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Influence of Teachers` Classroom Management Strategies (CMS) on Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of teachers' classroom management strategies on students' academic performance. It examined in details the strategies adopted by teachers in managing their classroom and how these enhanced students' academic performance. Two research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study while descriptive survey research design was adopted. Taro Yamen's model was applied to determine a sample size of 380 from a population of 7,425 senior secondary school teachers. "Teachers Classroom Management Strategies and Students Academic Performance (TCMSAP)" was the title of the instrument used for data collection. Descriptive statistics was used to answer research questions while t-test statistics was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 significant level. Findings showed that teachers in senior secondary schools in Rivers State use both preventive and reactive strategies for their classroom management and these have significant influence on students' academic performance. It was concluded that no matter how equipped with modern technologies the classroom might be, there is unalloyed need for teachers as the highest authority in the classroom to be given professional training. Also, reactive measures of classroom management such as punishment may contribute to classroom control and enhance student performance. Consequently, it was recommended among others that teachers should establish rules and regulations in the classroom against disruptive behavior. Teachers should be cautious while using punishment so that it does not adversely affect students' academic performance. Teachers should assign responsibilities to students to make them have a sense of belonging and confidence. Educational conferences and seminars should be organized for teachers to learn and acquire new effective classroom management skills.

Keywords: Classroom management, teachers, children, behavior, student

INTRODUCTION

Children shout, kick, bite, tremble, scream, push each other and throw up to get attention. They tease their handicapped playmates, engage in sex play in the classroom and destroy or deface books, desks, wall and their own and others' clothing. Not some children but all exhibit actions such as these. Although the universality of such behaviours may be recognized, most people and in fact most school personnel do not realize the scope and magnitude of children behaviour problems.

According to Clarizio (2010), thirty percent of children now in school are maladjusted, 10% of enough severity to merit clinical attention; and because only 2 to 5 percent of children with emotional behaviour disorder are in special classes, it falls to the lot of the teacher to manage these young people. Clarizio (2010) further maintained that two-third to three-fourth of these maladjusted children improve without psychological treatment . The teacher is thus not only the first line of defense, but for most children, the only line of defense.

Putting these facts together means on the average, there will be three to four children in each class who could appropriately be described as emotionally handicapped. They will overcome these difficulties not because they received clinical treatment or because they are in special classes, but because one teacher or a small group of teachers will take enough interest in providing support, guidance, and a constructive outlet for energies (manage them).

Teachers view classroom control as the most difficult task in teaching. Adeyemo (2011) posited that the feeling of inadequacy in coping with problems of classroom management and the disillusionment that comes when disruptive behaviour is rampant were major causes for teachers leaving the profession after a year of two. Donald Peterson (2002) classified children problems into two: behaviour or conduct problem and personality problem. The conduct problems are those kinds of disruptive behaviours, "acting out" behaviours that make classroom management difficult for all but the most skillful professionals. The focus of this work is on the strategies adopted by teachers in classroom management that will maximize the students' performance.

Classroom management is the term teachers use to describe the process of ensuring that classroom lessons run smoothly without disruptive behaviour from students compromising the delivery of instruction. Boardman and Vittone (2018) define classroom management strategies as the methods and processes through which teachers control their classroom environment so that students learning prevail, because student misbehavior is effectively minimized and redirected.

Classroom management refers to the wide variety of skills and techniques that teachers use to keep students organized, orderly, focused, attentive on task, and academically productive during class. When classroom management strategies are executed effectively, teachers minimize the behaviour that impedes learning for both individual students and groups of student while maximizing the behaviours that enhance learning.

Evertson and Weinstein (2006) describe five types of actions teacher must take to attain high quality classroom management and these include: (1) develop caring, supportive relationships with and among students and (2) organize and implement instruction in ways that optimize students' access to learning; (3) encourage students' engagement in academic tasks, (4) promote the development of students' social skills and self-regulation and (5) use appropriate interventions to assist students with behaviour problems.

Classroom management is about creating inviting and appealing environment for student learning and the strategies includes tools and resources that the teachers can use to help create such an environment, ranging from activities to improve teacher-student relationships to rules that will regulate student behaviour. It is where and when the efforts of management fail that teachers have to resort to reactive, controlling strategies. Classroom management strategies therefore, may be preventive or reactive (Lane, Menzies, Bruhn & Cronbori, 2011). The establishment of rules and procedures and favourable teacher-student relationships are considered preventive strategies, whereas disciplinary interventions such as giving warnings or punishments are considered reactive strategies. Although it is generally assumed that preventive strategies are more effective than reactive strategies, reactive strategies are sometimes needed to reduce disruptive or other undesired student behaviour when preventive strategies do not work (Marzona, 2008). Ultimately, both preventive strategies and reactive strategies can be applied to the entire classroom population by discussing classroom rules or giving group detention; or to individual students by letting an easily distracted student sit alone during independent seatwork or placing a student temporarily outside the classroom when showing disruptive behaviour.

