

**THE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF YOUNG TEACHERS IN
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The study examined the classroom management practices of young teachers in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. Two research questions and one null hypothesis guided the study. The population of the study was all the 329 teachers of public secondary schools in the zone who has not taught for more than 4years, in 2016/2017 academic session. The sample used for the study was 120 teachers randomly selected from the three local government areas in the zone. A 20- item structured questionnaire developed by the researcher was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by two experts in Educational Administration and Planning and one from Measurement and Evaluation, all from University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The results were analysed using mean scores and standard deviations to answer the research questions, while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that the performance of young teachers in classroom management in public secondary schools in Enugu State was low. It was also revealed that location of schools had no significant effect on performance of the young teachers. It was recommended among others that the Ministry of Education, Post Primary School Management Board and Administrators of schools should organize workshops, conferences and formal mentoring programmes for newly recruited teachers in the State.

Keywords: Classroom management, Young teachers, Public secondary school.

Introduction

Management of classrooms for effective teaching and learning in schools pose concerns to the generality of people, particularly educators, parents and school administrators. Ogbonnaya (2013) defined classroom management as the organization, utilization and control of the resources for the achievement of the objectives of teaching and learning in the classroom. 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 student organized, orderly, focused, attentive, on task , and academically productive during a class.

Classroom management, therefore, can be defined as the activities of the teachers that facilitate learning which include among others, curriculum planning and instructional delivery, organization of the physical environment, teachers' personality, time management, 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.

Teachers' classroom management is considered very vital in the achievement of educational goals so 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 the education system. If their quality is of high standard, then the standard of the education system

will be high. Unfortunately, many young teachers in the teaching profession and some old teachers find it difficult to handle their teaching assignments due to inadequate skills and competences in classroom management.

Young teachers in this study refer to all the teachers who have not taught for more than four years in the public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. Available statistical records show that between the years 2009-2015, at least four thousand teachers were recruited in Enugu State. (Research and Statistic Unit, Post Primary School Management Board, 2015) This has created room for a large number of young entrants into the profession that may need to be trained on various aspects of classroom management. This is because new graduates are employed and deployed without adequate preparation and induction to face various challenges that confront them in the classroom. There is need for the younger teachers to be properly guided, supported and encouraged to manage the classrooms effectively for successful achievement of the goals of secondary education as indicated in the National Policy on Education.

Secondary education is the formal education given to learners after they have been exposed to primary education and before the tertiary education. Secondary education therefore occupies a very unique position in the educational sector in Nigeria. Ekundayo (2009) indicated that it is the level of education that determines the academic achievement and professional career of students. According to Abdulkadir (2015), secondary education is the bedrock upon which other levels of education are built. For secondary education to succeed and be effective, the role of the teachers in classroom management cannot be over emphasized. The ownership, administration and supervision of secondary schools could be used to classify them as either Public Secondary or Private Secondary School.

The concept of public schools is restricted to those schools that are publicly owned, which excludes schools that are operated by voluntary agencies, missions, individuals and organizations. Okafor (2006) stated that public education is intrinsically related to government owned and managed schools. In other words, it can be seen as the education provided through the sponsorship of government. Public schools may be described as the heart of the nation's life in democratic governance and the only industry that demonstrates commitment to equality by providing equal educational opportunity to the community. Hence, there is need to determine the performance of teachers in classroom management in public secondary schools where greater percentage of the students obtain secondary education.

In Enugu State, Nigeria, it is worrisome to note that large numbers of teachers are recruited and deployed to schools without adequate induction training or formal mentoring which will help them to face various challenges that confront teachers in the classroom. Such challenges facing teachers in public secondary schools include indiscipline among students, truancy, examination malpractice and general poor performance of students in public examinations, among others. These manifest clearly as many new teachers in public secondary schools face challenges in delivery of lessons, mastery of the subject matter, record keeping, time management and management of students' problems.

The foregoing concern has made it imperative that the younger teachers should be properly examined to find out their competencies to manage the classroom effectively to

improve teaching and learning. The problem of this study therefore, put in question form is what are the performance level of young teachers in classroom management practices in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out the performance level of young teachers in classroom management practices in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine the:

1. Performance of young teachers in classroom management in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.
2. Performance in classroom management of young teachers in the rural and urban secondary schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the mean performance scores in classroom management practices of young teachers in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria?
2. What are the mean performance scores in classroom management practices of young teachers in the rural and urban secondary schools?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis guided the study and was tested at 0,05 level of significance.

H₀₁. There is no significance difference between the performance scores in classroom management practices of young teachers in rural and urban public secondary schools.

Methodology

The design of the study was descriptive survey. In similar studies, Eze et al. (2020), Okeke et al. (2020a, b), Ugwuanyi et al. (2020), Okenyi et al. (2021), Ezema et al. (2021), Ezeaku et al. (2021) have used this design. The study was carried out in Nsukka Education Zone in Enugu State, Nigeria. Nsukka Education Zone is made up of three local government areas namely; Igbo-Etiti, Nsukka and Uzo- Uwani and has a total of 59 public secondary schools. The population of the study comprised all the 239 young teachers in the 59 public secondary schools who had not taught for more than four years. The sample for the study consists of 120 teachers randomly selected representing 50 percent of the teachers. This is in line with Nwana's (1990) rule of thumb which stated that when the population is a few hundred, the sample should be 50 percent.

