

EFFECTIVE PRIMARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: A TOOL FOR QUALITY EDUCATION ASSURANCE IN TEACHING-LEARNING OUTCOMES IN DELTA STATE

DR. ADEMU S. AWUJA

*Department of Curriculum Studies and Educational Technology,
College of Education,
Agbor, Delta State.*

Abstract

The paper focuses on effective primary classroom management as a vital tool for quality education assurance in teaching-learning outcomes particularly in Delta State by creating conducive environment. Classroom proper management refers to teacher's actions aimed at consistently attending to learners' behaviours via maintenance of order, discipline, punishment, reward, effective teaching and provision of adequate furniture in the classroom, laboratory and field activities. The teacher facilitates, motivates, guides academic and social activities. The paper takes a cursory look at methods, approaches, strategies and techniques of managing classroom challenges for quality assurance in learning-outcomes. It was concluded that since teachers are trained to manage complex and multidimensional classroom activities which include high quality learning-outcomes, they need to constantly attend seminars, workshops, conferences and retraining programmes in order to further update their knowledge, skills and attitudes towards effective teaching-learning-outcomes.

Key-wards: Primary, Classroom-Management, Motivational Climate, Learning-outcome.

Teaching and learning are inseparable concepts which are very imperative terms in education as a discipline. These two are basic processes of education requiring a conducive environment to succeed in bringing out better results. An environment is considered to be conducive if it is stimulating enough to support effective instruction. Classroom is an integral parts of learning environment while its management is an instrument for making pedagogical implementation prosper and successful around the world (Awuja-Ademu, 2015).

What is Classroom Management?

Teachers generally encounter challenges on how best to manage pupils and material resources due to individual differences existing among the learners while teaching in the classroom (Awuja-Ademu, 2002). Classroom management refers to an arrangement of instructional environment for a group of learners within a room under the same roof by a teacher or more especially at primary school level. Usually, orderliness is required as it is a task that must be done by a professionally trained teacher particularly in the classroom setting so that learning can take place. Classroom management was viewed to be different from classroom instruction in the early 1970s. However, many researches in 1980s had indicated that classroom management and classroom instruction are one and the same which are inextricably interwoven complicated terms in educational studies (Doyle, 1970; Evertson 1997). It is connected directly with management of human and material resources in order to attain educational objectives as well as societal goals.

Classroom holds the learners together as a group whose aim is to acquire desirable knowledge and obtain relevant certificate at any level of education. Furthermore, it describes an enclosure in a setting environment where teaching and learning take place in a congenial atmosphere devoid of violence, bullying, harassment and indiscipline between a teacher and his/her pupils. Classroom is like a dining room within a building where learners are sufficiently fed with knowledge, skills, attitudes and great wisdom using pedagogical due process as a tool for quality education assurance in learning outcomes (Awuja-Ademu, 2006).

A teacher's classroom management skill tells much about his/her beliefs on the subject matters which further illustrates the kind of instructional suitable methodology employed in a specified classroom setting. Of course, a teacher is in-charge of a classroom in nursery or primary level of education assigned to him/her by the school manager as a facilitator. He/she is responsible for leading learners to cognitive, affective and psychomotor development of the individual to be competent to live in and contribute to the development of the society (FRN, 2008).

Management of Material Resources

The success of any system of education as well as classroom proper management depend solely on proper planning, efficient administration and adequate financing (FRN, 2008). Management of material resources include organization, structuring, proprietorship, control, inspection and supervision. As a result, the strategies for achieving conducive teaching – learning environment involves physical planning, gathering of appropriate materials, equipment and facilities like chairs, tables, building, playing-ground, instructional materials and so forth before coming to teach the lesson. Management for better quality assurance in education involves teacher's

effective utilisation of personnel, learners and materials such as curriculum, syllabus, schemes of work, classroom attendant register, school diary, pupils' termly report cards, progress charts, methods and money to accomplish the set educational objectives. The importance of classroom material management cannot be over-emphasized if the teacher must succeed in teaching-learning outcomes.

