REVITALIZING CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL STRATEGIES AS VERITABLE TOOL FOR PROMOTING QUALITY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract

Classroom management and control has been viewed as a necessary factor for effective instructional and curricular practices towards enhancing quality of education at all levels. Consequently, the need for ensuring sound classroom atmosphere for effective instructional delivery in Nigeria education system cannot be over emphasized. Therefore, the paper underscored the need for revitalizing classroom management and control skills of teachers for effective discharge of instructional responsibilities. The conceptual framework, purposes and practical applications of classroom management and disciplines in schools were discussed. Finally, the paper highlights some key principles that classroom teachers must observe for ensuring qualitative classroom management for the attainment of qualitative education in Nigeria in the 21st century.

Introduction

Achievement of maximum success in any classroom teaching and learning interaction depends to a large extent on teachers' skills and abilities in classroom management and control. In fact, the goals of quality education can hardly be achieved in the school system without effective classroom management and control. Specifically, the teacher is essentially the important pivot of that classroom management. He is responsible for ensuring effective management of the classroom that promotes sound climate for effective teaching/learning process. Consequently, the need for ensuring effective teachers' classroom management and control strategies and skills of cannot be over stressed.

The paper therefore, attempts to examine the processes and skills teachers necessarily require for effective classroom management and control. Specifically, the concept and practical application of classroom management and control were explored. The paper highlights the conceptual definitions, purposes and process of classroom management and discipline. Attempts have been made in asserting the need for effective classroom management skills as necessary instrument for ensuring efficient classroom management, control and discipline for enhanced and efficient delivery of the teaching and learning process for the attainment of qualitative education.

The Concept of Classroom Management

The concept of classroom-management -has been defined as the process concerned with identifying, understanding, maintaining, motivating, stimulating, controlling, and unifying human and material resources in the classroom for maximum success in teaching learning situation', (Adesina et-al, 1995). Classroom management is described by Duke (2002), as the provisions and procedures necessary to create and maintain a situation in which learning and teaching can take place. When learning and teaching-can take place, there is order in the classroom, Cohen, Intillii, and Robbin (2002 118), describe order as "the situation where there is a clear set of expectations for all classroom members, where people can anticipate expectations, and where there is a high degree of conformity to the expectations". It has also been viewed as the process that involves the careful harmonization of those elements which help to create good teaching-learning situations which include the physical conditions with the classroom ventilation, equipment, and general appearance, the seating of pupils, the collection of books, materials and class papers etc. It can be easily observed from the definitions that classroom management is the effective utilization of human and material resources as well as the curriculum within the classroom setting for the successful teaching and learning process and the attainment of the school objectives.

Purpose of Classroom Management and Control

Accordingly, AH (2007), asserts that the central aim of effective classroom management is to promote a classroom environment conducive for effective and meaningful teaching and learning process. Consequently, teacher's classroom management strategies should serve the following purposes for efficiency and effectiveness in the attainment of the goals of the lesson:

a) Maintaining peace and order in the class;
b) Generating the learner's interested, attention and active participation in the lesson by using appropriate and effective instructional methods for qualitative lesson delivery,
c) Creating an atmosphere of discipline in the classroom for the learners to feel free and move freely;
d) Checking offences committed by the students and punish them appropriately;
e) Establishing and maintains conditions necessary for effective learning;
f) Developing in the students the attitude of self-control and cooperation as a valuable personal asset in meeting as well as fulfilling the duties of everyday life;
g) Developing the student's sense of respect for Law and order towards constituted authority;
The Processes and Skills of Classroom Management

