

EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU EDUCATION ZONE, ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

The study addresses classroom management in public secondary schools in Enugu education zone, Enugu state. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study which aimed at investigating teacher's classroom management and control in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone. Three research questions guided the study with a population of 1500. Simple random sampling was used for the study. The sample size was 150 which represent 10% of the population. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. In analyzing the data, the researcher used mean score and standard deviation in answering the research question of the study. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made: Secondary school teachers should be exposed to professional development and trainings to improve communication skill and enhance leaning outcomes. Teachers should create a well-defined routine structure and predictable daily schedule that outlines the timing for each subject and time for extracurricular activities, this will minimize downtimes, maximizes instructional time and increase focus on academic tasks. Teachers should develop a system of positive reinforcement by praising, rewarding, or recognizing efforts and good behavior. This will help build a positive mindset and motivates students to engage more actively in their learning. Conference, workshops, seminars and other in-service programmes should be regularly organized for teachers to acquaint them with latest innovations and skills in classroom management.

Keywords: Classroom, Management, Public school students, Teachers, Academic performance, Enugu Education Zone.

Introduction

Education as an important tool for human and National development occupies a central position in the evolution of a society. Quality education is a necessity for building citizens who can drive the economy of the nation responsibly and compete favorably in the knowledge-based world of today. Quality in Education bothers on effectiveness and efficiency of the school administration, teaching and learning (Ukwungwu,2008). To achieve this quality, it becomes paramount for teachers to apply classroom Management skills. Classroom environment should be properly managed for sustainable improvement in teaching and learning, behavior and development of effective system. Conventionally, Classroom is the central place where teachers mold and shape students' behavior, the expectation and objectives of formal education are equally accomplished in the classroom using a well-planned curriculum through effective classroom management. This function has not

been fully harnessed. The continuous degeneration of performance of the outputs builds a lot of concerns amongst the stakeholders in Education (Teachers, Students, School heads, School Administrators, Educational Institutions and the Government) and members of the public. Teachers have been blamed for their inability to live up to societal expectations in the development of knowledge and skills for the work place. Fundamentally, the ability to organize classroom activities and manage the behavior of students is activity in a typical school environment. Teachers have it as a responsibility to organize classroom activities and manage student's behaviors in schools, invariably, this means that teachers are the major implementers of school curriculum. Teachers need certain classroom management control to enable them manage students' behavior and ensure the maintenance of high standards in schools, which the application of effective communication cannot be overemphasized for effective teaching and learning to take place.

Communication is the bedrock of teaching and learning in any classroom. It involves the process of sending information and understanding from one person to another. teachers send instructions, transmit information, feedback, and expectations to students, and also receive responses from them through communication. effective communication in education is essential for establishing policies and rules, building relationships, encouraging active participation, mutual respect and ensuring the attainment of learning objectives. A classroom where communication is clear and purposeful tends to be well-managed because students understand what is expected of them and how they should behave. Teachers who communicate effectively tends to offer better and clearer instructions, explain concepts plausibly, listen to students, and deliver feedback constructively. Ogunode & Edinoh (2023) opined that teachers who communicate effectively with students experience fewer disciplinary problems and create a more orderly classroom climate. Marzano (2003) asserted that effective classroom management requires teachers to communicate clear expectations and build positive relationships with students. Similarly, Evertson and Weinstein (2022) identified communication as a 21st-century skill necessary for giving directions, managing transitions, and maintaining a conducive learning environment.

Through communication a teacher can make the class lively for purposeful teaching and learning process, encourage active participation and mutual respect in the classroom. The teacher must be intentional in planning to attract and hold the attention of the students till the end of the lesson. Basically, teaching and learning rely almost entirely on communication between and among teachers and learners; For a male or female teacher to run a successful class activity, he must be willing and able to communicate effectively. Therefore, Communication is central to successful management of classroom

