

STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING: A PANACEA FOR REVITALIZING SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NIGERIA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This paper examined the strategies for ensuring effective classroom management for teaching and learning in secondary schools in Nigeria. Classroom management could be described as those preparatory arrangements to be made by the teacher before lesson commences. A well-managed classroom enhances effective teaching and learning and it is the responsibility of the teachers to cultivate in their students an appreciation of the importance of good classroom management. Concepts like Management, Classroom Management, Teaching and Learning were clarified and the rationales for classroom management were enumerated. The paper further recommended that both state and federal government should provide adequate facility in secondary schools for an effective teaching and learning.

Introduction

Classroom is more than just a place where teachers and students interact for the purpose of teaching and learning. The classroom is a major tool for instruction for teachers; it is a home away from home for learners. The classroom should be organized in such a way that the teachers and learners would always want to come to class for teaching/learning interactions.

The time a teacher takes to manage the classroom is as important as the time taken to deliver lessons. As a teacher, the ways you handle the management of the class is very important just as teaching itself. If teaching is going to be effective, management of classroom must be a success in the first instance. This can be achieved by providing purposeful learning activities with adequate teaching resources. The classroom atmosphere should be peaceful, clean and inviting. It is the duty of the teachers and school administrators to ensure that classrooms are properly organized and managed for teaching and learning to take place.

Conceptual Clarification

Certain concepts like secondary education, Management, classroom Management, Teaching and Learning need to be clarified and explained. The term secondary education refers to as the education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage (FRN, 2004: 16). The broad aims of secondary education within the overall national objectives is contained in Section 4 subsection 18 of the National Policy on education (FRN, 2004: 16) are to: a) Provide an increasing number of primary school pupils with opportunity of higher quality, irrespective of sex or social, religious and ethnic background. b) Diversify its curriculum to cater for differences in talent, opportunities and roles possessed by or open to student after their secondary schools course. c) Equip students to live effectively in our modern age of science and technology. d) Develop and project Nigerian culture, art and language as well as the world's cultural heritage. e) Raise generations of people who think for themselves respect the views and feelings of others, respect dignity of labour and appreciate

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that value specify under our broad national aims and lives as good citizen. f) Foster Nigerian unity with an emphasis on the common tiers that unite us on our diversity g) Inspire students with a desire for achievement and save empowerment both at school and in our later life.

The term Management that is used interchangeable with administration has different definitions from management experts. It can be seen as the ability of the leaders in an organization which is aimed at influencing group activity towards goal achievement.

Management encompasses planning, organizing, staffing, leading or directing, controlling as well as co-ordination of an organization for the purpose of achieving organizational goals. Onyeke (2015) defined management as a group of persons who are constituted under formal structures and establishments with specific objectives to achieve within an organization. It comprises these people entrusted with the day to day running of the organization.

Management, according to Eya (2004) is the process by which those in authority plan, organize, and control the organization with a view of achieving the organizational goals. In this regard the manager of an organization has the responsibilities to plan, that is make judgments on the issues affecting the organization, organize or co-ordinate the factor resources in the organization and those factors including manpower, finance and equipment, and the control of men and materials with the wise manipulation of human resource to ensure motivation which facilitates quick result or goal achievement

Classroom Management

Having discussed briefly on management as a concept, let us look at classroom management. The time a teacher takes to manage the classroom is as important as that taken to deliver lessons. As a teacher, the way you handle the management of the class is very important just as teaching itself. If teaching is going to be effective, management of classroom must be a success in the first instance.

Classroom management is primarily concerned with, behaviour, but encompasses the planning, organization and control of learners the learning experience and the classroom environment to create and maintain an effective learning experience. Ogonnaya (2013) stated that classroom management is the activities that teachers perform to enhance academic learning time by making activities flow smoothly, so that students remain actively involved in learning tasks without diverting time to non-productive activities that may act as impediments to learning.

On the other hand, classroom management can be seen as those preparatory arrangements to be made by a teacher before a lesson commences. These arrangement include that the teacher should make sure that all the necessary materials are in their proper places that sources of disturbances and distractions are minimized, and that the teacher himself should be organized, knowing what exactly to do and when to do it.