According to Umoren (2010), the concept of classroom management is broader than the notion of student control and discipline, it includes all the things teachers must do in the classroom to foster students' academic involvement and cooperation in the classroom activities to create conducive learning environment. Morse (2012), relates that classroom management involves curtailing learners disruptive behaviours such as fighting and noise making, close observation, arrangement of classroom learning materials, and response to students who suffer from poor vision, poor hearing, poor reading, poor writing, poor spelling, shame, dullness, hyperactivity and poor study habits.

The issue of classroom management is a continuous exercise which a teacher has to cope with anytime he enters the classroom. The teacher has to cope with the activities of the students in the class, giving the students the deserved attention. This may be seemingly difficult because each student in the class has a different need at any given point in time. It is the responsibility of the teacher to pay attention to the various needs of the individuals in the class. Brophy (2006) however, observed that a lot of activities take place in the class simultaneously, even when a teacher gives the same assignment to every student. Some may get stuck on the way, while some may ignore the problem and engage in something else. Others may finish the assignment because they understand it, while some others may prefer doing correction of previous work. This explains why each student needs different attention, different materials/objects, different kind of encouragement and different materials. A teacher who can cope with these situations must be knowledgeable enough in the skills necessary for managing classroom activities and taking care of, and accommodating the individual needs simultaneously in the classroom.

Korpershoek et al. (2014) classified classroom management strategies based on their primary focus into:

1) Teachers' behaviour-focused strategies/interventions; which focuses on improving teachers' classroom management such as keeping order, introducing rules and procedures, disciplinary interventions and hence changing the teachers' behaviour. These are both preventive and reactive interventions.

2) Teacher-student relationship-focused strategies/interventions. The focus of the intervention is on improving teacher-student interactions, thereby building a caring, supportive relationship. These are preventive interventions.

3) Students' behaviour-focused strategies/interventions. This aims to improving student behaviour, for example, by improving self-control among students. Both preventive and reactive interventions are included in this category.

4) Students' social-emotional development-focused strategies/interventions; which targets at improving students' social-emotional development, such as enhancing their feelings of empathy for one-another.

Korpershoek et al. (2014) stressed that some classroom management programs may fit into more than one category as they are not considered to be mutually exclusive. Korpershoek et al. (2014), applied meta-analysis of the effect on students' academic, behavioural, emotional, and motivational outcomes to examined effective classroom management strategies and classroom management programs. Their result revealed no significant differences between the various groups of outcomes and they concluded that the results of the meta-analysis confirm a positive effect of classroom management interventions on student outcomes in primary education.

Iqbal (2018) investigated classroom management and its impact on students' academic achievement: insight from the faculty, in the Kingdom of Bahrain, India and found that from the common classroom strategies, teachers have to provide awareness for instructional activities and to map and decide how to deal with the student's behavior that is unsuitable.

Academic achievement according to Umude (2010), is a measure of the ability of a learner to recall facts and information at a given time. The degree of this ability to recall learned experiences is premised on several environmental factors. Leyer cited in Uwah (2016) posited that each facet of performance provides a sample of behaviour that can be used to predict actual academic performance. Academic performance or academic achievement is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has attained their short or long-term educational goals. It refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by teachers. Academic performance is important because it is strongly linked to positive outcomes we value.

Statement of the Problem

Among the factors that have posed serious problems to students' academic performance over the decades is unconducive learning environment. It has been a source of concern to teachers, parents, Guidance counselors and researchers. Effective classroom management has been discussed extensively at educational seminars and workshops, with efforts aimed at bringing lasting solution to the challenge of students' poor academic performance encountered in secondary schools. Experience has shown that in some cases, the teacher becomes frustrated as he tries to secure a conducive classroom environment to

enhance learning; he may adopt strategies ranging from preventive such as issuing verbal instruction, to reactive strategies such as the use of corporal punishment to instill fear and discipline in the classroom.
Adeyemo (2011) posited that the feeling of inadequacy in coping with problems of classroom management and the disillusionment that comes when disruptive behaviour is rampant were major causes for teachers leaving the profession after a year of two. Studies have highlighted classroom management strategies as a major variable that affects students' academic performance (Marzona, 2008, Idopise, 2004). The obvious reason for this assertion is that effective classroom management strategies set the stage for teaching and learning. Walter (2006) advanced that classroom management strategies differs from one teacher to another depending on factors such as the teacher's sex and personality, teaching style, preparedness and number of students. The question is what are the strategies actually applied by these teachers, and how does it influence the students' performance in the senior secondary school. Although, researchers such as Udo (2002) and George, Sakirudeen and Sunday (2017) have investigated effective classroom management in Uyo and other geographical locations of Akwa Ibom State. It is necessary to also examine effective classroom management and its effects on students' academic performance in other geographical locations. Consequently, this study examines teachers' classroom management strategies and students' academic performances among senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate teachers' classroom strategies and student academic performance among senior secondary school students. Specifically, the study examined

