



## Problems of Classroom Management in Nigeria Secondary Schools and its Effects on the Teaching and Learning

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### ABSTRACT

Effective classroom management is crucial for successful teaching and learning in Nigerian secondary schools. This study, conducted at Government Girls College Bauchi using qualitative research, explores classroom management issues and their impact on the teaching and learning process. Factors influencing classroom management include teachers' behaviors (punctuality, preparedness, and friendliness), students' interests, teaching strategies (interactive methods and effective communication), and gender dynamics. Addressing these issues is vital for enhancing education quality. Recommendations include incorporating classroom management training in teacher education, emphasizing understanding and managing individual differences, establishing guidelines for student behavior, and organizing workshops to enhance teacher skills. Ongoing research is encouraged to develop tailored strategies for the unique challenges faced in Nigerian classrooms.

### ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received: September, 2023

Received in revised form: September, 2023

Accepted: November, 2023

Published online: December, 2023

### KEYWORDS

Secondary Schools, Classroom  
Management, Teaching, Learning

### INTRODUCTION

In our formal system of education, classroom plays a very vital role; it is a facility that could enhance learning if properly conditioned. Before the introduction of formal system of education in Nigeria, the system was informal traditional education or indigenous Nigeria education. This type of education takes place everywhere and throughout life. There is no particular place mapped out for this type of education. It is to some extent arranged and organized and takes place in some specialized places but in an informal educational setup, for example, a tailor or shoemaker undergoes a course of study in an organized setting like the workshop, which is still within the informal structure of education. The importance of classroom in the educational process cannot be overemphasized as the classroom environment has far-reaching consequences in the education of the child. One may hold the view that the classroom is not very important, that lessons could

be taught outdoors under a tree and learning would still take place. This could be true but the question is "How such learning would take place in such a situation". Any good teacher would find it difficult to stimulate interest and effect desirable changes in an environment which is not conducive to learning. Attention may be short, distraction could occur and there may be inconveniences on the part of both the teacher and the learner if lessons are held under trees or similar environment. Where good classroom management is lacking, there is chaos, teaching and learning are disrupted and much learning does not take place. Equally important in classroom management is the issue of discipline and handling of disciplinary problems. The teacher should know that it is important to understand the personality of the students he/she is handling in order to keep the classroom in order and ready for the task at hand. This creates a picture of the activities that teacher is involved in while in the classroom.

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In dealing with the students, the teacher is confronted with such problem as; Absenteeism, fighting, disobedience, leaving seats for no good reason, inattentiveness, inability to learn, noise, jeering at the teacher, sleeping, shuffling of feet among others. All these show that there exist lapses in the classroom management. It is also evident that where these cannot be controlled or managed to some great extent, there emerges case of great indiscipline which is reflected in the students' attitude in the attainment of higher education. Teachers are leaders that influence students' needs, skills as well as self-confidence, self-respect, status, and control of themselves and their environment in order to perform their duties well. The professional responsibilities include; the organization of classroom, physical environment, and also management of student's behavior. The schools as a vital institution ensures that young ones receive good education. Federal government of Nigeria has adopted education as an instrument for affecting national development. Education will contribute highly in the national development plan because it is the most important instrument of change as any fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society has to be preceded by educational revolution. Consequently, the National Policy on Education 2000 stipulated the objectives of secondary school education, which are prepared for higher education and preparation for useful living in the society. These objectives can fully be achieved only if the teacher's respect principles of secondary schools and the government play their roles well but the bulk of the work is left to the classroom teachers. Many studies and books have been written on the subject of classroom management. In their writings, authors have always shown the complexity and broadness of the concept 'classroom management'. Classroom management covers a "broad range of teacher behaviours", the teacher behaviours such as establishing, organizing and managing classroom activities, developing teachers' teaching skills and creating good teacher-learner relationships. The multiple factors that characterize and effectively managed classroom have also caused the overgeneralization and compartmentalization of