Management in the classroom refers to issues of supervision, the act of handling or controlling the classroom activities successfully. The ability of the teacher to exercise a reasonable degree of control over students' behavior in the classrooms depends on Teacher's knowledge, ability and level of classroom management skills. Classroom management is well-informed actions taken by teachers to utilize any available resources in schools to enable effective teaching and learning process. Classroom management is the action teachers take to create an environment that supports and facilitates both academic and social emotional learning (Everton & Weinstein, 2016). Effective classroom management is crucial for promoting a conducive and encouraging learning environment, especially in public secondary schools where diverse student with all and sundry backgrounds and behaviors converge. Classroom management strategies encompass various approaches, incorporating time management and motivation techniques that educators employ to

enhance students' academic outcomes. Classroom management skill is the most essential skills needed by teachers (male and female teachers) for effective teaching and classroom organization. It takes a great deal of effort and ability to button classroom that has large number of students. The teacher has to be thorough and knowledgeable enough in the subject he/she is handling, be conversant with classroom control mechanisms and maintenance of discipline and order in the classroom. According to (Donovan and Cross, 2012) the inability of teachers to effectively manage classroom behaviors often contribute to students' low academic achievement. The rationale behind this assertion is that teachers' inability to effectively manage classroom behaviors makes it impossible for quality to be assured in teaching and learning process. This is because the quality of learning, among others depends on the skills exhibited by teachers in the classroom. The application of these skills ensures quality in teaching and learning in schools

Quality in teaching and learning in schools, otherwise known as quality assurance is the process of ensuring that good standard is upheld. Mbaji, Ebirim & Akwali (2012) opined that quality assurance is the establishment of standard in various processes and activities that lead to the attainment of quality result. Quality assurance is a systematic way of encouraging the achievement of good, quality and high standards in learning process. Quality assurance is the practice to ensure that teachers maintain good standards of teaching in the classrooms in order to achieve the educational goals. Nwite (2012) maintained that quality assurance in teacher's classroom management involves a systematic management, monitoring, and evaluation of procedures adopted to measure the performance of students, to ensure best practices and efficient utilization of time in classroom management.

Time management is one of the most critical resources in the teaching and learning process. Effective utilization of instructional time determines to a large extent the achievement of educational objectives and the maintenance of discipline in the classroom. Time management refers to the ability of teachers to plan, organize, and use available instructional time judiciously to cover the curriculum, engage students in learning activities, and minimize disruptions (Evertson & Weinstein, 2022). Teaching is nostalgic as teachers are faced with the challenge of completing the syllabus within the stipulated time while also ensuring that students understand the lessons and participate actively. Poor time management by teachers often leads to wasted instructional periods, incomplete syllabi, increased student idleness, and consequently, classroom indiscipline (Evertson & Weinstein, 2022). On the other hand, teachers who effectively manage time are able to start and end lessons promptly, make smooth transitions between activities, provide timely feedback, and create a structured learning environment that supports effective classroom management.

Observation has shown that teachers who utilize time effective has a way of reducing opportunities for disruptive behavior and devise strategy to provide and encourage active participation and mutual respect in the classroom. Evertson and Weinstein (2022) noted that when teachers plan their lessons well and use time efficiently, they are able to maintain order and promote academic achievement. Also, Uzochukwu and Nwokuwu (2021) found that secondary school teachers in who effective planning and utilization of instructional time, experience fewer classroom disruptions and record better academic outcomes. This suggests that time management is not only a global best practice but also a relevant strategy for teachers to effectively motivate students.

Furthermore, Strategic motivation is another powerful tool for effective classroom management. it refers to the approach teachers employ to inspire, and influence students' behavior, interest,

participation and engagement of students in teaching and learning process. Observation has shown that motivated students are more likely to be attentive, complete assignments, and adhere to classroom rules. Teachers use various motivational strategies such as rewards, recognition, encouragement, praise, and goal-setting to stimulate and deepens students' interest in learning and also to sustain positive behavior. When students feel valued and see the relevance of what they are learning, they are more likely to develop interest and cooperate with the teacher by taking responsibility for their learning. Evertson & Weinstein (2022) stated that motivating students through positive reinforcement and recognition is essential for classroom management because it encourages supportive learning environment and reduces misconduct. Also, Omebe and Ugwu (2020) opined that secondary school teachers who use motivational strategies such as rewards, encouragement, and feedback experience better classroom discipline and improved student academic performance.

