

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND TEACHERS EFFECTIVENESS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper examined classroom management and teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Nigeria. Features of the classroom such as chalkboard, seats, and desks, ventilation and lighting classroom hygiene, classroom environment were highlighted in this paper because of the importance in the achievement of the goals of education. The classroom management embodies the arrangement of teachers and students, seats, adequate and proper walk-ways in the classroom, adequate and proper positioning of other classroom furniture to facilitate effective teaching-learning atmosphere. These were all reviewed in this paper for the paper to be appreciated. The paper also enumerated government roles in classroom management such as providing the facilities which enable the teachers to discharge their duties effectively. Again, the paper reviewed the readiness of students to learn which enhances teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools.

Classroom management is an essential instrument which supports teacher's effectiveness in the discharge of their duties. Jones and Jones (1998) justified the need for proper classroom management with two problems associated with students. According to them one of the problems is the varying degrees of emotional distress and inadequate skills with which the students come to school. The other is teachers' inadequate useful information about how to organize and manage classrooms for effective teaching and learning (Okorie, 2008). Personal experience shows that some secondary schools lack basic facilities that would enhance effective classroom management. Even where the facilities are provided, the teachers lack the classroom management skills which would invariably, lead to ineffective classroom management. These observations necessitated the need for this study which may unravel the extent to which teachers manage the classrooms in secondary schools.

What is Classroom and Classroom Management?

The classroom can be defined as a room set aside and specifically designed and furnished for the purpose of teaching and learning.

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Agabi (2002) described it as a room where students converge for the purpose of learning under the guidance of a teacher. The number of classrooms in a school is determined by the level of education. It is also determined by the number of learners admitted into the school. Again the number of teachers available, the landmass occupied and government policy affects the number of classrooms in a school. Akubue (1991) defined classroom as a place where educational plans are implemented and research findings tested.

According to Akinwumiju and Agabi (2008) the classroom has the following features: the chalkboard, seat and desks, ventilation and lighting, classroom hygiene and classroom environment.

Classroom Management

Classroom management embodies the arrangement of teachers and students seats, adequate and proper walk-ways within the classroom, adequate and proper positioning of other classroom furniture to facilitate conducive teaching-learning atmosphere. Also considered as part of classroom management, is student-student relationship in the class, teacher-student relationship. Madsen & Becker (1977) assert that unless teachers are effective in getting children ready to learn, their technical teaching skills are likely to be wasted. They added that knowledge of differential social reinforcement procedures as well as other behavioural principles is skills that can greatly enhance enjoyment of the profession and their contribution to effective development of the students.

The teacher takes cognizance of the differences in the students who make up the class, contributes tremendously to good teacher / student performance and makes the teacher's work much acceptable to the society. When classroom facilities are not provided by government and stake holders in education, it becomes difficult for the teacher to plan his classroom well, even when the teacher possesses the expertise to organize his classroom proper. Without facilities, he cannot get his classroom adequately planned and managed for effective teaching and learning.

Ibode (2004) summarized effective classroom management as an embodiment of the following.

1. involving students right from the beginning of any lesson
2. ensuring that classroom is tidy, materials available, displayed, arranged and sometimes, necessary instructions or examples are written on the board;
3. adopting appropriate method of sitting among the students
4. maintaining appropriate position in the class preferably, standing, while teaching is on
5. maintaining decorum in the classroom
6. reaching out to any misbehaving students
7. planning lessons in a way that there will be a successful ending of the lesson.

Importance of Classroom Management

Classroom management in education is very important in the realization of the objective of the education system. Good classroom management enhances teacher's effectiveness, therefore it is pertinent to note that for effective teaching and learning to take place, there should be conducive classroom environment.