classroom management. Significant factors include the teachers' role in teaching and managing the classroom; the teachers' approaches, strategies, techniques and skills in dealing with both appropriate and inappropriate behavior. The fact that much has been written on the subject of classroom management is proof that classroom management is an important topic in the teaching and learning situation which therefore warrants thorough investigation and understanding. Too much emphasis is placed on school management, yet classroom management is an important area in the life of every teacher, whether experienced or not. One may then metaphorically say that teachers in educational institutions are being prepared to become "principals" and not masters of the teaching discourse, even though universities and colleges of education are beginning to incorporate classroom management in their syllabi. Therefore, training for new teachers and in-service training for experienced teachers are essential if they are to acquire the skills, techniques, and strategies to deal with behavioral problems.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Teaching has been noted as one of the most difficult jobs in the world. It becomes more difficult when the teacher is over whelmed with the problems of classroom management. In order not to be placed in this position, there is need for effective classroom management. This effectiveness of classroom management depends on the provisions of good teachers, good facilities adequate knowledge of subject matters, personnel, fund, and provision of good physical learning environment, good leadership style, good personality and attributes that will ensure the maintenance of student's interest. Absence of all these lead to poor performance in examination, accompanied by cheating and the standard of education continues to fall. It is therefore, important to study problems and issues of classroom management in Nigeria with specific reference to GGC Bauchi, and how they affect teaching and learning situation of the school under study. It was in line with this that the following research questions were asked.

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- i. What are the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents
- ii. What are the determinant of the principles applied?
- iii. Describe the strategies used in the respondents to deal with behavioral problems
- iv. Ascertain the extents students contribute to classroom management

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of this study was to determine how secondary school teachers manage classroom behavioural problems. The specific objectives are:

- i. To describe the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents
- ii. To determine the behavioural management principles applied by the respondents
- iii. To describe the strategies used by teachers employed to deal with behavioural problems.
- iv. The extent to which students contributes to classroom management problems

### **METHODOLOGY**

The research design in this research work depended on the use of qualitative approach. Qualitative research is about exploring issues, understanding phenomena, and answering questions by analyzing and making sense of unstructured data. From health studies, the academic, marked and policy research; qualitative research happens in nearly every workplace and study environment, nearly every day. Focus groups, in-depth interviews, content analysis, ethnography, evaluation and semiotics are among the many approached that were used, but qualitative research in its most basic form involves the analysis of the unstructured data, including opened survey responses, literature reviews, interviews, audio recordings, videos, pictures, social media and web pages. It relies more on describing realities on the basis of information and

interpretations given by the participants being observed. Hence it is descriptive in nature. The descriptive nature of qualitative research has a bearing in that “the biases, values, and judgment of the researcher become stated explicitly in the research report” in other words, the researcher explains and interprets the results on the basis of what he or she has observed and uses this information to qualify and elucidate his or her point or view.

This research study is aimed to cover Public Senior Secondary Schools in Nigeria, with particular emphasis on the Government Girls Secondary School Bauchi. The sample for this study was Government Girls College Bauchi which was used as the case study for this research work. A sample of respondents was selected using a statistical method which consisted of the use of tables and percentages (%). The methods were complementary to each other in order to display a clear fact of the researcher’s work that will be easily understood.

The instrument for data collection in this study is the structured questionnaire using a five (5) points liker scale response options. The questionnaire consists of 25 items for the teacher to tick their opinions. The method used in collecting data for this research was classroom observations, teacher interviews and questionnaire. The researcher observed five classrooms of average class size of 49 students in each of the classes observed. Interview sheets were drawn up for the teachers under which the classrooms were observed. Questionnaires were equally administered to the respondents.

The data analyzed in chapter four was based on Patton’s dimensions of analyzing qualitative research, namely data organization, description and interpretation (Best and Kahn, 2007). Patton’s dimensions featured prominently in the analysis of classroom observations and interviews; however, questionnaires were also administered, few modifications in the presentation of the data were evident. The procedure in analyzing data has no distinct or standard procedures that are carried out, hence qualitative data analysis is said to be “eclectic”.

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### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

At this stage, the data collected are analyzed and interpreted. Two hundred (200) questionnaires were distributed to teachers and students of Government Girls College Bauchi in Bauchi Metropolis. 60% of these questionnaires were responded to by the teachers while 40% were responded to by the students. All the questionnaires distributed were retrieved. The

decision rule for this analysis was mean of 3.50. This means that any opinion with mean below 3.5 will not be considered. Only opinions with means of 3.50 and above were used for this analysis.

