

PROPER CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESSES IN SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This paper investigates classroom management as a vital factor influencing effective teaching and learning in primary, secondary, and post-secondary educational institutions. The study, which positions the teacher as the principal manager of classroom activities, investigates the responsibilities involved in creating an environment conducive to educational attainment. Data were sourced from library searches and classroom observations. Based on existing management theories and pedagogical literature, the paper explores the conceptual foundations of management, highlighting planning, organisation, direction, and control as critical duties for classroom teachers. It examines how physical classroom arrangement, optimum student positioning, and strategic placement of instructional materials all contribute to effective instruction. The study emphasizes discipline as an essential component of classroom management, detailing ways for maintaining decorum and instilling self-control in students. The study also cites essential characteristics of an effective teacher, including topic competence, pedagogical competency, humility, punctuality, friendliness, and moral uprightness. It also identifies teachers' professional functions such as diagnosing learning issues, encouraging students, evaluating performance, and coordinating activities as critical to effective classroom governance. The paper concludes that the teacher's teaching and the students' learning environment should be very conducive and favourable enough in order to engender proper comprehension and possible assimilation of what is taught by the teacher during the lesson. It recommends that diverse instructional resources, consistent discipline, and exceptional teacher leadership are required to achieve desired educational goals.

Keywords: Classroom management, Effective teaching and learning, Processes, Schools

Introduction

Classroom management is one of the most important aspects of school's running and management in institutions of learning which include the primary, the secondary and the tertiary levels. Williams (2016) defines it as the involvement of how class works, how the teacher and the students work together, and how teaching and learning take place. Anisulowo (2024) views it as the technique that the supervisor(teacher) uses to keep students focused, organized, attentive and productive to bring out the best from the students. The teacher, who is at the center stage of all activities in the classroom is the manager of every action and inaction of the students. In this regard, he or she must ensure that there is effective and proper dissemination of instruction in the classroom through the teaching and the learning processes leading to the achievement of educational objectives. To this effect, good rapport through human relationship is recognized as indispensable criteria that influences the teaching and learning processes. The basic and primary responsibility of the classroom teacher is to guide the learning activities of children (in primary schools) and students (in secondary and tertiary institutions). This is applicable individually to applied music students or as a group or team work in ensemble music studies and performance workshop. In the process of this interaction, the teacher influences the children (learner) either intentionally with planned behaviour or consciously without planning but often without the awareness of his behavior and its attendant effect on the learning process. An effective teacher needs to know a good deal not only about what he is teaching but also how children learn (Fatunwase, 2017).

Basically, the existence of the school is to ensure that students are prepared to be rightfully placed socially and vocationally in the society where they found themselves. The achievement of that purpose depends largely on the quality of instruction they receive in the classroom, because, learning involves assimilating what is being taught in the classroom by the teacher. In other words, learning can be simply interpreted as the objective of teaching that is, the learning outcomes. This is achievable through the application of appropriate teaching methodology (pedagogy), proper classroom organization by incorporating discipline among the pupils or students. Consequently, with poor pedagogy, a teacher may contribute negatively to the teaching and learning processes in the classroom. To actualize effective teaching and learning process, the need to consider classroom management is highly imperative because its neglect or poor handling will inhibit effective teaching and learning process. The objective and vision for educational attainment can be achieved or realized right from the classroom level. In this regard, it is our expectation that the classroom be well managed because, if the foundation is weak or poorly laid in the classroom, other level of educational attainment will be greatly affected.

