

# **EFFECT OF FORMAL MENTORING ON CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN NSUKKA EDUCATION ZONE, ENUGU STATE**

By

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## **Abstract**

*This study was designed to determine the effect of formal mentoring on classroom management practices of secondary school teachers in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State, Nigeria. A pretest, posttest quasi-experimental research design was adopted. The population comprised all the 670 teachers' in the public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone who had teaching experience of not more than eight years. The sample was made up of 250 teachers out of 670 teachers, from Nsukka Education Zone using Taro Yamane's formula. Two research questions and two null hypotheses, tested at .05 level of significance guided the study. The instruments for data collection were researcher developed teacher mentoring guide (TMG) and teacher evaluation instrument on classroom management (TEICM). The instruments were face validated by three experts; two from educational administration and planning and one from measurement and evaluation, all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The reliability coefficient of the rating scale obtained through Cronbach Alpha method were .84, .75, .86, .74, .88, .90 and .83 for clusters 1,2,3,4,5,6 and the whole instrument respectively. Data were collected through the 28 trained assessors. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions and t-test for testing the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The result of the study showed that using formal mentoring appeared to have positive impact on teachers' performance in classroom management in public secondary schools.*

**Keywords:** Formal Mentoring, Classroom Management, Public Secondary School and Teachers.

Management of classrooms for effective teaching and learning in schools, pose concerns to the generality of people, particularly educators, parents and school administrators. Allen (2010) explained that classroom management is a term used to describe the process of ensuring that classroom lessons run smoothly despite disruptive behaviours by students. According to Nancy (2006) it is one of the most difficult aspects of teaching for many teachers because the Classroom management process consists of the use of a wide variety of skills and techniques by teachers to keep students organized, orderly, focused, attentive, on task, and academically productive during a class.

Classroom management therefore, can be defined as, the activities of teachers that facilitate learning which include among others; curriculum planning, organization of the physical environment, teachers' personality, time management, instructional delivery and management of classroom problems. Many of these duties involved in classroom management are difficult for the experienced teachers and are far more challenging to the beginning teachers. Good classroom management is necessary, if meaningful teaching and learning will be achieved by teachers.

Teacher practices in classroom management are considered very vital in achievement of educational goals and more effort should be made by school administrators to ensure attainment of high standard in teachers' performance. Teachers are widely accepted to be the bedrock of education system. If their quality is of high standard, then the standard of the education system will be high. Unfortunately, many new entrants into the teaching profession and some old teachers find it difficult to handle their teaching assignments due to inadequate skills and competences in classroom management. The need to explore other possibilities that could enhance the acquisition of the desired teaching skill, led many developed countries to invest in designing formal mentoring programmes for teachers in schools, especially for the newly recruited ones. As posited by Donaldson (2008), good quality mentoring in schools makes an important contribution to developing the professional skills of new teachers and ensuring the best quality learning experiences for students.

Mentoring and the benefits associated with it have been described by various researchers in different ways. According to Moorhead & Griffins (2004), mentoring is an arrangement in which more experienced workers help less experienced workers grow and advance by providing advice, support and management. Ismail and Arokiasamy (2007) described mentoring as dyadic relationship between more experienced members of an organization with a less experienced individual where both parties stand to benefit from the relationship, as both of them gain experiences through the relationship. Mentoring can therefore be defined as a relationship which exists between two persons

willingly and in which the more experienced and skilled person serving as a role model, sponsors, supports, encourages, counsels and nurtures the less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the less experienced person's professional development and overall effectiveness of the school. It is a relationship between two individuals based on a mutual desire for development towards career goals and objectives. This relationship can be informal or formal.

Formal mentoring is characterized by a structured mentoring relationship with the primary purpose of systematically developing the skills and leadership abilities of less experienced members of the organization. As stated by Maughan (2006), in a formal mentoring, the organization oversees and guides the mentoring programmes in order to promote employee development. Informal mentoring according to Buell (2004) develops on their own without any laid down rules or regulations guiding the relationships. It is less structured and focuses on building a relationship between the mentor and the mentee with whom they have personal connection or social network. This may be common amongst teachers, students, heads of departments and principals in various schools.