Management of Classroom Instruction and Pupils' Activities

The interwoven nature of classroom management involves several activities performed by both teachers and the learners. These activities can be classified into verbal or non-verbal, indoor/outdoor, practical or non-practical actions basically intended to achieve the instructional objectives in the curriculum. These instructional management operations include explanation of concepts, phenomena, improvising models, presenting instructional materials for practical activities, demonstration, carrying-out project work, drawing, composing songs, poems and managing the chalk board (Egede, 2011). The 9-year basic education curriculum activities, methods of teaching-learning processes, skills, approaches, techniques and objectives as prescribed under each topic in order to promote learning by doing is at the exclusive disposal of the classroom manager who is the primary curriculum implementer to choose the most suitable management option to deliver effectively (FRN, 2012). Application of technical instructional skills required by classroom teacher to help learners develop the capabilities to become competent for active participation in the lesson like set induction, use of examples, illustrations, stimulus variation, planned repetition, non-verbal communications and closure describe the extent of quality of the teacher effectiveness.

The management of instruction and pupils is difficult to separate because, the classroom teacher runs into the processes of organising and co-ordinating the willing-efforts of children to achieve their own educational objectives. It encompasses teacher's managerial ability to employ the process of keeping school rules, regulations, discipline, planning, preparing and presenting lessons effectively as well as inspecting and supervising learners at work. To effectively manage pupils and materials resources, the teacher needs to create positive pupils' satisfactory learning-environment that is task-oriented and goal-directed towards academic achievement. There should be correlation between engaged time, appropriate academic activities and high level of learners' performances due to proper primary school curriculum implementation.

The school curriculum currently in use consists of three programmes which include the programme of studies, the programme of activities and the programme of guidance. This paper views programme of guidance to be more important than the first two due to the fact that without proper guidance, the knowledge, skills and attitudes gained from the first two may come to naught (Kpangban and Ajaja, 2007). As a result,

the teacher needs to carefully plan his classroom works by creating congenial learning environment to make its implementation attain desirable objectives.

Consideration should also be given to availability of physical and cognitive spaces so that the teacher can make proper classroom arrangement to match desired psychology and philosophy of learning. Distracting features need be removed from the classroom while learners should have freedom of vertical and horizontal interactions to implement classroom management practices. Teacher's personality and its effects on teaching affect children in primary school who are in their impressionable ages where the significant adults world become their models in almost everything they do either good or bad. This is because, children can easily imitate speech patterns like singing songs hair dressing styles and postures of popular musicians or footballers. Codes of behaviours for the classroom to function as desired should be taught, practiced and enforced consistently to follow classroom managerial procedures.

Instructional methods required to help classroom manager meet up their expectations include guided inquiry, demonstration, discussion, discovery, experimental, laboratory, lectures, play-way, role play, dramatization, project, field trips/excursion, science process skills and so on. For instance, the teacher can administratively plan to visit specific places of interest like cash crops farm, water supply projects, erosion sites, building sites, pharmaceutical companies or industrial areas with learners during excursion/field trips for pupils to have first-hand learning experiences (Egede, 2011). During classroom instructional process, teacher guides learners to observe, identify, explain, discuss, describe and possibly relate relevant experiences to concepts taught theoretical in the classroom. Primary school pupils can be assigned a project to collect different types of leaves in the environment, group them using various properties on the album while employing an activity based instructional method.

Motivational Climate in Teaching-Learning Environment

Teacher encourages learners to learn through provision of exciting learning environment using practical demonstration of certain instrument to design and construct different shapes, draw diagrams with various colour paintings or dispersion of light using prisms/actions. The learners may not be allowed to handle the instrument due to their cognitive level of immaturity but they can observe how it functions in the demonstration and become motivated to learn. Equally, the teacher can use positive reinforcement to serve as an impetus to good behaviour in the classroom to shape subsequent occurrence.

Motivational classroom climate is capable of increasing or decreasing the rate of responses as put forward by B.I Skinner in his popular theory of stimulus-response (S \leftrightarrow R) connectivism. The celebrated theorist felt that motivation is need – oriented event expressed in a state of lacking desirable something and making effort to get it. Thus, when a teacher praises a learner for a work well done, awards a learner high score during classroom test or praising a neat child on the assembly ground or rewards a learner for a brilliant performance with a gift of pencil, notebook and so forth at the end of a sectional examinations to motivate the learner to work harder, he/she has created motivational climate in teaching-learning outcomes. The teacher can appreciate neatness, orderliness, quietness or discourage behaviours inimical to learning like noise making, truancy, dirtiness, fighting and other vices.