Academic performance refers to the outcome of teaching and learning process that is quantifiable. It is usually measured through examination scores, continuous assessment, and overall learning outcomes (Aremu & Soka, 2003). In the school system, students' academic performance is a major indicator of the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching, learning, and classroom management. consequently, several factors influence students' academic performance negatively which include teacher-related factors (teacher quality, instructional methods), student-related factors, home background, school facilities, and classroom management practices (Adunola, 2011). A well-managed classroom creates an atmosphere that is conducive to learning, minimizes disruptions, and maximizes instructional time. When students are engaged, disciplined, and motivated, they are more likely to understand lessons, participate actively in class, by so doing reducing poor academic performance drastically.

Poor academic performance among secondary school students has become a source of concern to educators, parents, and government not only in Enugu Education zone but in Nigeria at large. There has been a growing concern over examination malpractice and decline in academic performance of secondary school students, especially in public examinations such as WAEC and NECO. Studies have linked this trend to ineffective classroom management, inadequate instructional time utilization, and low student motivation (Omebe & Ugwu, 2020). A well-managed classroom provides an environment where students feel safe, respected, and motivated to learn. When teachers apply effective strategies such as effective communication, proper time management, and motivation, students are more likely to pay attention, participate, and achieve higher academic results (Evertson & Weinstein, 2022). When teachers effectively manage instructional time and classroom activities, academic achievement of students goes up compared to those in poorly managed classrooms. This suggests that classroom management is not just about maintaining discipline, but also about creating conducive atmosphere that promote effective learning and academic success.

Despite all these significances, there is need to determine the extent to which male and female teachers in Enugu Education Zone strategically apply effective communication, time management and motivation in classroom for improvement of academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone hence this study, *Effective Classroom Management Strategies and Academic Performance of Students in Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu State*.

Statement of the Problem

Classroom management is the heart of every education system. No curriculum planning is complete without effective implementation of class management which is mainly carried out in the classroom. Teachers are the ultimate decider of the classroom atmosphere as expected by all sundries. Their role is crucial in influencing the behaviors of students and learning outcomes. Teachers who plan practically are able to overcome many classroom challenges such as disruptions, misbehaviors of students, poor time management, poor motivation of students and ineffectiveness in terms of communication. Managing a classroom in other to improve academic excellence is the ultimate responsibility of a teacher.

However, observation has shown that some teachers fail to communicate instructions clearly, leading to misunderstanding and confusion among students. Others do not utilize instructional time effectively, resulting in incomplete syllabi and increased student idleness. In addition, the use of motivational strategies to sustain students' interest and discipline appears to be inadequate in many classrooms

While studies have examined classroom management in other contexts, there is limited empirical evidence on the extent to which effective communication, time management, and motivation by teachers influence students' academic performance specifically in Enugu Education Zone. Furthermore, it is unclear whether male and female teachers differ in their application of these strategies.

This study therefore seeks to investigate effective communication, time management, and motivation as strategies for classroom management and the influence it has on students' academic performance in public secondary school in Enugu Education Zone.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which teachers apply effective classroom management strategies for academic achievement of students in public secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu state.

Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. the extent to which teachers apply effective communication as a strategy for classroom management in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu State
2. identify the extent to which teachers utilize time as a strategy for classroom management in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu State
3. examine the extent to which teachers use motivation as a strategy for classroom management in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu State

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. To what extent do teachers apply effective communication as a strategy for classroom management in secondary schools in Enugu education zone, Enugu State?
2. To what extent do teachers apply time management as classroom management strategy in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu State?
3. To what extent do teachers apply motivation as a strategy for classroom management in secondary schools in Enugu Education zone, Enugu State?

Methods.