1. A conducive classroom environment increases the desire for knowledge and heightens creativity in learners.
2. Classroom setting helps to eliminate social prejudices among learners because complexes that many arise from economic and cultural backgrounds are thereby eliminate.
3. It also strengthens the spirit of team work and tolerance.
4. The classroom protects learners from the vagaries of nature such as rain, storm, wind, excessive cold, heat and sunlight. A comfortable classroom allows teaching and learning to take place in spite of the season of the year or the weather condition.
5. The professional skill of a teacher is sharpened in the classroom. Instructional activities with learners in the class help the teacher to identify his strong and weak areas. The classroom therefore provides a basis for relevant decision on the professional development of the teachers. (Akinwumiju & Agabi, 2008).

Government Role in Classroom Management

The government in every nation establishes and manages the public schools at all levels of the educational system. The government builds and equips the schools with relevant facilities for effective teaching and learning. It is the responsibility of the government to employ both teaching and non teaching staff.

The classrooms are also constructed and furniture provided by the government. The ventilation and lighting situation in the class is designed by the government during the building of the school.

The governments most times, choose the site where schools are built. A conducive environment is therefore provided by the government. All other features of the classroom are provided by the government and the teachers are only expected to provide themselves with instructional materials most times in spite of the ones procured by the government. Thus, the roles played by government in classroom management are enormous and needs the complementary roles of the teachers to effectively manage the classroom for the achievement of the goals of education. This is why the government should share the blame of poor management of classrooms. On the other hand, teachers who do not understand how to manage their classrooms would still let the facilities remain unutilized even when all of them have been adequately provided.

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Teacher's Roles in the Classroom Management

The fundamental reason why classroom management is necessary is to enable students have conducive learning environment that is capable of giving rise to rewarding students' performance. For a teacher to achieve this objective, it is vital for him to know what is involve in teaching learning process. They should first and foremost appear very neat and decently dressed at all times, before coming to teach in the classroom. The teacher plans his lesson and gets all instructional materials ready ahead of class time. The participation of learners in the instructional process makes the class lively and interesting. The teacher should respect his pupils or students as human beings who have rights and as learners who have expectations. The teacher should always make a walk-way while arranging the seats in the classroom. This walk-way will enable the teacher to move round the classroom when the lesson is going on to attend to the students collectively and individually. The voice of the teacher should be very loud enough for all the students to hear and comprehend the ideas communicated. Teacher's knowledge of the subject matter is very crucial in teaching-learning process. It is imperative for the teachers to be skillful and knowledgeable enough in their areas of specialization as to command respect as the resource person.

A teacher who knows what to teach, various components of his class, the individual differences in his students and the arrangement of his classroom is duty bound to produce optimal results. The inability of a teacher to understand these various make-ups of teaching function leaves him and the society to reap poor result from his students, (Cangelosi, 1993).

A good teacher who is interested in classroom management should always apologize to the students for any occasion of lateness to class. Teachers should always use civil and decent languages when teaching or when illustrating issues to the students. The researcher's experience shows that when these complimentary roles of teachers are performed as expected, there will be effective classroom management, all things being equal.

Classroom Management and Teachers Effectiveness

Effectiveness of the teacher in instruction delivery is dependent on the classroom management ability of the teacher and availability of the teaching and learning facilities.

In addition to this, the learning process varies from student to student. Some students learn quietly in the class and would always refuse to share their ideas with others, others learn by always wishing to share their ideas with other members of the class. The former are usually tagged "introverts" while the later are always described as "extroverts" This opposite learning situations have to be understood by the teacher who wishes to conduct his class properly for effective instruction delivery, which invariably, would lead to the achievement of the goals of secondary education.

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Again, students discipline is another determinate factor. When students are well behaved and obey the school rules and regulations even in the classroom, it makes teachers effective in discharging their duties.

Conclusion

The classroom is a very important unit of the school system because most instructional activities take place in the classroom. The classroom has many benefits for the learner, teachers as well as the school managers. The classroom should be comfortable, conducive and devoid of disciplinary problems. This is why the effective management of the classroom is a joint responsibility of the learner, teacher, government and other stake holders in education.

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