Concept of Management

Management is the act or skill of dealing with people or situation in a successful way (Hornby, 2010). Management also refers to the organizational structure, the acquisition of planning and the coordination of physical perspective of human material toward the achievement of organizational goal. Resser (1973) considered management as the utilization of physical and human resources through cooperative efforts. It is accomplished by performing the functions of directing, and controlling staffing, planning, organizing etc. It is expected by implication that a teacher who aims at achieving a result-oriented teaching and learning process must essentially be a planner, an organizer, a director, a leader and a controller that is, the one in charge of his classroom and students during lessons. Furthermore, a result-oriented management is therefore the effective organization of resources to attain clearly defined objectives. This requires a complete process of restricting system, whether human or materials for doing work. It equally requires restricting attitude and the level of knowledge of workers. It ensures that leaders defined clearly where the organization is going, how to get there and that the correct route is followed (Resser, 1973). According to Adewale and Tuoyo (1994), management is the process by which a cooperative group direct action towards common goals. They further highlighted that classroom management is not just limited to class control and orderliness in the classroom, it involves curriculum planning, classroom administration that is, the physical setting of the classroom, recognizing individual differences in talents and abilities when teaching the pupils. It also ensures that punishments are retributive, reformatory and deterrent providing ample opportunities for students to express themselves and exercise their leadership potentials and ensuring that a variety of practical activities are introduced.

Classroom Arrangement, Management and Discipline

Classroom arrangement and management is an integral aspect of the teacher education in the implementation of the educational programme by the teacher; either micro-teaching teachers, Teaching Practice teachers or the conventional classroom teachers in primary, secondary, colleges or tertiary institutions. A competent and diligent teacher is expected to combine proper and adequate classroom arrangement and management with his teaching methodology to enhance the required efficiency in the implementation of the educational programme in Nigerian schools. Proper classroom management begins with classroom arrangement. In a spacious classroom, the arrangement should be just that there are enough spaces at the back, the front, the left and the right sides of the students' chairs and desks. The students sitting arrangement should be in rows such that in a classroom that can accommodate 40 students the teacher can create five rows with eight students in the line-up of each row. (Falusi, 2022). According to Hunt (1980), formal teaching begins in the primary school, and the following suggestion apply almost equally to both primary and secondary schools. The class should be compactly arranged, if the class does not fill the room, students should not be allowed to spread themselves into sides and corners leaving the middle of the room with empty spaces.

For an example, in a music class, if an upright piano is used, it should be in the right centre of the room (viewed as facing the class) at an angle of about forty- five degrees, with the keyboard in view of as many pupils as possible, but it should not hide that part of the wall blackboard being used for the lesson. The teacher when seated at the piano, will have the class partly in front of him and partly to his right taking care that no one is behind his back (p.7). Further arrangement requires that there will be spaces between the rows for the teacher to enhance easy movement as he moves round while inspecting the children's class work during the lesson. Also, the teacher's sitting position in conventional classroom should be at the front right or left hand corner of the classroom where he will be able to monitor the students during the lesson. Also, the instruction materials like musical instruments such as recorder, keyboard, piano or organ should be within the teacher's reach for easy access during practical lessons and for demonstration during theory classes.

Classroom Management

Control is an essential element of management and as such, the management of a class for effective teaching learning process is incomplete without control. Control is concerned with juxtaposition of events and plan and making necessary corrections where events deviate from the original plan. The class teacher is supposed to be in total control of the pupils or students during lesson. Proper decorum must be maintained and ensured during lesson hours such that proper discipline is enforced. During the lesson, students are to listen to the teaching of every lesson with rapt attention. Hunt (1980), further explains that single desks are best as their use facilitates quick standing up by the pupils. In a music class, when the children sit down to sing, the desks provide a rest for the hands holding up the music copies. If the copies are laid flat on the desks, the singer will tend to lean forward and adopt a generally unsuitable position. They should rest their shoulders against the back of the seat and hold the copies nearly vertically. When standing they can easily manage an upright posture behind the desk if the seat tips up.