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. the study was carried out in some selected secondary schools in Enugu Education zone, which constitute the area of study. Three

research questions guided the study and The total population of the study stood at 1500 with a sample size of 150 which represent 10% of the entire population. One Hundred and Fifty (150) Questionnaires were given to Teachers. These were administered and collected using the research assistants employed by the researcher. A four-point scale with assigned value was used to rate the responses to the questionnaire items as follows: Very Great Extent (VGE) 4 points, Great Extent (GE) 3 points, Low Extent (LE) 2 points, Very Low Extent (VLE) 1 point. Data collected were analyzed using simple mean and standard deviation. To ensure the reliability of the instrument, the validated instrument was trial tested on five male and ten female secondary school teachers in Udi Education Zone. To ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument, the Cronbach Alpha method was used to compute the internal consistency of the instrument. The computation yielded 0.95 for scale one, 0.95 for scale two, 0.97 for scale three, and 0.85 scale four. The instrument has an overall reliability index of 0.92 which indicates that the instrument was reliable and therefore considered appropriate for use. In rating, the computed mean scores that range from 2.50 and above was regarded as being great extent while the item that falls below 2.50 was regarded as having low extent.

Results:

Research question 1 To what extent do teachers apply effective communication as a strategy for classroom management in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean score of male and female teachers on the extent do teachers apply effective communication as a strategy for classroom management in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone Enugu State?

S/N	Items: Teacher	Male teachers			Female teachers		
		Mean	SD	Dec	Mean	SD	Dec
1	makes use of facial expression in communicating to students	3.24	0.93	GE	3.19	0.83	GE
2	permits students to freely express themselves during teaching in the classroom	3.34	0.85	GE	3.29	0.76	GE
3	uses abusive language in communicating to students	3.05	0.92	GE	3.30	0.74	GE
4	uses clear and simple words with students during teaching.	3.12	1.00	GE	3.04	0.62	GE
5	uses respectful tones of voice in communicating with students	3.06	0.81	GE	3.32	0.74	GE
6	does not listen to students' complaints	2.98	0.93	GE	3.22	0.81	GE
7	Encourages expressions of opinion and view from students	3.27	0.97	GE	3.29	0.74	GE
8	uses both writing and oral communication	3.03	0.93	GE	3.29	0.74	GE
9	Uses body signs and gestures to correct students	3.15	0.81	GE	3.27	0.82	GE
10	avoids the use of technical jargon in teaching	3.18	0.88	GE	3.33	0.79	GE
11	Uses a loud and harsh voice in communicating with students	3.15	0.83	GE	3.24	0.88	GE
	GRAND MEAN	3.14	0.88	GE	3.25	0.77	GE

Data presented in Table 1 show that respondents responded to a great extent in all items. The grand mean of 3.14 and 3.25 for male and female teachers, respectively, and the standard deviation of 0.88 and 0.77 for male and female teachers, respectively, imply that there is a great extent to which teachers use effective communication as classroom management and control in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone.

Research Question 2: To what extent do teachers apply time as a strategy for classroom management in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu State?

Table 2: Mean score of male and female teachers on the extent to which teachers apply time management as a strategy for classroom management in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu State?

		Male Teachers			Female Teachers		
S/N	Items: Time Management	Mean	SD	Dec	Mean	SD	Dec
1	Class teacher utilizes lesson time effectively	3.14	0.81	GE	3.22	0.84	GE
2	Teacher spends so much time in telling stories not related to the lesson	3.09	0.79	GE	3.21	0.77	GE
3	Teacher spends so much time in introducing the lesson	3.25	0.86	GE	3.35	0.74	GE
4	Teacher does not map out sufficient time for evaluation	3.16	0.82	GE	3.35	0.77	GE
5	Teacher uses much time in copying note at expense of explanation	3.28	0.87	GE	3.34	0.72	GE
6	Teacher spends much time to correct students when displayed unacceptable behavior in the class.	3.21	0.94	GE	3.31	0.71	GE
7	Teachers do not map out sufficient time to make use of instructional materials	3.21	0.76	GE	3.31	0.81	GE
	GRAND MEAN	3.19	0.84	GE	3.30	0.77	GE

Data presented on table 2 shows that teachers responded to a great extent in all the items addressing time management as classroom management strategy. The grand mean of 3.19 and 3.30 for male and female respectively and standard deviation of 0.84 and 0.77 for male and female teachers respectively implies that teachers employ time as classroom management strategy in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone.

Research Question 3: To what extent do teachers apply motivation as a strategy for classroom management in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu State?

