CHALLENGES OF EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DELTA STATE

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Abstract

The study examined the challenges facing effective classroom management and control with strategies to curb these challenges in public secondary schools of Delta State. The population was made up of all the teachers (12,883) in public secondary schools. The sample of 645 teachers was randomly selected using the simple random sampling technique. Three research questions were asked and answered using mean and standard deviation. The mean ratings employed 2.50 and above acceptance level while below 2.50 is rejection level. Two hypotheses were formulated and tested at alpha level of 0.05 significance using the z-test statistical tool. The results of the mean ratings showed that teachers agreed on the challenges and strategies of effective classroom management and control. The results also revealed that there was no significant difference between male and female teachers on the challenges and the strategies of effective classroom management and control in public secondary schools. Based on the findings, conclusion was drawn and recommendations were made that school administrators should ensure that seminars are regularly organized which are aimed at intermittent training of teachers on effective classroom management and control strategies to curb classroom behavioural problems.

Keywords: *Classroom management, Challenges, Strategies, Control, Secondary schools, Public.*

Introduction

Classroom management is a method of ensuring that classroom activities and lessons are carried out smoothly and sequentially by teachers despite students behavioural problems. Accumulating research has revealed that the challenges of effective classroom management is a critical component of effective teaching, but too many teachers were distressed with the ineffectiveness of classroom management. For example, teacher's stress and negative emotion are often related to student misbehavior, (Emmer & Stough, 2001). In search for the causes of and the cures for the persistent problem of engaging student in learning and reducing misbehavior, researchers have adopted a broadened view of classroom management which encompasses not only using control to reduce misbehavior, but also establishing a good teacher-student relationship, creating supportive classroom environments and responding to students needs for love, respect and sense of belonging to a school (Emmer & Gerwels, 2006, Emmer & Stough, 2001, Jones & Jones, 2004, Pianta, 2006, Ritter & Hancock, 2007). This broadened view takes into consideration the student centered and humanistic approach to classroom management has not kept pace with instructional reforms. As Morse (2004) commented "it is sad to note that proposals for school reform or special education inclusion seldom gives attention to conditions which would facilitate the school as a setting for continuity of caring for children". In practice, conceptions of classroom management typically remain rooted in behaviourism and the most common approach to classroom management is controlling students misbehavior. It is an integral part of effective teaching which prevents behaviour problems through good planning, organizing and managing of classroom activities and resources aiming at maximizing students involvement and co-operation in learning.

Classroom control according to Atanda & Lameed (2004) involves the mobilization and organization of resources to achieve the expected objectives of the school system. Osakwe, (2011) in her study stated that teachers can effectively control the class by judiciously adhering to and applying these variables-motivation, discipline and teacher's competence to the classroom situation which will positively enhance teaching-learning process in secondary schools.

Classroom management includes all efforts teachers make in the following areas, organizing the students, coordinating their activities, monitoring their behaviour, ensuring effective learning process, providing instruction through interactive communication, getting feedbacks from learners preparing and utilizing instructional materials in facilitating learning, maintaining discipline among learners, evaluating learning outcome, ensuring that the problems of above average learners are being solved, relating on one to one basis with learners, being mindful of other basic needs, providing basic information to learners, assisting learners to developing coping skills, providing an exemplary behaviour for learners to imitate, and generating interest among learners as well as reinforcing their performance through motivational techniques (Egbule in Osakwe 2014).

The classroom is an operational venue in schools which holds students together and offers the opportunity of achieving the purpose of education. (Hill & Hill 1990). The classroom is a place where a group of students or children are taught lessons. Thus, the classroom should be well managed and maintained to bring about healthy learning

environment, relatively free from behavioural problems which goal should be to maintain a positive productive learning environment and quality performance. The quality of the physical environment, according to Edwards (1993), affects the performance of teachers as well as that of students.

Effective classroom management and control tasks consist of planning lessons, providing a conducive learning environment, teaching students and perhaps the most daunting task of all, is appropriately responding to students behavioural problems. This is a great task that teachers face on daily basis which requires them to work deligently and continuously to maintain a positive classroom atmosphere. The ability of teachers to organize their students is critical to achieving positive educational outcomes (Osakwe, 2014).

Effective classroom management requires proactive and reactive teachers in order to define and communicate their social and academic expectations to their students. Such involvements can motivate the students to obey and accept the school rules and regulations. Classroom management strategies are a crucial part of teachers success in creating a safe and effective learning environment for students. Therefore, teachers should know how to use and apply strategies that will allow and also help students to learn (Zuckerman, 2007). From experience, teachers in Nigerian secondary schools can apply the following strategies for effective classroom management and control.