Classroom management process is concerned with the teachers' abilities to skillfully consider and manage the physical setting of the classroom, time, class control, students' interest, communication in the classroom as well as maintaining discipline and order for effective teaching and learning. Therefore, teacher's skills remain the key factor in the attainment of effective classroom management. The teacher must therefore, acquire skills in classroom management and maintaining good discipline for ensuring effective teaching and learning process. The following areas of classroom management skills are among the most essential skills and processes the teacher need to develop and skillfully observe:

a) Physical Classroom Atmosphere

The physical arrangement of every classroom is the first and most important point of concern in classroom management. This is because the physical setting of the classroom has been viewed as an important factor for motivating pupils to learn or deterring them from learning. Harvard (1973); Adesina et-al (1995), Farrant (1991), are all of the view that, if the classroom setting is orderly, beautiful, and comfortable in terms of lighting, organization and temperature conditions, pupils will be made happy and willing to learn. However, a poorly arranged classroom which is sited near a noisy street, factory, or market place and which does not have the right temperature and lighting system can lead to boredom, fatigue, indiscipline, and negative learning attitudes on the part of the pupils. Therefore, it is important that every classroom teacher should understand that the physical environment of the classroom and the school constitute a strong factor for effective classroom management and motivators for effective learning, Harverd, (1973).

b) Chalkboard Arrangement in Teaching/Learning Process

Chalkboard arrangement constitutes an important part of effective classroom management. The chalkboard is very essential part of the classroom that enables the teacher to utilize the students' sense of sight and their sense of hearing in the teaching/learning process. The use of two or more senses instead of one, makes learning more permanent. In order to ensure good chalkboard arrangement for effective classroom management and control the following should be taken into consideration:

i. All work chalkboard should be in the style of handwriting understandable to the students in the class. ii. Sketches/diagrams on chalkboard should be made quickly to illustrate important points in teaching. . iii. Work should be arranged neatly for easier to learning

It is important to note that bad chalkboard arrangement has bad effects on classroom management.

c) Classroom Arrangement

Classroom arrangement is an important factor in the process of teachers classroom management and control. Teachers should possess the necessary skill in class arrangement for effective utilization of classroom space that will facilitate efficient teaching and learning. However good classroom arrangement depends on the type of furniture available in the school. In most cases the individual students' desks or long benches, chalkboard and teacher desk are provided in school classrooms. These should be well arranged in rows.

d) Time Management in the Classroom Activities

For effective classroom management and control, time management skill must be imbibed. Time management, like any other skill can be learned. The degree of efficiency and success a teaching and learning in the classroom depends on the adequacy of the planning and use of time as a resource. If the time available is well managed there will be enough time for all the teacher to decide to bring about efficiency and effectiveness in the school programme. It is important to note that the teacher should have a weekly and daily time charts showing details of what he intend to achieve every week or every day.

e) Sustaining of Learners' Interest in the Class

Teaching is deliberate and plan activity. Therefore, the teacher must spend some time thinking about what to teach, who to teach and how to teach. The teacher must carefully select learning content, medium of instruction and how to evaluate what is taught in order to sustain learners' interest. This will ensure and thereby create conducive classroom climate. In sustaining the learner's interest, the teachers should use a variety of methods and techniques of teaching.

f) Handling Instructional Materials

As part of their teaching strategy, many teachers find it necessary to provide supplementary materials or notes for the students in addition to the information in the textbooks. When notes or diagrams are written or drawn on the board during the lesson, a lot of teaching time is wasted. If the school administration will allow it, notes and diagrams should be duplicated on a machine and each students gets a copy. In most classrooms there are bulletin boards and host of empty wall spaces for charts, diagrams, notes and other forms of visual materials. A teacher should try to use make of such facilities as frequently as possible; otherwise he will be neglecting important dimensions in the management of learning.
g) Communication for Effective Classroom Management

Adesina (1995), considers communication as an important instrument for effective classroom management and control for the attainment of (he school goals. He argues that without effective communication skills the teacher would not be able to carry the learners along in the process classroom management and instructional performance. In communication process, the teacher knows what to communicate, how to communicate when to communicate and the medium, means or channels for such communication process. Therefore, for effective classroom management and learning/teaching process, there must be successful communication. Good communication in the -classroom helps to make lessons clear and-e7isy~rorstudefils~to learn. Generally, good communication makes teacher’s work in classroom management process easier as well as creates an environment of the school conducive for learning.