A 20- item questionnaire was used to collect data from the teachers by 12 trained assessors who observed the teachers in the classroom. The instrument was structured on a 4 point scale and weighted thus: Very high extent, 4 point; High extent, 3 point; Low extent, 2 point; and Very low extent, 1point. The instrument was face validated by two experts from Educational Administration and Planning and one from Measurement and evaluation, all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

The 120 copies of the questionnaires administered were retrieved and used for the study. The data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviations to answer research questions, while t-test was used in testing the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The extent of performance of the teachers was obtained by interpreting the mean scores against the limits of real numbers as follows: 0.50-

1.49= very low extent, 1.50-2.49= Low extent, 2.50-3.49= High extent, 3.50-4.00= Very high extent. To determine the reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire was administered on 30 young teachers from Obollo Education Zone of Enugu State, and it yielded a Cronbach Alpha coefficient estimate of 0.75 for the instrument which was considered adequate for the study.

Results

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

Research Question One: What are the mean performance scores of young teachers in classroom management in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria?

Table1: Mean and standard deviation of the performance scores of young teachers in classroom management (N=120)

Item Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
1. Preparation of scheme of work	2.62	.61	High Extent
2. Provision of teaching aids	2.05	.42	Low Extent
3. Completion of record of work in the diary	2.11	.40	Low Extent
4. Preparation of lesson plan	2.83	.47	High Extent
5. Arrangement of the instructional materials	2.44	.53	Low Extent
6. Neatness of the classroom and students	2.68	.53	High Extent
7. Interacts cordially with the students	2.09	.39	Low Extent
8. Physical appearance of the teacher	3.19	.50	High Extent
9. Eloquence of the teacher	2.03	.35	Low Extent
10. Regularity to class	2.90	.42	High Extent
11. Introduction of the topic	2.40	.40	Low Extent
12. Effective use of the lesson plan	2.06	.41	Low Extent
13. Sufficient knowledge of the content	2.47	.35	Low Extent
14. Sufficient involvement of students activities	2.78	.46	High Extent
15. Effective use of the instructional materials	1.68	.31	Low Extent
16. Effective class control	2.43	.52	Low Extent
17. Orderly presentation of the topic	2.39	.50	Low Extent
18. Achievement of the stated objectives	2.50	.48	High Extent
19. Establish clear rules and regulations guiding the class	2.33	.62	Low Extent
20. Always have a well designed engaging lesson	2.41	.61	Low Extent

Overall Mean	2.42	.46	Low Extent
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Table 1 shows the mean performance scores of young teachers in classroom management. Items 1 to 20 are the various classroom management practices of the young teachers in Enugu State. The analysis reveals that the mean performance scores of the young teachers on items 1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 14 and 18 are within the mean range of 2.50 to 3.49 meaning that the teachers perform to a high extent on those items of classroom management. However, their mean performance scores on items 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11- 13, 15-17 and 19-20 are within the mean range of 1.50 to 2.49 indicating that the young teachers' performance on these items of classroom management was low. Generally, the cluster mean of 2.42 indicates that in overall, the young teachers performed poorly on classroom management.

Research Question Two: What are mean performance scores in classroom management of young teachers in the rural and urban secondary schools?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of performance scores in classroom management of young teachers in the rural and urban schools

(N₁=63; N₂= 57)

Item Statement	Location	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
1. Preparation of scheme of work	Urban	2.70	.61	High Extent
	Rural	2.54	.60	High Extent
2. Provision of teaching aids	Urban	1.65	.34	Low Extent
	Rural	2.45	.52	Low Extent
3. Completion of record of work in the diary	Urban	2.18	.49	Low Extent
	Rural	2.04	.30	Low Extent
4. Preparation of lesson plan	Urban	2.73	.45	High Extent
	Rural	2.93	.49	High Extent
5. Arrangement of the instructional materials	Urban	2.24	.47	Low Extent
	Rural	2.64	.58	High Extent
6. Neatness of the classroom and students	Urban	2.70	.48	High Extent

	Rural	2.66	.57	High Extent
7. Interacts cordially with the students	Urban	2.01	.36	Low Extent
	Rural	2.17	.42	Low Extent
8. Physical appearance of the teacher	Urban	3.20	.53	High Extent
	Rural	3.18	.47	High Extent
9. Eloquence of the teacher	Urban	2.01	.33	Low Extent
	Rural	2.05	.37	Low Extent
10. Regularity to class	Urban	2.95	.40	High Extent
	Rural	2.85	.44	High Extent
11. Introduction of the topic	Urban	2.36	.39	Low Extent
	Rural	2.44	.41	Low Extent
12. Effective use of the lesson plan	Urban	2.04	.38	Low Extent
	Rural	2.08	.43	Low Extent
13. Sufficient knowledge of the content	Urban	2.45	.34	Low Extent
	Rural	2.49	.35	Low Extent
14. Sufficient involvement of students activities	Urban	2.58	.42	High Extent
	Rural	3.00	.49	High Extent
15. Effective use of the instructional materials	Urban	1.54	.29	Low Extent
	Rural	1.82	.33	Low Extent
16. Effective class control	Urban	2.36	.53	Low Extent
	Rural	2.50	.60	High Extent