- Plan their lessons properly and present lessons from known to unknown facts.
- Use proper introductory strategies to set students expectations at the beginning of every lesson and activity.
- Use incentives to motivate students and provide counselling services for students with behavioural problems.
- Make rules and regulations simple and understandable and be consistent in enforcing them.

In order to have an effective classroom management (Jones and Jones in Osakwe 2014) suggested 5 main skills as follows:

- Developing a solid understanding of students personal, psychological, and learning aspirations.
- Establishing positive student - teacher and peer relationships that aid students psychological needs.
- Using instructional methods that facilitates optimal learning by responding to students learning needs.
- Using organizational and group management methods that maximize students on task behaviours.

There is no strategy for classroom management that will totally overcome student behaviour problems if the teacher does not provide an interesting programme that allows each student to become actively involved.

Statement of Problem

The importance of a good classroom management and control in the realization of the objectives of education cannot be over-emphasized. It has been observed that many teachers

who come to the classroom to teach, only prepare themselves with book knowledge and theory but have little experience in controlling a classroom of 35 students. In a school system, where effective classroom management and control is lacking, there is likely to be chaos which affects the teaching - learning process, and the standard of students performance, hence a good teacher should be acquainted with such problems, be able to prevent and find solutions to such problems in order to promote quality secondary education. These problems are as follows: over crowded classroom which constitutes a serious problem in many school systems; the physical setting of the classroom; the overwhelming teacher students ratio; instructional delivery method and lack of teachers preparation. Some other classroom management problems include absenteeism/ rudeness noise-making, disobedience, naughtiness, truancy, restlessness, inattention, boredom, fighting (verbal or physical), sleeping, untidiness and refusal to do assignments (Osakwe, 2014).

The problem of this study put in question form is: what are the challenges of effective classroom management and control in Government Secondary Schools of Delta State?

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide this study:

1. What are the challenges facing effective classroom management and control in public secondary schools?
2. Is there any difference between male and female teachers in the challenges they face in classroom management and control in secondary schools?
3. What are the strategies for effective classroom management and control in public secondary schools?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference between male and female teachers in the challenges for effective classroom management and control.
2. There is no significant difference in the strategies for effective classroom management and control with regards to gender.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges of effective classroom management and control in public secondary schools.

Significance of the Study

It is believed that the outcome of this study will hopefully be of great importance to the following group of persons, teachers, principals, curriculum developers and researchers.

Teachers of secondary school will make use of the finding to redirect their teaching strategies/techniques in classroom management and control thereby improving learning.

Teachers will also benefit from the findings because it will enable them understand some techniques in classroom management and control and how to handle areas of students difficulties and behavioural problems.

Principals of schools will also gain from the finding of the study, which will be a useful aid for them as they adopt the process - approach method in the school curriculum where students will be actively engaged to learn.

Curriculum developers will also benefit because the outcome of the study may help them in the planning and designing of the secondary school curriculum and identification of the specific teaching skills which teachers need to acquire.

Finally, information generated from the study will be useful to researchers who will be interested in studying classroom management and control in secondary schools.

Methodology

This study employed the expost-facto design to unravel the challenges of effective classroom management and control in secondary schools in Delta State. The design chosen involves the collection of data to answer the research questions and test hypotheses on the present situations of problems without manipulation of the variables. Four research questions were raised to guide the study, and two hypotheses were formulated which was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population comprised all the 12,883 teachers of public secondary schools in Delta State. The sample was made up of 645 teachers which was selected using simple random sampling technique. The instrument used was a questionnaire comprised of thirty items which was designed using the four point scale of measurement. (strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree). To ascertain the face and content validity of the instrument, copies of the questionnaire were given to three experts in Educational Administration and Management for scrutiny, corrections and suggestions. The reliability of the instrument was established using split half reliability technique, and a correlation coefficient value of 0.84 was obtained. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions with a bench mark of 2.50 and above as agreed, while below 2.50 as disagreed. The z-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results
Research Question 1: What are the challenges facing effective classroom management and control?