Table 3: Mean score of male teacher and female teacher on the extent do teachers apply motivation as classroom management strategy in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu State?

		Male Teachers			Female Teachers		
S/N	Items: motivation	Mean	SD	Dec	Mean	SD	Dec
1	teacher relates lesson content to students' real-life experiences to make it interesting	3.25	0.83	GE	3.30	0.74	GE
2	teacher style of administering assignments enhances your academic performance	3.12	0.86	GE	3.33	0.71	GE
3	teacher praises you publicly when you perform well in class	2.98	0.93	GE	3.33	0.71	GE
4	teacher does not encourage active participation in class.	3.41	0.76	GE	3.33	0.81	GE
5	classroom arrangement encourages you to participation in class.	3.05	0.91	GE	3.27	0.76	GE
	GRAND MEAN	3.16	0.86	GE	3.31	0.75	GE

Data presented in table 3 shows that respondents responded to a great extent in all items. The grand mean of 3.16 and 3.31 for male and female teachers respectively and standard deviation of 0.86 and 0.75 for male and female teachers respectively implies that to a great extent teacher uses motivation adequately for classroom management in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone

Discussion

From table 1, is it seen that effective communication skills enhances good class room management. The evidence from the study shows that both male and female teachers responded to a great extent in relation to communication as a strategy for classroom management in secondary schools in Enugu Education zone with grand mean of 3,14 and 3,25 respectively, and a standard deviation of 0.88 and 0.77. This implies that gender is not a barrier to adoption of effective communication for managing classrooms. This result corroborates Marzano (2003), who asserted that effective communication management requires teachers to communicate clear expectations and build positive relationships with students. It is also consistent with Evertson and Weinstein (2022), who identified communication as a 21st-centry skill for giving instructions, providing feedback and maintaining order in the classroom.

Data presented in table 2 shows that both male and female teachers in Enugu Education zone to a great extent apply time management as a strategy for classroom management. the grand mean of 3.19 for male teachers and 3.30 for female teachers indicates a high level of agreement. The standard deviation of 0.84 for males and 0.77 for female teachers. This implies that both genders recognize the judicious use of instructional time as a key for maintaining order and achieving learning objectives. The findings agree with Uzochukwu & Nwokuwu (2021), Who opined that secondary school teachers who effectively plan and utilize time experience fewer classroom disruption and record better academic outcomes. Therefore, effective time management remains a vital strategy for classroom management irrespective of gender.

In table 3 the findings reveal that both male and female teachers in Enugu education zone to a great extent adequately apply motivation as a strategy for classroom management. The grand mean of 3.16 and 3.31 for both genders indicates a high level of agreement. The standard deviation of 0.86 males and 0.75 for females show that responses were consistent within each group. This implies that teachers recognize motivation as an important tool for engaging students, sustaining interest and reducing misbehavior in the classroom. The result is in line with Evertson & Weinstein (2022), who stated that motivating students through praise, recognition and goal setting is essential for classroom management because it promotes positive behavior and active participation. The findings also agree with Omebe & Ugwu (2020), Who reported that secondary school teachers who use motivation technique such as reward, encouragement and feedback experience better classroom discipline and improved student performance. Thus, motivation serve as an effective strategy for classroom management of teachers irrespective of gender.

Conclusion

The study examined the extent of Effective Classroom Management Strategies use by teachers of public secondary schools in Enugu Education zone, Enugu state. Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn, in classrooms, teachers adopt effective communication in their teaching, ensure students discipline, motivate and manage their time as classroom management strategies in secondary schools.

Recommendations

1. Secondary school teachers should be exposed to professional development and trainings to improve their communication skills and enhance leaning outcomes.
2. Teachers should create a well-defined routine structure and predictable daily schedule that outlines the timing for each subject and time for extracurricular activities, this will minimize downtimes, maximizes instructional time and increase focus on academic tasks.
3. Teachers should develop a system of positive reinforcement by praising, rewarding, or recognizing efforts and good behavior. This will help build a positive mindset and motivates students to engage more actively in their learning
4. Conference, workshops, seminars and other in-service programmes should be regularly organized for teachers to acquaint them with latest innovations and skills in classroom management.

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