**Research Question 1:** What are the teachers' behaviours that can improve effective classroom management?

**Table 1:** Teachers' behaviors that can improve effective classroom management

S/N	Question Items	Mean	Remark
1	Teachers' punctuality to classroom lessons will enhance effective classroom management	4.24	Agreed
2	Teachers' preparedness to classroom lessons will improve effective behavioural management	4.16	Agreed
3	Teachers friendly behavior helps in improving classroom behavioural management	4.38	Agreed
4	Fair treatment of students by teachers will help in improving classroom management	3.97	Agreed
5	Giving recognition and respect to pupils will enhance effective classroom management	3.98	Agreed
6	Teachers' pleasant behavior to students will enhance effective classroom management	4.75	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>4.24</b>	

Source: Field Survey

From table 1 above, item 1 showed a mean of 4.24. This is an indication that the respondents have agreed that teachers' punctuality to classroom lessons will enhance effective classroom behavioural management. For item 2, a mean of 4.16 showed that the respondents have also accepted that teachers' preparedness to classroom lessons can help to improve classroom behavioural management. Similarly, item 3 showed a mean of 4.38 which is an indication that the respondents have accepted that teacher's friendly behavior can help in improving effective classroom relationship. For item 4, a mean of 3.97 is an indication of respondents' acceptance that fair treatment of students by teachers is a behavior that can support the creation of effective classroom management. Item 5 also showed a positive

results with a mean of 3.92, which is an indication that the respondents have accepted that, giving recognition and respect to pupils as learners by teachers will improve effective classroom behavioural management. Similarly, item 6 of the research question 1 showed positive result of 4.75 mean. This is an indication of acceptance by the respondents that teachers' pleasant behavior to students can help to improve effective classroom management. Moreover, the grand mean of 4.56 for this research question portrayed that teachers' positive behaviours have influence on the creation of effective classroom behavioural management.

**Research Question 2:** What is the influence of student's interest on their behaviours toward building effective classroom management?

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**Table 2:** The influence of students' interest on their behaviours for effective classroom management

S/N	Question Items	Mean	Remark
1	Teachers' should draw students' interest toward building better classroom management.	4.29	Agreed
2	The students interest on the course determines their level of attention to building classroom behavioural management	4.38	Agreed
3	Relating lessons to students prospect after graduation will increase their level of interest to the creation of effective classroom management	4.53	Agreed
4	Students interest on learning activities will help in improving effective classroom management	4.05	Agreed
5	Students interest on their teacher is a source of their motivation to building effective classroom management to solve the behavioural problems	4.74	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>4.42</b>	

Source: Field Survey

From table 2 above, item 1 indicated a mean of 2.29. This means that the respondents have agreed that, teachers should draw students' interest toward building effective relationship. Similarly, item 3 of this research question showed a positive result of 4.53 mean, which indicated that relating lessons to students prospect after graduation will increase their level of interest for the creation of effective classroom management. The mean of 4.74, showed in item 5 is a significant result to indicate the respondents' acceptance that students interests on their teachers is a good

source of their motivation for building effective classroom management to solve the behavioural problems. The grand mean of 4.42 shown in the table indicated that there were significant influence of students' interest on their behavior in the classroom which will have effect on classroom management.

**Research Question 3:** What is the effect of teaching strategies of teachers on the classroom management?

**Table 3:** Effect of teaching strategies of teachers on the classroom management

S/N	Question Items	Mean	Remark
1	Democratic teaching style promotes effective classroom management	4.08	Agreed
2	Teachers should encourage students to learn on their own but should act as facilitators of learning activities.	4.19	Agreed
3	Good communication skills improve the classroom management between teachers and students	3.98	Agreed
4	Interactive teaching strategy encourages good classroom management	4.78	Agreed
5	Teachers' knowledge of the subject matter helps in earning him respect from the students.	4.36	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>4.48</b>	

Source: Field Survey

In table 3 above, item 1 showed a mean of 4.08. This means that, if teachers' democratic teaching style, it will help in improving effective classroom management. Item 2 showed a mean of 4.19 which is an indication of the respondent's acceptance that teachers should encourage

students to learn on their own but should act as facilitators to learning activities. The mean of 3.98 shown in item 3 confirms the undisputed fact that good communication skills can help on promoting effective classroom management. In item 4, the mean of 4.78 indicates the respondent's

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acceptance that, teachers should adopt interactive teaching strategy in promoting effective classroom management. Similarly, item 5 showed a positive result by having a mean of 4.36. This means however that the teachers' good knowledge of the subject matter has been recognized by the respondents as having influence in promoting effective classroom management in order to solve

the problem experienced in classroom management. The overall grand mean of 4.48 proved a strong influence of teaching strategy of teachers' on the solving classroom behavioral problems.