1. Senior secondary school teachers Classroom management strategies.
2. The impact of teachers' classroom management strategies on student's academic achievement.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the classroom management strategies adopted by senior secondary school teachers in Rivers State?
2. To what extent is students' academic performance influenced by teachers' classroom management strategies.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses which were tested at 0.05 level of significance were postulated for the study:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers with regards to teachers' classroom management strategies.
2. The mean ratings of male and female teachers regarding the influence of teachers' classroom management strategies on students' academic performances do not differ significantly.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey design was used for the study. Survey design allows for the selection of a representative sample of a population as required in this study. The population of the study comprised 7,425 senior secondary school teachers consisting of 3,854 and 3,571 males and females respectively. Due to the large population, Taro Yamen's model was used to determine the sample size of 380, which was proportionately distributed into 197 males and 183 females. "Teachers Classroom Management Strategies and Students Academic Performance (TCMSAP)" was the title of the instrument used for data collection. The instrument contains items on preventive as well as reactive interventions. Anchored on a response pattern of Likert type 4point rating scale of Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed, the instrument was validated by test experts in the faculty of education of the Rivers State University. The reliability of the instrument which was established using Cronbach's alpha method was 0.89. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer research questions while t-test statistics was used for testing hypotheses.

RESULTS

Research Question 1:

What are the classroom management strategies adopted by senior secondary school teachers in Rivers State?

Table 1: Teachers Classroom Management Strategies (X≥2.5→Agree)

S/N	Item Description	Male (N=197)			Female (N=183)		
		Mean (X)	SD	Rmk	Mean (X)	SD	Rk
1	Teachers need to map and decide how to deal with their student's behavior that is unsuitable.	3.48	0.78	A	3.75	0.65	A
2	Teachers can make decisions instantly, even during critical situations.	3.37	0.95	A	3.63	0.69	A
3	Student with poor outlook is sent home from school	3.00	1.00	A	2.59	1.12	A
4	Students are involved in formation of rules to guide the class	3.24	1.01	A	2.98	1.58	A
5	Disturbing students are assigned responsibilities	2.84	1.67	A	2.56	1.73	A
6	Teachers have to provide awareness for activities.	3.21	1.09	A	3.48	0.94	A
7	Awards are reserved for good behaviours	3.52	0.68	A	3.67	0.59	A
8	Peer assessment is practiced in the class	2.76	1.78	A	2.81	1.88	A
9	Group punishment is highly utilized where culprit is hidden	2.41	2.01	D	3.10	0.87	A
10	Student with disruptive behaviour is made to sit alone	2.94	1.32	A	3.45	0.73	A
11	Teachers can examine their classroom while teaching-learning procedure is going on.	3.17	1.11	A	3.41	1.07	A
	Grand Mean/SD	**3.09**	**1.22**		**3.25**	**1.08**	

Table 1 shows that each items of 1 to 11 had mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. The descriptions are all typical instances of preventive and reactive classroom management strategies. Both male and female teachers agreed on the use of reactive strategies but differ on group punishment for unidentified culprit as either a preventive or reactive strategy. The respective grand means of 3.09 and 3.25 for male and female indicates that the respondent agreed on the both preventive and reactive strategies as listed on the table above as the classroom management interventions used by teachers in senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research question 2

To what extent is students' academic performance influenced by teachers' classroom management strategies?

Table 2: Influence of teachers' classroom management strategies on students' academic performances (X≥2.5→High Extent)

S/N	Item Description	Male (N=197)			Female (N=183)		
		Mean (X)	SD	Rmk	Mean (X)	SD	Rk
1	Classroom supervision as the process of establishing and maintaining a successful leaning environment may lead to success in academic work	3.20	1.01	HE	3.47	0.98	HE
2	Teacher's role in class affects student's academic success.	3.57	0.87	HE	3.88	0.77	HE
3	The rate of educational attainment in a well-managed classroom is high.	3.12	1.76	HE	3.09	1.11	HE
4	Less attention toward lesson may result in poor intellectual achievement.	3.35	0.79	HE	3.22	0.99	HE
5	Lack of earnings affects student's knowledge in the class and academic achievement.	2.48	1.94	LE	2.44	1.87	LE
6	No interruption in the class time or repeat the lesson which could provide clarity	2.89	1.82	HE	2.84	1.77	HE
	Grand Mean/SD	**3.10**	**1.37**		**3.16**	**1.25**	

The mean scores for item 5 are 2.48 and 2.44 for male and female respondents indicating low extent, while mean scores for items 1 to 4 and 6 are respectively more than the criterion mean score of 2.50, and indicates high extent. Generally, the high grand mean scores of 3.10 (SD=1.37) and 3.16 (SD=1.25) for male and female suggest respondents' indication that teachers' classroom interventions influence students' academic performance to a high extent.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers with regards to teachers' classroom management strategies.