Okorji and Nwogbo (2013) outlined the following as the need for Classroom Management. It is obvious that the success of classroom management depend wholly in organizing and managing classroom effectively and appropriately. Thus, the importance of managing classroom includes the following.

- a) realization of objectives of the school,
- b) prevent wastage of available resources,

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- c) ensure that student uses available resources in the classroom,
- d) enable the students to realize their potential,
- e) avoid wasting of time,
- f) coordination of classroom activities in the best possible manner,
- g) guide against disruptive behaviors in the classroom,
- h) encourage hard work among students,
- i) inculcate and encourage good relationship among students,
- j) develop in students the need to take responsibility for their actions,

Teaching

Different authors have ascribed diverse meanings to teaching based on their schools of thought. For instance, Olaitan and Agusiobi (1981) saw it as an attempt to bring about desirable changes in human learning abilities and behaviour. The Encyclopedia International vol.17 (1979) cited in Koko (2015), defined teaching as the art of informing or instructing or providing guidance, suggesting activities and supplying materials to stimulate learning. Invariably, the aspect of the definition of teaching which points at ‘suggesting activities and supplying materials to stimulate learning’ by the Encyclopedia, clearly highlights the importance of why we are here and to elucidate on the use of instructional materials in teaching. Koko (2015) supports this input by her definition of teaching as an attempt by trained personnel to provide an enabling learning environment with adequate material resources to enable the learner acquire basic skills and competencies. The use of instructional materials in teaching without the teacher is like an army without a commander. Good teaching as we must know does not emanate except from adequate preparations and utilization of essential learning materials in teaching. One of the best strategies is the adoption of essential and varied instructional materials in teaching special learners but the teacher definitely is the key to positive instructional achievements.

Learning

Learning can be defined as mental activities by means of which knowledge, skill and attitude are acquired, retained and utilized. It is defined as changes in the particular form, change in behavior, tendency, resulting in relatively permanent practice. It involves that change which occurs as a result of reinforced practice that gives new meaning and orientation. This leads to acquisition of new skills and behavioral tendency that is permanent. It must quickly be pointed out that the change in behavior or performance should lead to improvement if learning has taking place, especially in a school settings (Denga, 2002, in Ogbodo, 2005).

Features of Well-managed Classroom

The following points were made by lioyd (2008) as being the main features of well-managed classes

1. Resources are tidily stored, are clearly labeled and offered easy access for teachers and students alike. Care is taken to ensure that equipment is cared for and that students take responsibility for obtaining and clearing away resources.
2. Parts of the classroom are designated and equipped for specific subject studies

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3. Displays are mounted to enhance and stimulate work in progress or to record and celebrated complete studies.
4. Classes have clearly understood routines and procedures related to ways of working to be followed.
5. Relationships are cordial and students are expected to have high standards of behaviour.
6. The teacher makes good use of posture, eye contact and voice modulation to maintain, control and stimulate learning
7. Students demonstrate good attitudes to work, and are keen to complete work to an acceptable standard within prescribed time limits.
8. Students are sometimes able to make choices about the work to be undertaken, within limits circumscribed by the teacher.
9. The teacher is skilled in managing other adults in the classroom, the later tasks are clearly defined and the complement and enhance the work of the teacher.
10. Sometimes groups are formed in order to give students experiences of leadership and responsibility by helping other students with less skill or knowledge.
11. The layout of classroom furniture is varied to meet the requirements of the subject matter studied or the particular learning needs of the class or of individual within it.