**Research Question 4:** What is the influence of gender on students-teacher relationship?

**Table 4:** Influence of gender on students-teacher relationship

S/N	Question Items	Mean	Remark
1	Most students prefer male teachers' to female teachers	2.85	disagreed
2	Gender preferential treatment by teachers will sometimes cause poor students-teacher relationship	4.08	Agreed
3	Teachers lose their integrity when students discover that he/she is in personal relationship with one of them.	3.89	Agreed
4	Personal relationship between males and females students sometimes cause classroom behavior problems	4.21	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.75</b>	

Source: Field Survey

From table 4 above, item 1 showed a negative result with a mean of 2.1. This indicates that the respondents do not have preference as to male or female teachers. For item 2, the mean of 4.08 is a positive result indicating the respondents' acceptance that gender preferential treatment by teachers will sometimes cause poor students-teacher relationship. Item 3 also showed a positive result with a mean of 3.89. This is a strong indication that teachers lose their integrity when students discovered that he/she is in personal relationship with one of them. Similarly, item 4 also indicated positive result of 4.21 mean. This means that respondents have agreed that personal relationship between male and female students will sometimes cause poor relationship in the classroom. However, the grand mean of 3.75 is an indication that gender will have influence on the relationship between teachers and pupils in classroom.

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

Based on the data collected and analyzed, the following findings were made:

- a. Positive teachers' behaviours can influence the behaviours of students in

- creating effective classroom management.
- b. The individual interest of students can have influence on their behaviours towards creating effective classroom management.
- c. Understanding the individual differences of the constituents of the classroom will greatly help sustaining a good classroom management.
- d. The kind of strategies adopted by teachers' in teaching will help in generating positive student's behaviours towards solving the problem of classroom management.
- e. Gender has a significant influence on the behaviours of both students and teachers' in the creation of effective classroom management.

**CONCLUSION**

The following conclusions are drawn from the research based on the aim of the study:

- a. Teachers were aware of the need to acquire classroom management skills, although they do not found themselves

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at a disadvantage because they were able to manage classroom behavior problems to some extents but not 100%. This is caused by the fact that the theoretical framework and implementation strategies of classroom management skills provided by literature are not clearly defined and explained for teachers.

- b. Teachers understood the importance and effect that certain preventive procedures could help them in handling classroom behavior problems. However, in classroom practice teachers failed to reflect on behavior management principles to prevent behavior problems. The cause to this effect is that teachers do not carry over into their practice procedures which they intuitively known would help in preventing problems.
- c. Teachers maintain that they use certain strategies in dealing with classroom behavior problems. However, most classroom observations revealed lack of effective use of behavior management strategies in dealing with behavior problems in classrooms. The reason can be that teachers have become immune to behavior problems in classroom such as that dealing with them is of no use. Also, teachers may think learners will still continue to misbehave no matter what they said or did. The lack of classroom management skills and strategies cannot be left out because they form the frame under which a teacher will act in response to undesired behavior.
- d. The prevention of behaviors before they began was seen by teachers as a means of minimizing disruptions. However, the failure by teachers to ensure minimum disruption showed that teachers lacked means and ways of detecting a situation that could lead to disruption and act upon before it started. Teachers did not monitor their

classroom nor did they use body language to send a message to a misdemeanor. Teachers preferred to ignore learners and continue to teach. This sends a message to learners that they can choose or not choose to listen to a lesson. It was the learner's choice.

The conclusion clearly indicated the need for teachers to acquire classroom management skill in order to deal with classroom behavior problems. The researcher therefore provides recommendations that would serve as a springboard in managing classroom behavior problems.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Workshops and seminars should be organized for teachers on how to improve their behaviours, their teaching strategies and strategy of identifying and including the positive interest of students in organizing classroom activities.
2. There should be regular supervision of teachers' behaviours by inspectors from the ministry of education regarding classroom activities to ensure that positive behaviours are maintained.
3. A set of written guidelines should be provided for students on classroom behaviours to regulate their actions and interest in the classroom.
4. Teachers should as much as possible involve students in planning of classroom activities. This is to save him/herself from students' blames later.
5. Relevant strategies of teaching and behavior modification should be taught to teachers to ensure quality in the teachers who handle classes.
6. A new course should be introduced to students which will be targeted at teaching the students strategies of identifying and managing their individual differences in the classroom.

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7. Further research on classroom management should be conducted since research studies in this area in Nigeria are limited. Research should be based on classroom behavior problems that are characteristic of Nigeria classrooms. Researchers who intend to explore this area may look into students' views on classroom management, the frequency of the occurrence of classroom behavior problems, possible strategies and techniques that may epitomize our classrooms, form of in-service training for teachers and behavior management models.

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