance of using the catfish effect to improve classroom management**

##### 3.2.1 The characteristics of students

Students are young and curious about unknown knowledge. At the same time, they are like blank slates that can be guided, and if they are given the right stimulus, they can bring out their potential abilities and achieve all-round development. The internal results of educational activity show that the teacher acts on the educated person with the help of educational measures, the result of which is to influence the physical and mental development of the educated person.

##### 3.2.2 The right stimuli contribute to the healthy growth of the individual

Management research shows that, in general, people's potential is only about 50%, but effective motivation can increase it by about 30%. Therefore, the use of catfish in the educational process and the application of appropriate pressure can motivate students in the class to compete with each other to improve each other and promote the development of individuals. However, for the use of catfish, it is important to guard against its implicit negative effects.

##### 3.2.3 Optimization of the overall ethos accompanies individual optimization

Healthy competition among individuals builds a good overall class climate, and a good general environment promotes the development of individuals, so it is necessary to apply the catfish effect into classroom management.

### **4. Application of the catfish effect in classroom management**

#### **4.1 Building healthy competition to avoid collision between "catfish" and "sardine"**

In the management process, teachers must have a keen eye to identify which "catfish" can produce positive effects, that is, those with outstanding ability or dynamic and competitive. Students with good grades, high moral character, and organizational leadership skills can be appointed as class leaders to manage the class while promoting their own development and serving as a model of excellence for their classmates. In addition, you can also choose students with special skills, but with low grades, to act as "catfish" and stir up the class.

These competitive and innovative students can not only excel in their own field and achieve success, but also exert pressure on the "sardines" who are not as competitive as the status quo, so that they can discover their own shortcomings and motivate them to pursue competition and make up for their shortcomings.

However, in this process, the teacher, as the dominant player in the three elements of educational activities, must pay attention to the construction of a benign competition model. A benign model, in which students complement each other's strengths and evaluate themselves more comprehensively and objectively, is a good model that can truly promote

individual and collective development. However, if this competition model is transformed into vicious competition, the hidden negative effects will be huge. Individuals in the class will be jealous of each other, and the rivalry will make the class in a pandemonium, and even the overall regression.

#### **4.2 Combination of "Catfish" and "sardines" to promote collective progress**

"Catfish" and "sardines" are not the same kind of people, but in the end, they belong to the same class. Catfish" are the "backbone" of the class, and "sardines" are active members of the class, which are indispensable elements in addition to ordinary students. Then they collide with each other to produce sparks, but also produce more oxygen, which makes the whole environment full of vitality. In other words, the progress of individuals also promotes the progress of the collective. These outstanding activists show their own characteristics while also passing on their characteristic strengths to ordinary students. These students internalize these good genes as their own qualities, while at the same time the activists can learn from and absorb the bright spots in the ordinary students.

In this process, teachers need to develop a sense of collective honor among students. It is important to go beyond the individual to the collective level of the class and to try to coalesce into a force that can surpass the rest of the class. The "catfish", as advanced members of the class, improve themselves while greatly enhancing their own sense of participation and belonging. Teachers need to provide them with timely psychological care and adjustment, while not forgetting to provide psychological care for the average student. I believe that this joint approach leads to better quality, richer problem-solving skills, and an overall smoother pace of HF.

#### **4.3 Strengthening communication between teachers and students**

When adding "catfish" pressure to students, there is a greater need for communication between teachers and students. Educators need to use psychological tools such as the "Hawthorne effect" and the "own person effect" to know the impact of "catfish" on the average student in a timely manner.

In addition, "catfish", like external pressure, have two sides. If managed too loosely, it may lead to a proliferation of liberalism and disruption of the classroom order, with even more serious consequences; if managed too tightly, it may limit the ability of the "catfish" to move around, compromising or even losing their "catfish" effectiveness. This has a serious impact on all students' creativity, personality development, and perception and expression of self-worth. Therefore, teachers need to follow up on classroom performance and solve problems quickly and efficiently.

Improved communication also allows teachers to know the right people and to find more suitable "catfish" to replace them. It also creates a democratic teacher-student relationship that allows students to grow and develop freely and healthily. As Zheng Xuezhi says: respect students, rely on them, and trust them to achieve a win-win situation for their growth.

### **5. Conclusion**

In the current educational environment, teachers have been using a fixed educational model for a long time, and this educational model is suppressing and killing creativity. This is one of the reasons why psychological tools such as the "catfish effect" are needed, as previously active, questioning, creative individuals become lazy and uninterested in new things.

It also teaches students that not all of these "catfish" are good, and that they need to learn to look at things dialectically and internalize values based on their own choices.

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