Class Control and Discipline

It cannot "be denied that without classroom order and control learning cannot take place. One characteristic that is believed to distinguished effective classrooms from ineffective ones is the teacher's ability engenders and sustains class control. For effective classroom management and control, the teacher must have a good understanding of the reasons for students' misbehaviour of principles for preventing such misbehaviour and ways of correcting when they arise. Effective class control best be achieved through enacting rules governing classroom behaviour and being firm and consistent in enforcing them.

The Concept of Discipline in Classroom

Discipline is the training of the minds and-character of pupils so as to make them obedient to authority and develop self control. Harved (1973), noted that the best form of discipline is self-discipline. Self discipline is the orderly behaviour maintained by pupils because they are fully convinced that it is right to do so. This inner conviction makes pupils responsible, diligent, cooperative, honest, obedient and law-abiding without enforcements, threats of punishment or promises of rewards. There must be obedience, cooperation, and recognition of authority as well as a cordial relationship between pupil and teacher if the work of the class is to proceed effectively.

ii. Some Factors that Promote Effective Class Control

Teacher's attainment of effective class control in the teaching process depends on several factors. The most important of these factors is the teachers' promotion and sustaining of sound discipline. There are several indicators of good classroom discipline. These include the personality of the teacher, good physical surroundings; good organization; a wise use of order and authority.

a) Teacher's Personality

Several educationists and professional teachers agreed that, the personality and character of the teacher play an important role in determining good classroom discipline. This apparently indicated that the teacher should have absolute control of himself and develop self-discipline qualities if he is to secure respect and willing obedience from his students. Farrant (1991), asserts that the teacher must cultivate in himself those qualities he wishes to find in his pupils- sincerity impartiality, truthfulness, industry, patience, and punctuality. He must maintain a certain amount of dignity and at the same time show courtesy and humour without lapsing into undue familiarity. He must exercise tact, avoid hasty temper, be firm or principled and adopt uniformity in the treatment of the students

The teacher should therefore, be a model for imitation. He should be neat in dress and person and his duties always performed in regular and methodical manner. He should be punctual and diligent and everything he does in the school should be characterized by consistency.

b) Organization

Adesina (1995), Observes that without proper organization of classroom activities, the class will not only be rowdy but also in a confused state of affairs of the class work. Therefore, careful attention must be paid to every detail which promotes order and smoothness of work. Activities like the distribution and collection of exercise books, the opening and shutting of windows, cleaning the blackboard, fetching drinking water, organization of work, sweeping the classroom and leaving the classroom for outdoor work are which should be done according to a fixed routine without a word from the teacher. There should be clear and rules and regulations in classroom that would guide behaviour and conduct of class activities. Students should be well acquainted with the established rules therefore, teacher should ensure prudent organization in the conduct of all classroom teaching/learning and routine activities.

c) Use of Order and Authority

It has been stressed that the foundation of all good classroom management is the authority of the teacher. (All, 2007). The way the teacher exercises his authority determines to a great extent the manner in which his orders are obeyed. The teacher can best achieve obedience of his students through wise use of physical punishment and force that inflicts fear, but these methods will only result in resentment on the part of the child. All efforts should be in the way to ensure that the child become self-disciplined himself, without intervention from the teacher. Teacher's effective use of order and authority can facilitate desired positive classroom management and through display of the following qualities, (Akabue, 1991):

i. Be consistency being consistent in the use of discipline and avoid favouritism in dealing with children
ii. Be firm in his decisions and disciplinary approach; combined with kindness and understanding;
iii. Be self-aware of his limitations in personality and manner of approach in dealing with the pupils,
iv. Be fair and just in his understanding and control of the wrong doing.