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Class management as predictor of students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South of Anambra State

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Abstract

In this study, the researcher investigated the relationship between class management and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South of Anambra State. The design Adopted for the study is a descriptive survey research design. Three research questions guided the study while three null-hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study consisted of 1,965 SS2 students while the sample size of 491 SS students was drawn using simple random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was titled; Class Management as Predictor of Students' Academic Achievement Questionnaire (CMPSAAQ). The instrument comprises three sections, section A dealt with the relationship between teachers' discipline and students' academic achievement, section B was concerned with teachers' competence and students' academic achievement while section C investigated teachers' reward system and students' academic achievement. A 15-item questionnaire was designed along a modified four-point rating scale; Strongly Agree (SA) = 4points, Agree (A) = 3points, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 2points and Disagree (D) = 1point. The item by item analysis was done using the same point scale rating. The questionnaire was validated by three experts, two in Educational Management and Policy and one in Measurement and Evaluation all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. The reliability of CMPSAAQ was obtained through trial testing and analysis using the split-half method of reliability.

The three sets of scores obtained from the pilot tests were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The reliability value of 0.89 was obtained from the scores which indicated a high reliability of the instrument. The data collected were analysed using arithmetic mean to answer the research questions while the Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the three hypotheses. The study found out that there is a significant relationship between class management and students' academic achievement. It was also recommended that teachers should be proactive enough to identify unwanted actions of students that can affect academic achievement of students and deal with them early before they grow to become serious problems that can impede the process of teaching and learning.

Keywords: Class management, predictor and academic achievement

Introduction

The classroom is a formal setting where teaching and learning takes place. It is a place where education policy objectives and research findings are tested (Moore, 2009) ^[9]. Beyond the physical arrangement of students in a room that defines the traditional classroom setting, there is also the virtual classroom popularly called the "invisible college". Whether a classroom is on-line (virtual) or physical, it is a place of pedagogical interaction between students and teachers for cognitive development.

Classroom management explains the gamut of all activities by the teacher to ensure that teaching and learning in the classroom is smooth and effectual. Everson and Weinsten (2006) ^[8] define classroom management as all actions taken to create an environment that supports and facilitates academic and extra academic activities in the class. In a more elaborate sense, it is a wide range of skills and techniques engaged by a teacher to get students organized, orderly, focused and attentive to lessons and tasks at the classroom level. Edumark (2006) ^[6] defines it as all forms of strategies directed at minimizing excess conduct of students that could impede effective teaching and learning in the classroom.

One of such strategies is discipline. Ada (2004)^[1] explains it as the application of rules to ensure order in the class. It is an interaction between students and teachers that brings about class control and respect for order. Discipline involves transforming students to become responsive and responsible. Discipline according to Adewura (2007)^[3] instills self-appraisal and self-audit of personal character and performance of students.

The enactment or formulation of rules of conduct to check students' misbehavior and enforce corrective measures is one other model of classroom management (Ada, 2004)^[1]. In most cases, such rules and regulations are determined by both the students and their class teacher. As a result of this collaboration, there is mutual commitment to bring order and harmony to the class.

Teachers' competence and behavior during teaching and learning is equally a class management strategy (Edumark, 2006)^[6]. Edumark submitted that teachers' ability to deliver the contents of their subjects qualitatively is the definition of teachers' work efficiency. This can instill order in the class. Students according to them express much respect for teachers with competence and as such give them rapt attention.

In addition, Ademola (2007)^[4] stated that the behavior of a teacher in the class as he interfaces with students during teaching and learning can elicit comportment from students and draw out rapt attention from them. Teachers' behavior here includes coming to class as and when due and prosecuting the class subject curriculum. At such moments, the class is under control. The opposite of it is chaos especially when the utterances of such a teacher, his attitude and competence level are low, poor and questionable.

Positive reinforcement is a very good model to achieve class management. Ada and Olatundu (2007)^[4] look at this as the reward system of the teacher employed to support pedagogy. Teachers should be able to acknowledge students with impressive performance in class tests or quiz. They should also praise those that show patriotism and honesty on issues that border an inter-personal relationship that are brought to teachers' attention.

Generally, teachers should be apt in correcting mistakes and constructively enforce optimal mannerism. Afe (2001)^[5] submitted that the ability of a teacher to constructively discharge attitudes or behaviours that impair learning in the class defines his work efficiency and his capacity to manage or control the class.

Class management can also be called class control. It is the capacity of a teacher to isolate disruptive behaviors from good ones and be proactive enough to nip them in the board. Rancifer (2010)^[11] added that a teacher should be charismatic and exude an aura of respect and followership among his students. This more than anything else makes for classroom management.

Classroom management is a response to all forms of actions and inactions of students that impede normal flow of academic activities in the classroom. Some of the actions of the students that affect teaching and learning in the class according to Moore (2009)^[9] include noise making when lessons are ongoing in the class, irregular movement of students in and out of the classroom while the teacher is teaching and even improper arrangement of chairs or desks in the class which can make students to rearrange them during lesson.