Desks are of course essential for any written work such as dictation. A back support is most important for a singer when sitting down. When standing, singers should have their feet apart, head up, and the face not hidden by the copy. Sitting and standing should alternate during a lesson. Because, a class which stands the whole time will be unduly fatigued, with bad results on the style and tone, while a class which sits all the time will become slack and lazy, with almost identical results (p. 8). During an ensemble or a performance workshop class, when in standing position, the feet should be placed approximately six inches apart. The left foot preferably should be in front of the right. This stance affords the singer better balance and lay the foundation for the proper use of the breathing muscles. The weight of the body should rest on a great extent on the ball of the feet not on the heel. The singer should always remain in an erect position while standing with the stomach (abdomen) drawn in and the spine should be kept straight as possible. Also, the chest should be held relatively high but without strain or excess tension. Since the throat function as an organ pipe, the head must be kept perpendicularly to the shoulder in order that the pipe be kept clear and functional.

The singers are to hold the piece in such a way that the music director or conductor can be easily seen. This posture will prevent them from lowering or raising their heads as any deviation from this correct posture will affect the tone quality. When the singer is seated, the correct posture from the waist will be almost same as the standing posture. The only basic difference is that the legs assume a bent position. While in sitting position, the singer must keep both feet on the floor and lean slightly forward in the sitting position from the back of the chair to maintain adequate breath control and support. The proper coordination between the breath muscle and the vocal apparatus will give better result only if this correct posture is maintained while singing (Falusi, 2019). The principle of effective classroom management must be maintained during question-and-answer time such that the pupils wait for their turn by raising their hands while supplying answers to a given question by the class teacher.

Class Discipline

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (8th edition), the term "discipline" refers to the practice of training people to obey rules and orders and punishing them if they do otherwise. It also refers to the controlled behaviour or situation that results from this training. Furthermore, it means the ability to control the way individual behaves, lives or works (Hornby, 2010). In corroboration, Adesina (1980) refers to discipline as the readiness or ability to respect constituted authority and observe conventional or established laws of the society. It means, self-restrain and respect for others. Discipline in all respects demands a sacrificial lifestyle, perseverance, tolerance and recognition of human dignity and value. It is an act of conforming to the general laid down rules and regulation or code of conduct in any society, institutions or organization. In classroom situation, discipline may be measured by the extent to which the pupils or students are self-controlled and the willingness in adapting to the assigned task. A disciplined student is someone who did not find it difficult to conform to the classroom rules and regulation for the smooth running of the teaching and learning processes which are geared toward the achievement of educational objectives. On discipline, Hunt (1980) give the listed recommendations:

(i) A class of interested children will behave well. (ii) It is best not to spend too long on difficulties in one lesson. (iii) A lesson should be split up into different contrasted sections. (iv) Finish with something familiar, something which has been previously learnt. (v) The class should be sized with taller children at the back. (vi) Get all the faults finding over and done with (if possible) early on and to finish on friendly terms. (vii) As far as possible, all the class should be occupied the whole of the time. (viii) A teacher should never begin to talk to a class or begin a song when the pupils are inattentive. (ix) Movement from sitting to standing or vice versa should be done quickly. (x) One must persevere with each lesson for a short time, especially in lower classes. (xi) Some children are simply slow in developing a musical sense, but they acquire it in time. (xii) After a class performance, all music should be passed to the front and put away before a singing class is dismissed. (xiii) Good discipline is essential and lack of control can be disastrous (p. 9).

The afore-mentioned recommendations are simple and applicable in all classes during lessons. By implication, an effective and efficient teacher must ensure that he controls his classroom during lessons and bring forth appropriate discipline which will ultimately achieve a result-oriented teaching and learning process. Because, lack of disciplined by the teacher or the students in the classroom, within the school premises or outside the school will hinder the progress of educational achievement. In this regard, it is worthy of note that proper classroom management and good class discipline will go a long way in the achievement of educational goals and objectives.