Using Skill of Recognising Attending Behaviours to Maintain Learning Environment

Teacher's efficient classroom management does not end at planning, preparing or teaching but also requires maintenance of the learning environment using appropriate skill of recognising attending behaviours (Awujale Ademolu, 2015). Therefore, he/she needs to focus on group processes to identify and prevent certain disorderliness from occurring in the first place. Obviously, learners may differ in their mental abilities, social or physical outlook and these qualities directly or indirectly influence their attitudes towards one another and behaviours in the classroom. Furthermore, these individual variations greatly affect their cognitive, affective and psychomotor learning outcomes. To be an effective manager of learning environment, the teacher fashions out strategies to elicit high levels of co-operative work involvement and low levels of misbehaviours by adopting group alerting to keep all learners attentive in a whole group focus just to help maintain the flow of instruction without any significant stumbling learning block.

Effective transition from one activity to another is structured to ensure that every learner has materials and mind-set needed for new activity. Individualizing instruction through catering for individual learners in the class is a sure way of recognising attending-behaviours and learning needs thereby equalizing learning opportunities. Inappropriate behaviour should be corrected before it escalates as teachers are charged with the responsibilities of monitoring learners' behaviours closely. Consequently, teachers have been trained professionally to handle all manners of learning- environment including boredom, fatigue and lack of interest on the part of learners, noisy, inattentiveness, fighting, rough playing, verbal bullying and all forms of disturbance during lesson.

The simple ways of dealing with attending behaviours is to:

- a. Give every member of your class equal attention at every lesson to recognise attending behaviours,

- b. Be time conscious to change your lesson,
- c. Be audible, fluent and straight to the points to enable the learner learn faster.
- d. Summarize your lesson with salient points.
- e. Adopt skill of questioning to keep every learner alert.
- f. Evaluate your lesson before skill of closure is used. Having exhausted professional guidelines of handling learning environment, effective school manager imagines, anticipates and walks mentally through classroom learning activities to proffer solutions where learners are likely to experience difficulty.

Quality Education Assurance in Teaching-Learning Outcomes

The quality of education and indeed, teacher education in Nigeria has come under severe criticism in recent times as a result of learners' dwindling performances in internal and external examinations (Oniyama, 2007). It is hypothesized that the quality and effectiveness of every educational system is dependent on the competence, effectiveness, efficiency and devotion of the teaching work-force. Hence, training and retraining of teachers had always been advocated for Nigerian educational system, because they are seen as the bedrock of the quality of education that could emerge. If the quality of teaching manpower is weak; then, there are likely to be weak graduates particularly at primary education level. (Oniyama, 2007).

Quality education assurance in teaching-learning outcomes refers to the systematic planning, preparing, inspecting, supervising, monitoring and evaluating various components of school system to ensure maintenance of high level standards as proposed that are met. Quality instructional outcomes at primary school involves systematic monitoring and evaluating every aspect of lower basic education level from primary 1 to 6 classes.

Quality education assurance according to Giwar (2005) refers to the setting of standards for various processes and activities leading to the production of qualified teachers by training institutions. It comprises how learning is organized, and managed, what content and the level of achievement. In pursuance of goals of primary education, advancement from one class to another need to be on class based continuous assessment as well as the primary school leaving certificate to be issued on the basis of continuous assessment

Conclusion

Classroom is part of learning environment and its effective management is instrumental to better teaching-learning outcomes. The effective management of classroom is connected with human and material resources to attain set objectives. Learners are in the classroom to acquire knowledge, skills and obtain certificates after successful completion of their programmes. A teacher facilitates teaching-learning

outcomes by breaking curriculum into syllabus and syllabus into schemes of work, lesson plan or lesson note for proper implementation. He/she adopts suitable teaching methods to ensure excellent quality learning outcomes.

The paper observed that curriculum in use is composed of programmes of studies, activities and guidance but that the programme of guidance is more significant than the first two because, without proper guidance, the knowledge gained may become naught. Individual differences bring about variations among children in the class which a teacher uses skill of attending behaviours to maintain learning outcomes. Quality assurance is seen as the degree of excellence and conformity to standards. It is the setting of standards to ensure compliance involving systematic monitoring and evaluating all aspects of primary 1 to 6 classes with reference to objectives of education.

Recommendation

Emanating from above discussion, it is hereby recommended that:

1. Government should organise conferences, seminars and workshops for classroom teachers to update their knowledge, skills and attitudes on how best to manage their classes that would result to better learning outcomes.
2. Pupils are expected to transit from one class to another without necessarily writing internal or external examinations within primary education as it is in the policy document.
3. Parents and general public should be properly educated on the new educational policy to ensure compliance.

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