Edumark (2006)^[6] added that a teacher's incompetence in terms of his inability to deliver quality teaching can as well impede class management process. Teachers' appearance and character traits can distract the attention of the students and also affect classroom management even during lesson.

As indicated earlier, classroom management encompasses every effort put in place by teachers to bring students under control during lesson so that teaching and learning cannot be obstructed. It can also be regarded as class control. These efforts made by teachers to tame students during lessons constitute the strategies for classroom management. Emma and Edmund (1994)^[7] encapsulated classroom management strategies discussed above into a checklist of the teacher organizing the classroom and materials, choosing rules and regulations and managing students while planning and conducting instruction among others.

Statement of the Problem

The study investigated classroom management as predictor of students' academic achievement in Public Secondary Schools in Awka South Local Government of Anambra State. A classroom is any form of arrangement (physical or virtual) that provides a formal form of interaction between students and teachers with the drive to improve the cognitive domain of students. Proper classroom arrangement with not more than 20 - 25 students allowing spaces so that teachers and students can move freely is a classroom management strategy. Arranging students into study groups ranging from 5 to 7 students is also a classroom management strategy. A few minutes class work within the period of lesson with monitoring and supervision can bring order to the class. However, in most public secondary schools in Awka South of Anambra State, the situation is different. The number of students in each classroom is between 80 to 100, a number considered too high for a teacher to coordinate. With this large number of students, teachers find it difficult to enforce compliance to class rules of conduct. In addition to the above situation, there is the dearth of empirical research on how classroom management can enhance students' academic achievement in Anambra State. It is this gap in knowledge that this study is intended to fill.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to ascertain the relationship between teacher classroom management and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study ascertained:

1. The relationship between teachers' classroom discipline and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State.
2. The relationship between teachers' competence and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State.
3. The relationship between teachers' reward system and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between teachers' classroom discipline and students' academic achievement in

- public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State?
2. What is the relationship between teachers' competence and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State?
 3. What is the relationship between teachers' reward system and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship existing between teachers' classroom discipline and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State.
2. There is no significant relationship existing between teachers' competence and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State.
3. There is no significant relationship existing between teachers' reward system and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State.

Method

The study investigated classroom management as predictor of students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South of Anambra State, Nigeria. The research design used for the study was correlational research design. The population of this study consist of 1,965 SS 2 students of public primary schools in Awka South LGA, Anambra State. The sample size of 491 SS 2 students was drawn using simple random sampling technique which made

was up of 25% of the total population. The instrument titled "Teacher Classroom Management (TCM) and Students' Academic Achievement (SAA) was used for data collection. The TCM was structured on a 4-point rating scale of strongly agree (SA) = 4, agree (A) = 3, disagree (D) 2 and strongly disagree (SD) = 1. On the other hand, SAA Achievement was derived from the end of second term examination result 2019/2020.

The instrument was validated by two experts in the field of Educational Management and Policy and one from Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of TCM and ASS was established using trail testing and data analysis using Cronbach alpha formula and it yielded correlation coefficient value of 0.87, 0.88 and 0.91 for clusters B1 to B3 with an overall reliability coefficient of 0.89 obtained. The researcher personally administered copies of TCM and SAA to the respondents in their schools with the help of four research assistants who were adequately briefed on the method of administration and collection. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to answer the research questions and employed in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. For the purpose of data analysis, each of the instruments used were scored. In testing the hypotheses, any hypothesis with p-value lesser than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) was rejected while a hypothesis with p-value greater than 0.05 was accepted. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0.

Results

Research Question 1

What is the relationship between teachers' classroom discipline and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State?

Table 1: Pearson Correlation Co-Efficient of Teachers' Classroom Discipline and Students' Academic Achievement

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r	Relationship
Teacher Classroom Discipline		16.34	0.88		
	482			.79*	Strong positive relationship
Students' Academic Achievement		78.85	0.81		

Table 1 indicates a correlation value of 0.79 showing a strong positive relationship between the dependent and independent variables. This is to say that teachers' classroom discipline was a strong factor in determining the academic achievement of students in public secondary schools in Awka South of Anambra State. This further implies that the ability of a teacher to maintain discipline will determine the attention students pay during teaching

process which improves their academic achievement in the topic.

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between teachers' competence and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State?

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Co-Efficient of Teachers' Competence and Students' Academic Achievement

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r	Relationship
Teacher Competence		17.91	1.82		
	482			.81*	Strong positive relationship
Students' Academic Achievement		18.43	1.73		

Table 2 indicates a correlation value of 0.81 showing a strong positive relationship between the dependent and independent variables. This is to say that teachers' competence was a strong factor in determining students' academic achievement. This further implies that the more competence a teacher shows in instructional delivery, the more the students achieved academically.

Research Question 3

What is the relationship between teachers' reward system and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State?