Establishment of formal mentoring in secondary schools is perceived as an important tool for encouraging effective classroom management practices of teachers. Based on the above background, there is need to determine the effect of formal mentoring on classroom management practices of teachers in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Enugu State government appear not to be doing well in formal mentoring of teachers especially in relation to classroom management practices. The classroom management practices of teachers in public secondary schools may require introduction of formal mentoring to help facilitate improvement in their performance. Research efforts in the past have focused on the use of mentoring strategy to improve mentee's performance in organizations other than public secondary schools.

The problem of this study therefore is what are the effects of formal mentoring on classroom management practices of teachers in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to find out the effect of formal mentoring on classroom management practices of teachers in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State. Specifically, the study sought to determine the:

1. Classroom management practices of formally mentored teachers in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State.
2. Performance in classroom management practices of teachers due to experience in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the mean performance scores in classroom management practices of formally mentored teachers in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State?
2. What are the mean performance scores in classroom management practices of teachers due to experience in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State?

### **Hypotheses**

Ho<sub>1</sub> There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test mean performance scores of the formally mentored teachers in classroom management practices.

Ho<sub>2</sub> There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores in classroom management of teachers due to experience.

### **Methodology**

The design was a pretest, posttest quasi experimental design. The researcher purposively assigned pre-existing groups to the treatment group and control group. According to Ali (2006), quasi experimental design is used for testing effect of two or more independent variables without random assignment of subjects to experimental and control groups. It was applicable in this study because, pre-existing groups were used as experimental and control and the effect of two independent variables, namely mentoring and experience were examined. The study was carried out in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu state and lasted for eight weeks.

The population is comprised of all the 670 teachers' in the public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone who had teaching experience of not more than eight years. The sample was made up of 250 teachers out of 670 teachers from Nsukka Education Zone using Taro Yamane's formula. The instruments for data collection were researcher developed teacher mentoring guide (TMG) and teacher evaluation instrument on classroom management (TEICM). The instruments were face validated by three experts; two from educational administration and planning and one from measurement and evaluation, all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

The reliability coefficient of the rating scale obtained through Cronbach Alpha method were .84, .75, .86, .74, .88, .90 and .83 for clusters 1,2,3,4,5,6 and the whole instrument respectively. Data were collected through the 28 trained assessors. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions and t-test for testing the hypotheses at .05 level of significance.

### **Experimental Procedure**

Twenty five mentors were trained by the researcher to assist in mentoring the teachers participating in formal mentoring. The mentors were required to have a contact session with the mentee at least once a week for the period of eight weeks. Each mentor is to mentor a maximum of five teachers. The researcher gave each of the mentors a

copy of the teacher mentoring guide which served as a reference material to them when mentoring the mentees. . The control group were not formally mentored but did their normal teaching for that period of six weeks. Twenty eight experienced teachers who were not below the rank of principal cadre were trained as assessors of both the experimental group and the control group by the researcher on how to assign scores to the subjects while observing the teachers in real teaching situations. The teachers' evaluation instrument on classroom management was completed by the assessors through observing the formally mentored and informally mentored teachers teaching in the classroom and assigning scores using the nominal value assigned to the scale point as follows: very high 4; high 3; low 2 and very low 1. Some aspect of the assessment required the assessors to interview the mentees, check the lesson notes of the teacher, scheme of work, the weekly record of work in the diaries and instructional materials used to aid teaching. One week was used to pretest/assess the teachers before the commencement of the experiment, and another one week was used to posttest/assess the teachers at the end of the six weeks of formal and non-formal mentoring. A total of eight weeks was used for the experimental study excluding the period of training of the mentors and assessors.

### **Results**

The results of the study were presented according to the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

**Research Question One:** What are the mean performance scores in classroom management practices of formally mentored teachers in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State?

**Table 1: t-Test Analysis of Difference in the Pre-test and Post-test Mean Performance Scores in Classroom Management Practices of Formally Mentored Teachers in Public Secondary Schools**

Test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t-cal	Sig. ( 2-tailed)
Pre-test	125	2.97	.30			
Post-test	125	3.26	.23	124	-8.306	.000
Mean Difference		0.29				

Table 1 shows the pre-test and post-test performance scores of formally mentored teachers in classroom management. It reveals that the pre-test mean performance score of the teachers is 2.97 with standard deviation of .30 while their post-test mean performance score is 3.26 with standard deviation of .23. Mean difference of .29 shows that the teachers had mean performance gain after being exposed to formal mentoring programme.