17. Orderly presentation of the topic	Urban	2.38	.44	Low Extent
	Rural	2.40	.55	Low Extent
18. Achievement of the stated objectives	Urban	2.50	.47	High Extent
	Rural	2.50	.48	High Extent
19. Establish clear rules and regulations guiding the class	Urban	2.36	.58	Low Extent
	Rural	2.30	.66	Low Extent
20. Always have a well designed engaging lessons	Urban	2.59	.61	High Extent
	Rural	2.33	.63	Low Extent
Overall mean Extent	Urban	2.34	.45	Low
	Rural	2.47	.49	Low Extent

Table 2 shows the mean performance scores in classroom management practices of young teachers in urban and rural schools. It shows that the mean performance scores of the young teachers in both urban and rural schools on items 1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 14 and 18 are within the mean range of 2.50 to 3.49 implying that the young teachers in urban and rural schools to a high extent use those classroom management practices. On the other hand, the mean performance scores of the young teachers in urban and rural schools to items 2, 3, 7, 9, 11-13, 15, 17 and are within the mean range of 1.5 to 2.49 meaning that the young teachers in urban and rural schools to a low extent use the classroom management. However, there are variations in the mean performance scores of young teachers in urban and rural schools to items 5, 6, 16, and 20. The overall mean performance scores of 2.34 and 2.47 for the young teachers in urban and rural schools respectively imply that the performance level of young teachers in classroom management practices was low.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of young teachers in urban and rural schools.

Table 3: t-test analysis of the difference in the performance scores in classroom management of young teachers in the rural and urban schools

Location	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t-cal	Sig. (2-tailed)
Urban	67	2.34	.45		-1.49	1.981
Rural	53	2.47	.49	118		

Table 3 shows that the probability associated with the calculated value of t (-1.49) for the influence of location on the performance scores of young teachers in classroom management in the urban and rural public secondary schools t-critical at 0.05 level of significance is 1.981. Since the calculated t-value is less than the critical t-value, the null hypothesis was not rejected, meaning that location of school does not significantly influence the mean performance scores of young teachers in classroom management in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results showed that young teachers' performance in classroom management practices was low. The analysis further indicated that teachers in both urban and rural schools performed very low in provision and use of instructional materials. This could be attributed to the current state of the teacher training colleges/institutions in Nigeria with dearth of lecturers and inadequate instructional materials leading to production of half baked teachers. There is a saying that "practice makes perfect" Exposing student teachers to regular use of instructional materials during training will inculcate the culture of constant use of instructional materials as aid to effective teaching and learning The findings are in agreement with Allen (2010), which stated that research over the past few decades has consistently indicated that new teachers feel unprepared when it comes to classroom management skills and that they are often unprepared to function successfully in today's classrooms with regards to provision of instructional materials. Doyle (2011) also noted that experienced teachers effectively managed their classrooms better than young teachers. An earlier study by Oliver, Wehby and Reschy(2011) indicated that teachers' classroom management practices have significant positive effect on decreasing problem behaviour in the classrooms and improving academic performance. Therefore, it is not surprising to observe the present low standard of academic performance of students in public secondary schools due in part to poor performance of young teachers in classroom management. This requires urgent intervention if teachers in public schools would contribute their own quota in realising the objectives of the secondary education as stated in the national policy on education.

The results also indicated that location of school did not significantly influence the mean performance scores of young teachers in classroom management in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The slight difference in the performance of teachers in classroom management in favour of rural teachers may not actually be that rural teachers were more effective than their urban counterpart. There was the possibility of variations between and within assessors on the score given to a particular behaviour. The indication that location did not

significantly affect the teachers' performance was evidence that one can get teachers who perform very well in classroom management in urban schools as well as in rural schools. Likewise, there may be teachers who perform poorly in classroom management in both urban and rural schools.

This result agrees with Ezeudu (2013) which stated that there was no significant difference in the academic achievement of student in urban and rural schools. Amoke (2016) equally indicated that location of school does not significantly influence the mean performance

scores of teachers in classroom management in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study and the discussion, it can be seen that young teachers' performance in classroom management in public secondary schools in Enugu state, Nigeria was low irrespective of school location. Since the overall performance of the students depends largely on the performance of teachers, the implication is that school administrators or principals who do not encourage workshops, seminars or mentoring programmes for young teachers in their schools may not achieve improved students' performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and the implications, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education, Post Primary School Management Board and all stakeholders in secondary school administration should play active roles in planning and organizing conferences, workshops, and mentoring programmes for newly recruited teachers to enhance their performance in classroom management.

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