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Co-Efficient of Teachers' Reward System and Students' Academic Achievement

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r	Relationship
Teacher Reward System		17.79	1.89		
	482			.84*	Strong positive relationship
Students' Academic Achievement		21.82	1.83		

Table 3 indicates a correlation value of 0.84 showing a strong positive relationship between the dependent and independent variables. This is to say that teachers' reward system was a strong factor in determining students' positive relationship. This further means that the more teachers' reward students, the more students are motivated to study hard and improve their academic achievement.

Testing of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship existing between teachers' classroom discipline and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) Analysis of the Relationship Between Teachers' classroom discipline And Students' Academic Performance

(N = 482)

Variables	Mean	SD	R	p-value	Decision
Teacher Classroom Discipline	16.34	0.88			
			.79*	.00	Rejected
Students' Academic Achievement	78.85	0.81			
*p<.05; df = 480					

Table 4 showed that at .05 level of significance and 480 degree of freedom, the p-value is .00. Since the p-value of .00 is less than the alpha level (p-value = .00 < 0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between teachers' classroom discipline and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship existing between teachers' competence and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State.

Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) Analysis of the Relationship Between Teachers' Competence And Students' Academic Performance

(N = 482)

Variables	Mean	SD	r	p-value	Decision
Teacher Competence	17.91	1.82			
			.81*	.02	Rejected
Students' Academic Achievement	18.43	1.73			
*p<.05; df = 480					

Table 5 showed that at .05 level of significance and 480 degree of freedom, the p-value is .02. Since the p-value of .02 is less than the alpha level (p-value = .02 < 0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship existing between teachers' competence and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship existing between teachers' reward system and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State.

Table 6: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) Analysis of the Relationship between Teachers' Reward System and Students' Academic Performance

(N = 482)

Variables	Mean	SD	r	p-value	Decision
Awareness of trespass	17.79	1.89			
			.84*	.00	Rejected
Teachers' work attitude	21.82	1.83			
*p<.05; df = 480;					

Table 6 showed that at .05 level of significance and 480 degree of freedom, the p-value is .00. Since the p-value of .00 is less than the alpha level (p-value = .00 < 0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship existing between teachers' reward system and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State.

Discussion

The finding of this study indicates that there is significant relationship between teachers' classroom discipline and students' academic achievement in Public Secondary Schools in Awka South Local Government of Anambra State. It was found that the level of discipline a teacher maintained in the class during teaching determines to a large extent the degree of impartation he achieves among

students. Teachers' classroom discipline according to Afe (2001) [5] includes the attitude and utterance of a teacher while interfacing with students in the class. It also stands for his ability to forestall all unwanted behaviours of students that are likely to truncate the process of teaching and learning. It is therefore established that students behave better and learn more from a disciplined and well-behaved teacher and this ultimately results in their increased academic achievement.

Another finding of the study is that there is a significant relationship between teachers' competence and students' academic achievement. The competence of a teacher can be explained in terms of his quality lesson delivery at the classroom and his good test administration and assessment strategy (Rancifer, 2010) [11].

Teachers who exercise mastery of their subject contents naturally attract attention from students. Such teachers exude the atmosphere of honour, respect and they attract increased followership from students. Students listen to such teachers and in most cases wish to be like him. The outcome of the whole process is that students perform creditably in their subjects and this inadvertently leads to an improved academic achievement.

The study also found out that there is a significant relationship between teachers' good reward system and students' academic achievement. Teachers' good reward system is synonymous with positive reinforcement or performance enhancement strategy. By definition, it is the practice of commending students for doing well in tests, assignment or even in a group study or work.

Teachers can also praise students for being honest, identifying and bringing out lost items, resolving conflict between other students and generally for behaving well. All these enhance students' competence level in the various subject and in the end enhance their academic achievement.

Conclusion

Teaching and learning are said to be at optimal level when the students learn and are able to achieve the educational objectives. This is not always the case due to a lot of obstacles. Students' academic performance is a function of many variables. This study has shown that students' academic performance is also a function of class management. That is to say that teachers' competence, good reward system and classroom discipline can predict the academic performance of students. Efforts therefore should be strengthened in this regard to enhance the academic performance of students by overall reorientation of teachers.

Recommendation

In view of the above findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are made;

1. Teachers in the public secondary schools in Awka South of Anambra State should conduct themselves with a high level of discipline while meeting with students in the classroom for lessons.
2. They should exercise competence in their teaching by qualitatively delivering their subject contents. This can be a very good class management strategy.
3. They should equally adopt positive reinforcement strategy in the class. This will increase students' quality participation in class work, assignment and even during lessons.

4. Teachers should develop rules of conduct in the class. This they can do with students' participating in drafting such rules. The teachers however should be bold and strong enough to enforce compliance.
5. Finally, teachers in the area of study and in Anambra State in general, should be proactive enough to identify students with grey attitudes in order to nip their unwanted behaviours in the bud before they grow to create problems in the school system.

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