Table 1: Challenges of Effective Classroom Management and control

S/N	Items N = 645	Teachers Response		
		$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Overcrowded classroom constitutes a serious classroom management problem (restlessness/noisemaking/inattention).	3.84	1.40	+
2.	Teachers ineffectiveness and teacher attrition to the condition of the school which they teach.	2.54	1.42	+

3.	Inadequate physical facilities (furniture and teaching aids).	2.84	1.14	+
4.	Poor student teacher relationship (rudeness, disobedience, absenteeism).	2.75	1.28	+
5.	Poor motivation on part of students and teachers.	2.87	1.32	+
6.	Many teachers embark on their career without having mastered an effective approach to managing students in the classroom.	2.69	1.22	+
7.	Teachers insufficient knowledge of a subject matter and poor communication.	3.59	1.55	+
8.	Poor lighting and ventilation	1.90	1.25	-
9.	Many teachers have no comprehensive information and pedagogical method of the management of students behaviour problems in the classroom.	3.89	1.55	+
10.	Poor instructional delivery method.	2.53	1.45	+
	Grand mean		2.94	

N = No. of teachers, + = Agreed, - = Disagreed;

Table 1 result showed that out of 10 items on the challenges of effective classroom management and control, teachers agreed on nine items (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9,10) which had their decision mean above 2.50 but disagreed on one item (8) which had its decision mean below 2.50. From table one it can be concluded that teachers agreed on all the items except one that they are the challenges of effective classroom management and control and as such disrupt teaching learning activities in the classroom situation.

Research Question 2: Is there any difference between male and female teachers in the challenges they face in classroom management and control?

Table 2: Difference between male and female teachers on challenges of classroom management and control

S/N	Items	Teachers Response					
		Male N = 273			Female N = 372		
		$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Overcrowded classroom constitutes a serious classroom management problem (noisemaking, restlessness etc.).	2.87	1.31	-	2.93	1.96	-
2.	Teachers personality affect students behaviour.	3.31	1.40	+	2.59	1.22	+
3.	Improvised instructional materials for classroom instruction	2.60	1.46	+	2.76	1.45	+
4.	Inadequate physical facilities (furniture, teaching aids).	3.45	1.37	+	3.42	1.32	+
5.	Monitor students activities to avoid behaviour problems.	2.54	1.42	+	3.25	1.28	+
6.	Involve prefects in punishing pupils who violate class regulations.	1.90	1.29	-	1.91	1.22	-

7.	Spacious classrooms for teaching and learning process.	2.89	1.55	+	3.29	1.55	+
8.	Using threats to reprimand pupils.	1.70	1.30	-	1.90	1.21	-
9.	Hang flip charts and other instructional aids alike on the classroom walls.	1.50	1.10	-	1.70	1.31	-
10.	Incorporate the class prefects in decision making with regards to class issues and problems.	3.39	1.35	+	3.50	1.41	+
	Ground mean	2.62			2.73		

N = No. of teachers, + = Agreed, - = Disagreed

Table 2 result indicated that out of the 10 items on the difference between male and female teachers on the challenges they face in classroom management and control, items 1,2,3,4,5,7 and 10 had their mean scores above the decision rule of 2.50. This indicates that teachers perform their expected roles to a high extent in the various schools, but item 6, obtained mean ratings below 2.50 and so indicated that teachers do not involve prefects in punishing pupils who violate class regulations. However, items 8 and 9 equally obtained mean ratings below 2.50 showing that teachers disagree that these items are not among the challenges facing classroom management and control.

Research Question 3: What are the strategies for effective classroom management and control of public secondary school students?

Table 3: The strategies for effective classroom management and control

S/N	Items N = 645	Teachers Response		
		$\overline{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Monitoring students carefully and frequently to avoid behaviour problems.	3.72	1.08	+
2.	Providing instructions that use a variety of models approaches and activities.	2.59	1.54	+
3.	Ensure that classroom is free from noise and disturbance.	2.87	1.31	+
4.	Involve prefects in punishing pupils who violate class rules and regulations.	1.75	1.11	-
5.	Ensure that all the pupils in the class have adequate furniture.	3.50	1.41	+
6.	Incorporate the class prefects in decision making with regards to class issues and problems.	2.80	1.01	+
7.	Using innovating methods in teaching.	3.70	1.09	+
8.	Use of reinforcement and reward	2.90	1.14	+
9.	Teachers being vigilant in teaching learning process.	2.55	0.99	+
10.	Using threats to reprimand pupils.	1.71	1.20	-
	Grand mean		2.81	

N = No. of teachers, + = Agree, - = Disagree

Table 3 indicated that out of 10 items on the strategies for effective classroom management and control, the teachers agreed (+) on 8 items (1,2,3,5,6,7,8 and 9) as strategies for effective classroom management and control but disagreed (-) on 2 items (4

and 10). From the table, it can be concluded that these various strategies help teachers to manage the classroom effectively thereby promoting teaching-learning process, and also curbing behavioural problems in the classroom situation.