Teacher's Role in Classroom Management

The term "teaching" according to Falusi (2022) means the art of imparting knowledge or educational concepts and ideals in learners. The concept of teaching sees the teacher as a mediator in learning, that is, one who assists the learners to search for and utilize information in ways which bring about observable benefits both to him and to a larger society. According to the Advanced Learners' Dictionary of Current English, the concept "teach"

means to show somebody how to do something so that they will be able to do it themselves. It also means giving somebody information about a particular subject. While the time teaching means the work of a teacher. A teacher is someone who teaches or passes instruction on certain concepts of learning to others (learners). A teacher is supposed to be a role model that is someone with enviable character. He or she is supposed to know and able to demonstrate the technical know-how of his subject and must be able to combine flexibility with his teaching methodology.

The Importance of Flexible Teaching in Classroom Management

To achieve educational goals through the teaching and learning processes, first and foremost, qualified teachers are needed to interpret the curriculum. On the part of the teacher, it is required that he or she adopts certain principles that will enhance effective teaching in the classroom which is known as flexible teaching. Thus, the importance of flexible teaching according to Falusi (2022) is as follows: (a) It facilitates the effectiveness of the teaching and learning processes. (b) It is child centred. (c) It leads to self-actualization. (d) It promotes good rapport and friendliness between the teacher and his students. (e) It instills confidence in learners as they will be willing to learn and be corrected as they interact with their teacher during the teaching and learning process. (f) It promotes a conducive atmosphere which enhances loyalty and prompt obedience to teacher's instruction without the use of cane or corporal punishment. (g) The humility of the teacher motivates the learners to become responsible students with high regard and reference for their teachers.

The Qualities of a Good Teacher

The achievement of the educational objectives requires the exhibition of certain qualities by the teacher or the instructor who is saddled with the responsibility of interpreting the curriculum in order to impart knowledge in learners. These undeniable qualities in the lives of a qualified and competent teacher include the following: (i) Mastery of the subject or discipline he teaches. (ii) Competency in teaching. (iii) Demonstration of humility in her interaction with the students. (iv) Punctuality to classes. (v) Friendly attitude. (vi) Creating a conducive atmosphere for the teaching and learning process. (vii) Showing interest in his profession. (viii) Showing interest in the success of learners. (ix) Honesty, truthfulness and responsiveness in the discharge of his duty. (x) God fearing, Godliness and disciplined life.

1. Mastery of the Subject or the Discipline He Teaches

The mastery of the subject matter is one of the good attributes which should be considered as the first and foremost proof of a well tutored teacher. This attribute enhances competency with demonstrable ability that arouses learner's interest in the teaching and learning processes in the classroom. The mastery of the subject matter by the class teacher before delivering his lesson in the class during lessons' period enables the teacher to teach with reliable confidence that wins the learners interest. A good teacher's aim is to always achieve the educational objectives at the end of every lesson. In this regard, it is expected that the teacher or the course or subject facilitator should always ensure adequate preparation for the lesson through a well-drawn lesson plan and well prepared note before coming to the class.

2. Competency in Teaching

Competency is another factor or attribute that enhances effective or good teaching in the classroom. The proper application with the right teaching and competency will always place the teacher in a vantage position before his pupils or students. This attribute is in appropriate and proper correlation with the mastery of the subject matter already discussed in previous paragraph. Teaching with competency always prevents poor performance during the teaching learning process. Teaching with competency encourages effective teaching which leads to proper dissemination of the teaching concept to learners. It also encourages teaching from simple matters to complex subjects which also facilitate proper understanding and comprehension of the set goals and achievement of educational objectives.

3. Demonstration of Humility

Humility is the hallmark of all attributes or qualities which are to be demonstrated by a good teacher. It is a contagious attribute which is expected to be exhibited by all classes of people be it a young fellow or adult. Many, especially pupils or learners do easily respect and submit to a humble teacher than a proud one. A humble teacher is a rare model who is worthy of emulation by his pupils/students. This is a good attribute to be imbibed by both the teacher and learners. A humble teacher always command high integrity and respect before the pupils/students. In this regard, it is high expectation that every teacher imbibes the culture of humility before fellow teacher and students as students especially the younger ones learn by imitation.

