

Examples of critical writing

Paragraph 1

One such behaviour management system that can be used is that of a Token Economy, based upon the theories of Kazdin (1977). He would suggest that students can earn tokens for presenting a specific and positive behaviour, such as not interrupting the teacher while they are speaking, that can then be exchanged for meaningful reinforcement options, for example extra 'golden time'. Kazdin (1977) goes on to suggest that students, upon receiving this reinforcement will be conditioned to demonstrate these positive behaviours. This Behaviourist approach is based on Skinner's (1963) research into Operant Conditioning, that applying continuous positive reinforcement will condition individuals to exhibit the desired behaviour. This reward-based theory was the basis of the behaviour management system incorporated within the discussed case study. Students received stickers for demonstrating positive behaviours, such as putting hands up in class. When a student received 10 stickers, they could take a reward from the 'prize box' within the classroom, containing items which they felt had value.

Paragraph 2

However, there are possible limitations to consider. Some view these systems as a distraction for students, only demonstrating the desired behaviour to receive a reward. Rather than using the learning experience as an opportunity to learn and develop their knowledge and skills, students are only putting the effort needed to gain the reward (Evertson et al., 2021; Hine et al., 2018; Maggin et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2022). This would suggest that students are extrinsically motivated, lacking a deeper understanding of the learning and failing to see how engagement in the task will only serve to benefit them (Capstick, 2005; Kohn, 1993). Therefore, the so-called benefits of this behavioural system may not be as significant as they appear. Research by Smith et al. (2022) also suggests that we should be careful in generalising such benefits, finding that some students benefit from these more than others.

Students with ALN found rewards far more motivating than those students without ALN (Noor Azreena and Mohd Hanafi, 2018; Smith et al., 2022). Schools should therefore be careful in generalising the use of reward-based behaviour management systems to the entire class.

Paragraph 3

Several findings will now be discussed further. In questions relating to motivation and engagement (See Appendix 1-question 1 and 4) most students stated they 'agreed' that behaviour management chart had an influence. This was also apparent in research from Noor Azreena and Mohd Hanafi (2018) who found that a reward-based chart had a positive influence on ALN students' engagement and motivation to complete classwork. Such findings indicate that reward-based systems also have a role to play in influencing levels of engagement and motivation within the sample classroom. Interestingly, this contrasts with previously mentioned research which found that students perceived rewards as having little influence on their engagement and motivation with classwork (Capstick, 2005; Shreeve et al., 2002). Perhaps additional research is needed to learn how, why and possibly what areas of learning this may influence. Results from the questionnaire (See Appendix 1-question 3 and 8) also found that most students 'agreed' with the statement that behaviour management charts influenced the demonstrating of positive behaviours. As mentioned above, Koelewijn et al. (2018) also found that a reward system led to increased levels of listening within participants. This would indicate that a reward-based behaviour management system does have a role to play within the sample classroom. Similarly, to research from Payne (2015), analysis from the current case study also found that pupils perceived the behaviour management chart as influencing the relationship they shared with their peers and teachers (See Appendix 1-question 5 and 6). This would also have been an interesting area to explore further within the intended interviews, to gauge pupil perception on why and how they have an influence. Analysis from this case study also found that most students 'agreed' with the statement that behaviour management charts influenced their self-esteem in the classroom (See Appendix 1-question 7). When reviewing literature surrounding the topic of rewardbased behaviour management systems, there was little on

this subject. Therefore, in the future it would be beneficial to delve deeper into this area and learn more about its potential influence.

Paragraph 4

There are many strengths in adopting questionnaires within research. Questionnaires allow researchers to gather a large amount of data within a relatively short amount of time (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018; Lambert, 2019). As previously discussed, teachers already have a limited amount of time, energy and funds to put into conducting research, and so questionnaires are an efficient method of gathering the information needed. Lambert (2019) also highlighted the usefulness of questionnaires in establishing a range of thoughts and views on a certain topic, that may otherwise be limited by other research methods. Questionnaires can also be beneficial when conducting research with children. This was an important point to consider within the current case study, which focused on year 5 pupils who may have found other research methods too strenuous to complete. Questionnaires which adopt a Likert Scale, a rating scale to assess perceptions, are useful as younger participants find them simple and easy to understand (Bartlett and Burton, 2009; Wilson, 1996). This is vital in being as ethically informed as possible when conducting research (BERA, 2018).

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