Table 3: t-test analysis of difference in mean response of male and female teachers regarding teacher classroom management strategies in Rivers State

Variable	N	X	SD	$t_{calc.}$	Df	A	$t_{crit.}$	Decision
Male Teachers	197	3.09	1.22					
				1.33	378	0.05	1.96	Accept Ho
Female Teachers	183	3.25	1.08					

The observed t-value from the analyses above was 1.33 which is less than the critical t-value of 1.96. Since the observed value is less than the table value therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference is accepted and any other observed difference can be attributed to sampling error. The implication is that both male and female teachers do agree on the same classroom management strategies adopted by teachers in senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2

The mean ratings of male and female teachers regarding the influence of teachers' classroom management strategies on students' academic performances do not differ significantly.

Table 4: Analysis of mean ratings of male and female teachers with regards to the influence of teachers' classroom management strategies on students' academic performance

Variable	N	X	SD	$t_{calc.}$	Df	A	$t_{crit.}$	Decision
Male Teachers	197	3.10	1.88					
				0.46	378	0.05	1.96	Accept Ho
Female Teachers	183	3.16	1.56					

The above table indicates that no significant difference was found between the mean ratings of male and female teachers regarding the influence of teachers' classroom management strategies on students' academic performance, with the observed t-value of 0.46 being far below the critical value of 1.96. The null hypothesis was therefore accepted and this implies that teachers' classroom management strategies influence students' academic performances in the senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Summary of Findings

The following were the major findings in this study:

1. Teachers in senior secondary schools in Rivers State use both preventive and reactive strategies for their classroom management.
2. There is significant influence of teachers' classroom management strategies on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in River State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

One major finding in this study was that teachers in the senior secondary schools in Rivers State use both preventive and reactive strategies for their classroom management. These strategies are teachers-behaviour focused such as when teachers can make decisions instantly, even during critical situations. Some of the strategies are teacher-student relationship focused such as students are involved in formation of rules to guide the class; student-behaviour focused as when a student with disruptive behaviour is made to sit alone; and students' social-emotional development-focused as when group punishment is utilized where culprit is hidden or awards are reserved for good behaviours. This corroborates the findings of

Iqbal (2018) that from the common classroom strategies, teachers agree that they have to provide awareness for instructional activities and to map and decide how to deal with the student's behavior that is unsuitable. These are situations of preventive and reactive strategies. It also agrees with the assertion of George et al. (2017), that SS1 students in the public Secondary Schools in Uyo Local Government Area differed significantly in terms of academic performance based on verbal instruction, corporal punishment, instructional supervision and delegation of authority to learners; with preventive strategies having the highest mean scores. These are all components of teacher behaviour focused, teacher-student relationship focused, student behaviour focused preventive and reactive classroom management strategies which are also revealed in the current study.

Another major finding of this study is that teachers' classroom management strategies exact significant influence on student academic performance. A result similar to this was obtained also by Iqbal (2018) when he reported on the impact of classroom management strategies that majority of respondents agreed that classroom supervision leads to succeed in class, and that teacher's role in class affects student's academic success. Relatedly, Korpershoek et al. (2014) conducted a meta-analysis of the effects of classroom management strategies and classroom management programs on students' academic, behavioural, emotional, and motivational outcomes. The study revealed that there were no significant differences between the various groups of outcomes, and confirmed positive effects of classroom management interventions on student outcomes in primary education. While the two studies differ only on analysis procedures, both investigated classroom managerial strategies and their influence on students' performances.

CONCLUSION

The following conclusions are hereby drawn based on the findings of this study:

1 Teachers are the engine room of the classroom enhancement and instructional activities. No matter how equipped with modern technologies the classroom might be, there is unalloyed need for teachers as the highest authority in the classroom to be given professional training.

2 If teachers are regularly trained by way of participation in workshops and seminars it will enhance their output

3 Reactive measures of classroom management such as punishment contribute to classroom control and enhance student performance

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1 Teachers should establish rules and regulations in the classroom against disruptive behavior.

2 Teachers should be cautious while using punishment so that it does adversely affect Students' academic performance.

3 Teachers should assign responsibilities to students to make them have a sense of belonging and confidence of not being maltreated.

4 Educational conferences and seminars should be organized for teachers to learn and acquire new effective classroom management skills.

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