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test mean performance scores of the formally mentored teachers.

Table 1 shows that the probability associated with the calculated value of t (-8.306) for the difference in the pre-test and post-test mean performance scores of the formally mentored teachers is .000. Since the probability value of .000 is less than .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test mean performance scores of the formally mentored teachers in favour of their post-test score.

**Research Question Two:** What are the mean scores in classroom management practices of teachers in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State due to experience?

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Mean Scores in Classroom Management Practices of Teachers in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State Due to Experience**

Experience	Pre-test			Post-test		Mean Gain
	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
New Experience	46	2.90	.22	3.23	.25	.33
Old Experience	79	3.02	.33	3.86	.22	.84

Table 2 shows that teachers who had new experience in teaching had post-test mean performance score of 3.23 with a standard deviation of .25 against their pre-test mean performance score of 2.90 and standard deviation of .22 while their counterpart who had old experience in teaching had post-test mean performance score of 3.86 with a standard deviation of .22 against their pre-test mean performance score of 3.02 and standard deviation of .33. Mean performance gain scores of .33 and .84 for the teachers who had new experience and those who had old experience respectively may have indicated that teachers who had new experience in teaching had higher performance score than their counterpart who had old experience in relation to their pre-test and post-test scores.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores in classroom management of teachers due to experience

**Table 3: Analysis of Covariance of the Influence of Experience on Teachers' Means Performance Scores in Classroom Management**

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Eta Squared
Corrected Model	.063 <sup>a</sup>	2	.032	.560	.573	.009	
Intercept	13.030	1	13.030	231.194	.000	.655	
Pretest1	.101	1	.101	1.804	.950	.000	
Experience	2.059	1	2.059	36.768	.000	.008	
Error	6.876	122	.056				
Total	1337.269	125					
Corrected Total	6.939	124					

a. R Squared = .009 (Adjusted R Squared = -.007)

Table 3 shows that the probability associated with the calculated value of F (36.768) for the influence of experience on performance scores of teachers in classroom management is .000. Since the probability value of .000 is less than the .05 level of significance ( $p < .05$ ), the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, experience does significantly influence the mean performance scores of teachers in classroom management in favour of the teachers who have new experience in teaching.

### Discussion of Findings

The result of research question one and hypothesis one showed that formal mentoring of teachers would enhance the performance of teachers in classroom management. The findings are in agreement with Stanulis and Floden (2009) which indicated that beginning teachers who were mentored performed better than their counterpart who received only normal induction training. In the same vein, Donalson (2008) equally agreed that good quality mentoring in schools makes an important contribution to developing the professional skills of new teachers and assuring best quality learning experiences for pupils.

Findings from research question two and hypothesis two also revealed that experience had significant influence on the mean performance gain scores of teachers in classroom management in favour of the less experienced teachers. Observation showed that new teachers were more willing to learn and participate fully in classroom management than the older ones who already believe that they have known it all. As a result the mean gain performance scores of new teachers became higher. This may be because when teachers become more experienced, they tend to become less enthusiastic and question the validity of basic classroom management principles and rules expected by school authorities. This disagreed with the opinion of Nancy (2006) which noted that experienced teachers generally are able to deal effectively with the most salient aspects of classroom management better than beginning teachers. It also disagreed with the view of Allen (2010) which stated that new teachers feel unprepared when it comes to classroom management practices. The results however agreed with the study by Jennifer

(2010), which indicated that teachers get better in the first few years of teaching and then their performance slips in later years of service.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of this study, the following conclusions were made:

Teachers in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone in Enugu state when formally mentored would perform well in classroom management more than those not formally mentored. Teachers when appropriately mentored would perform better in classroom management regardless of gender, experience and school location. It was also concluded that beginning teachers need mentoring to perform well in the teaching profession.

Introduction of formal mentoring in schools would lead to improvement of teachers' performance in classroom management and subsequently lead to effective teaching and learning in schools. This will result in the overall improvement of the education sector in Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were proffered:

1. Public secondary school administrators should establish formal mentoring programmes for teachers to ensure continued improvement of teachers' performance in classroom management.
2. The Ministry of Education, Post Primary School Management Board all stakeholders in secondary school education should play active role in planning and executing mentoring programmes in schools, through organizing conferences and seminars for teachers.

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