4. Punctuality to Classes

This concept is in correlation with the popular saying or slogan that punctuality is the soul of every business. A teacher who is punctual to classes will always wade off the practice of late coming or truancy to classes by learners. Punctuality to the class by the teacher will enable him to deliver or disseminate his lessons at the appropriate period within the stipulated time in the school's time table such that his period will not infringe into

another lesson by other teachers. This is also another quality of a good teacher worthy of emulation by fellow teachers and the pupils/learners.

5. Friendly Attitude

Friendly attribute is another quality of a good teaching which enhances efficiency on the part of the teacher and effectiveness in the application of the teaching methodology in imparting knowledge in learners. A friendly teacher always wins the interest of the learners than a teacher who is hostile, bossy and unfriendly to the pupils. His friendliness will always attract the interest of the learners to his lesson's period. Pupils/students always look forward to the period of such teacher's lesson. But in a situation where the teacher is hostile to the students, many of them will be absconding from classes as they will develop cold attitude and hatred toward the teacher and his subject.

6. Creating a Conducive Atmosphere for the Teaching and Learning Process

Proper teaching which enhances the achievement of educational goals and objectives thrive under a conducive atmosphere where there is adequate provision of teaching facilities. These include spacious classroom, music laboratory, instructional materials such as music instruments, e.g. piano, organ, trumpet, flute etc. good board (black or white) with stave lines, drawn charts and other essentials for proper demonstration and effective teaching in the class. Besides, the teaching atmosphere must not be tensed such that the teaching method is child centered. In such conducive atmosphere, proper teaching can take place.

7. Showing Interest in the Profession

It is one of the ethics of every profession especially the teaching profession in the sense that whoever identifies with such profession should be passionate or show interest in their profession. Someone who is interested in his profession as a teacher will not be selling in the market when he or she is expected to be in the class to teach his lessons or lectures during the school hours. While in schools, he is not expected to while away the time of his teaching period when he is expected to settle down for a serious assignment during the lesson's period. Every teacher is expected to be passionate and be excited while teaching others, especially the younger ones who are expected to be leaders of tomorrow. Interest in the job must be well demonstrated such that most of the learners will respect and show interest in the teaching profession. Because, teaching is the most noble profession that deals with character formation and reformation apart from preaching through the pastoral ministry which deals with the spiritual aspect of human transformation.

8. Showing Interest in the Success of Learners

The purpose of every teaching and learning process in the classroom is to achieve the desired educational objectives. In this regard, it is expected that every good teacher should show interest in the success of his teaching as a teacher and vice versa the success of the learner whom he teaches. In the light of this, he is expected to study the learners' learning and comprehensive ability as we have both fast learners with high intelligent quotient (IQ) as well as slow learners with low intelligent quotient (IQ). Through regular assessment in the classroom during the lessons and take home assignment, the intelligent teacher is able to know the learning ability and academic performance of every pupil or student. This development will further assist him in helping the students to succeed.

9. Honesty, Truthfulness and Responsiveness in the Discharge of His Duty

Honesty, truthfulness and responsiveness in the discharge of every duty by a diligent and a dutiful teacher is an antidote to failure on the implementation of the requisite curriculum for the teaching and learning processes in the pre-primary, basic school, secondary and tertiary institutions. Honesty and truthfulness are regarded as the best policy which always determines the genuineness and reliability of the success of every business. Therefore, part of the qualities of a trustworthy and good teacher requires life of honesty, truthfulness and responsiveness. He must be a man of his word, a model and a transparent life worthy of emulation by others which include fellow teachers and learners.