Challenges of Classroom Management

Classroom management can be faced by several challenges like abnormal behaviours displayed by children during classroom instruction. It causes temporary halt in the instruction and attracts unnecessary attention of the teacher and the learners. If not well checked it can cause learning problems on the part of the child/ student concerned. For meaningful activity to go on in the classroom there must be order. If the classroom atmosphere is not in order, the objectives of the classroom are hardly achieved. The teacher must create enabling environment required for classroom learning. It is also necessary that the teacher identifies and solves all classroom challenges which can disrupt the class, to enable effective teaching and learning to take place. The following are some disruptive behaviours found in the classroom according to Eya (2004)

- a) Noise making
- b) Disobeying the teacher
- c) Challenging the teacher or the prefect/monitor
- d) Unjust complaints
- e) Laughing, whistling and shouting with intention to disturb the class
- f) Making exaggerated gestures to peers
- g) Physical aggression
- h) Over dependence on others
- i) Inability or unwillingness to obey class rules and regulations.
- j) Lack of interest in class work
- k) Absent mindedness or day dream in the class.
- l) Inattentiveness in the class.
- m) Poor communication by the teacher.
- n) Overcrowding due to large number of student in the class.
- o) Inability of the teacher to stamp his authority in the class.

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- p) Frustration due to inadequate academic achievement.
- q) Peer influences as in following bad gangs.

Strategies for Effective Classroom Management

The following are strategies for effective classroom management:

1. Teacher's own personality: A teacher should show examples by being moderately dressed i.e not overdressed or under dressed. He should be able to speak good English. Teachers who are autocratic instill fear into their students thereby killing their interest and initiative, rather than being friendly. A teacher that is friendly makes his students participate actively in class activities thereby making teaching and learning easier.

2. Good seat arrangement: The classroom is usually and normal room with four walls with a roof and other accessories like doors and windows. Seat arrangement must depend on the type of classroom furniture available. The student seats should be placed in such a way that there is enough spaces between rows to enable free movement in the class. This is dependent on the type of learners; this might not be so for challenged children. These seats and chairs should not be too high or too low for the age of the users. It is the duty of the teacher to determine who sits where depending on the height of the students. The seat arrangement should be in such a way that the learners should be able to see the board for effective teaching and learning.

3. Sound preparation of lesson: It is necessary that the teachers prepared and articulate his lesson before going to classroom. This sound preparation of lesson makes the whole work interesting and easy. The students will not have the opportunity for unnecessary act like attention diversion while the lesson is on, hence good classroom management.

4. Sitting arrangement: The ideal sitting arrangement is to have the students sit according to their height facing the teacher and the board. On the other hand the short ones should be seated in front while the tall ones sit behind. Apart from this arrangement, students who are usually impaired, for example the short sighted ones and those who are hard of hearing are usually placed in front of the class.

5. Taking into consideration the individual differences among the learners: Some children are faster than others in terms of learning ability. The teacher should bear in mind that there is individual difference among children which could be caused by hereditary, cultural and socio economic background. In this vein, he should not expect them to learn at the same pace. Thus, he should give these children opportunity to learn or participate at various levels of their ability. The teacher should make out time to give extra instruction despite classroom instruction for the slow learners. This can be successful where the teacher is compassionate to students. " A teacher without passion cannot succeed, as only passion can sparkle the interest in the student's minds" (Anonymous, 2017).

Conclusions

Classroom management could be defined as those preparatory arrangements to be made by the teachers before lesson commences. These arrangements include that the teacher should make sure that all the necessary materials needed for the lesson are available and are in their proper place. One of the features of a well-managed classroom is that students are sometimes able to make choices about the work to be undertaken, within limits

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circumscribed. Several reasons why classroom management is necessary were enumerated. The most important thing to note is that good classroom management promotes effective teaching and learning. Strategies for effective classroom management were also highlighted. Classroom management if not well checked can cause learning problems on the part of the child/student concern. The responsibility of establishing good classroom management for effective teaching and learning lies with the teachers who cultivate in his students an appreciation of the importance of good classroom management.

Recommendations

The following recommendations will improve good classroom management in secondary schools in Nigeria.

1. The teacher should be conversant with the strategies for effective classroom management and always apply it in his class.
2. The school should sometimes organize conferences and seminars and invite teachers to discuss some specific issues that concern classroom management.
3. The state and federal government should provide adequate furniture in secondary schools for effective teaching and learning.
4. The teacher should manage the equipment well and care for and students should take responsibility for obtaining and clearing away resources.

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