Hypothesis One
There is no significant difference between male and female teachers in the challenges for effective classroom management and control.

Table 4: Z-test analysis of male and female teachers in the challenges for effective classroom management and control

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	Z-Cal.	Z-Critical	Decision
Male	273	5.76	2.10				
Female	372	5.72	1.83	643	1.28	1.96	Retained

P ≤ 0.05 level of significance

As shown in table 4, the z-calculated was less than the z-critical therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the challenges for effective classroom management and control was retained. This shows that both male and female teachers are facing same challenges for the effective management and control of students behavioural problems in a classroom situation.

Hypothesis Two
There is no significant difference in the strategies for effective classroom management and control with regards to gender.

Table 5: Z-test analysis of the strategies for effective classroom management and control with regards to location

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	Z-Cal.	Z-Critical	Decision
Male	210	2.04	1.09				
Female	435	2.17	1.59	643	1.06	1.96	Retained

P ≤ 0.05 level of significance

Table 5, showed that the z-calculated value of 1.06 was less than the z-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, hence the null hypothesis was retained. This shows a non-significant difference in the strategies for effective classroom management and control with regards to gender.

Discussion of Results
This study answered three questions and tested two hypotheses on the challenges of effective classroom management and control in public secondary schools in Delta State. The result in table one revealed that out of ten items only one item obtained low mean ratings, thus the grand mean of 2.94 is greater than the decision rule of 2.50. Therefore teachers agreed on the challenges of effective classroom management and control. The result in table two indicated that seven items obtained mean ratings above decision rule of 2.50 while three items obtained mean ratings below the decision rule, however, the grand

means of 2.62 and 2.75 are greater than the decision rule of 2.50. Therefore both male and female teachers agreed on the challenges of effective classroom management and control. Table 3 result showed that out of ten items only two items obtained low mean ratings of 1.75 and 1.71 respectively, however, the grand mean of 2.81 is greater than the decision rule of 2.50. This implied that the teachers agreed on the strategies of effective classroom management and control of secondary school students.

Hypothesis one in the study revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the challenges of effective classroom management and control in public secondary schools. This result showed that male and female teachers unanimously agreed on challenges from the same perspective. This finding confirms the existing studies of Osakwe (2014) and Edwards (1993) which also revealed that the challenges of classroom management and control are quality of the physical environment, overcrowded classrooms, lack of teachers preparation and noisemaking to mention but few.

Hypothesis two showed that there is no significant difference on the strategies for effective management and control of public secondary school with regards to gender. The study revealed that both teachers agreed on the strategies from the same perspective because teachers understand students behavioural problems since they teach them daily in the same school environment. This finding supports the existing studies of Osakwe (2014), Emmer & Gerwels (2006), Pianta (2006), Ritter & Battistich (2006), and Jones & Jones (2004) which also revealed the strategies for effective classroom management and control such as good teacher-student relationship, using innovate methods, using reinforcement and rewards, creating supportive classroom environments and monitoring students carefully to mention but a few.

Conclusion

Classroom management and control is an integral part of effective teaching which prevents behaviour problems though good planning, organizing and managing of classroom activities and resources aiming at maximizing students involvement and co-operation in learning. Thus this study focused on the challenges of effective classroom management and control and possible prevent measures. Based on the results of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn that:

- Both male and female teachers agreed on the challenges facing effective classroom management and control of secondary schools with regards to grand mean ratings in tables one and two.
- Teachers agreed on the items on table three as strategies for effective classroom management and control of secondary schools.
- Male and female teachers do not differ significantly on the challenges facing effective classroom management and control of secondary schools.
- Gender does not differ significantly on the strategies for effective classroom management and control of secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion reached, it was recommended that:

1. School administrators should ensure that seminars are regularly organized which are aimed at intermittent training of teachers on effective classroom management and control strategies to curb classroom behavioural problems.

2. Positive learning environment should be created with adequate furnitures and teaching aids by both the school administrators and teachers.

3. There should be early identification and intervention by the school administrators and teachers on the challenges facing effective classroom management and control in order to curb such challenges.

4. Counselling sections should be organized and conducted on regular basis for students who are chronically involved in classroom behavioural problems making the classroom unconducive for effective management and control by teachers.

5. The state government should also make room for teacher training and development in the state where they will be acquainted with challenges facing classroom management and control, and strategies employed to ensure effective classroom management and control that will boost students academic performance.

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