10. God Fearing, Godliness and Disciplined Life

A wise saying which is also regarded as a Christian slogan says that godliness with contentment always brings great gain. The best quality of a good teacher is God fearing and a life of godliness because the teaching and the learning processes require a life of godliness and discipline in demonstration by the good teacher which in return is to be imitated by the learners. This is because, the end of an academic achievement requires that a graduate of the basic school, secondary or any tertiary institution is expected to be worthy in character and learning before graduation. Therefore, an emphasis on discipline and God-fearing aspect and also, on life of godliness during the teaching and learning processes cannot be over emphasized. In this regard, it is required that moral lessons which must cut across all classes from the pre- primary to basic school or from secondary to tertiary institutions should be given undivided attention by all teachers and authorities of every school and institution. Thus, the society will be rid of social vices and life of godliness will be promoted by all and sundry especially the young learners (Falusi, 2022).

Functions of a Teacher in Classroom Management

The role of an effective and competent teacher in proper classroom management cannot be overemphasized, in this regard, Tella, Ajayi and Olowoye (1990) highlighted the following major functions which every teacher is expected to carry out in their daily activities. These include: Explaining, informing and showing how; Arranging and organizing the classroom; Diagnosing learning problems; Initiating, directing and administering; Making curriculum materials; Unifying the group; Providing security; Evaluating the students and instructional activities; Clarifying attitudes, beliefs and problems; Enrichment of community activities; Participation in school activities; Participation in professional and civic life etc. Putting the role of a teacher in proper perspectives as highlighted above a teacher is recognized as a planner, organizer, coordinator, controller and a good leader. Balogun (1994) corroborates that a teacher should be competent to perform his expected duties in proper classroom management. The competences include the following among others: (a) Knowledge of the teaching objectives and their implication. (b) Mastery of the concept and skills of the subject matter to be taught. (c) Mastery of the subject developmental trends and implication. (d) Knowledge of learners' social and economic background. (e) Knowledge of the environment and social factors that influence teaching. (f) Commitment to the development of the competent staff and students. Furthermore, the teacher's classroom's responsibilities in proper classroom management include professional functions such as motivation, evaluation, counseling, and coordination. It is clear that the performance of the aforementioned functions are necessary by the teacher otherwise, he or she will not be effective as a teacher in the achievement of the desired educational objectives. Further clarification on the roles or duties expected of a good teacher that enhances effective teaching and learning under proper classroom management as suggested by Adewole and Tuoyo (1994) are highlighted as follow: (i) Incorporation of appropriate discipline. (ii) Keeping of accurate records. (iii) Selection of appropriate instruction materials. (iv) Directing all activities and programmes in the classroom. (v) Knowing how to motivate pupils to learn. (vi) Demonstrating resourcefulness in his teaching method. (vii) Adopting his instruction materials to the various abilities and areas of need of his students. (viii) Understanding his pupils by studying and knowing their strength and weaknesses. (ix) Willingness to improve in learning and encouraging others to learn. For classroom management to be classified and regarded as good and effective, the teacher's teaching and the students' learning environment should be very conducive and favourable enough in order to engender proper comprehension and possible assimilation of what is taught by the teacher during the lesson.

Conclusion and Recommendations

To ensure efficiency in proper classroom management, specific strategies are required through which effective classroom management can be incorporated in the teaching and learning processes in schools.

- i. The physical environment must be conducive for learning.
- ii. Varieties of instruction materials must be made available by the teacher to arouse the students and create keen interest in learning about them.
- iii. Classroom discipline must be ensured to pave way for proper decorum during the lesson.
- iv. Recognition of students' unruly behaviours is necessary to curb students' excesses and to ensure proper monitoring, supervision and encouragement of the identified students to learn rather than disturbing the lesson.
- v. Good organization and arrangement of materials will enhance effective teaching and realization of educational objectives.
- vi. The teacher should demonstrate good leadership role such as punctuality and exhibition of other good qualities of a teacher as discussed in previous paragraph.
- vii. All activities in the classroom must be properly coordinated in order to achieve the desired educational goals and objectives.

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