

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING: THE IMPLICATION FOR TEACHER CONTROL TECHNIQUES

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Abstract

This paper critically examined the concept of classroom management and x-rayed how learning environment promotes classroom management. It vividly explained teachers control techniques in the classroom such as reinforcement of sanctioned behaviour, attacking the deviancy and not the person, careful use of punishment among others. The paper discussed clearly the ways of inculcating discipline in the classroom such as: teachers conscientiously preparing and teaching their lessons, being friendly, considerate and helping the students with their problems. Teacher should also involve pupils in making rules and regulations that guide them. It concluded that pupils will not gain anything unless there is order in the classroom. Order can be achieved if the pupils are treated fairly, held responsible for their actions and gainfully occupied. The more occupied the pupils are, the less time they have to engage in acts of indiscipline.

Keyword: Classroom, Management, Teaching, Learning.

Introduction

The classroom can be seen as the power-house where the success or failure of the learning process is generated and sustained. The expectations and objectives of formal education are accomplished in the classroom more than anywhere else through a well-articulated curriculum and this can only happen through effective classroom organization and management. The hue and cry about the falling standard of education in Nigeria is therefore direct indictment, partly on the efficacy of our classroom management strategies. No other dimension of teaching causes more concern for beginning teachers than managing the classrooms and maintaining discipline. No matter the egalitarian nature of the curriculum, nothing can be achieved unless the learning centre (the classroom) is well organized and managed.

Effective classroom management is important because it establishes and sustains an orderly environment in the classroom, it increases meaningful academic learning and facilitates social and emotional growth, it decreases negative behaviours and increase time spent academically engaged. The actions and attitudes of the teacher during the first few class sessions set the tone of the rest of the term. The most effective teachers create a classroom management plan well in advance of the first class session. Although in some cases, management techniques will change depending on the students and grade level, many of the underlying basic strategies of classroom management remain the same. The school stands as the most important tool that education can use to achieve sustainable development.

It is expected that the school should facilitate economic, social and political upward mobility of any nation. This expectation can only be achieved through effective teaching hence the importance of good classroom activities, where the teacher deals directly with the learners. Teachers are the key component in any school and effective teaching would easily be achieved in well managed classrooms, Ejebe (2001). Effective teaching and learning is concerned with providing enough learning activities and conducive environment for the learners.

Consequently, a teacher is a very crucial factor for national transformation. Any nation that wishes to attain a high standard in her educational system must bring out the best from the teachers which would translate to high productivity. Teachers are the qualitative tools in which the educational system hang, therefore no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers (FGN 2004). Teachers are important educational resources, they enhance quality and standard of education through teaching and learning processes that occur usually in the classrooms.

There is therefore need to empower teachers to create opportunity that will enable all learners to be properly educated. In-service training and other opportunities for professional growth must respond to real need faced by teachers in the classrooms as they try to achieve the objectives for which they are recruited and functions for which the school is noted.

Conceptual Clarifications

Classroom Management:

It means variety of things to different people. Hanna (2012) sees classroom as the organization of classroom life which involves planning curriculum, organizing procedures and resources, arranging the environment to maximize efficiency, monitoring students' progress, anticipating potential problems. Classroom management is more than managing students' behaviour as many people are tempted to believe. It involves the overseeing of all aspects of classroom life and therefore includes planning, organizing, arranging, monitoring and evaluating students' progress. The evaluative aspect of the whole exercise will help the teacher assess the outcome of his management efforts. Akoka (2014), opines that classroom management is broader than the notion of students control and discipline; it includes all the things teachers must do in the classroom to foster students' academic involvement and cooperation in classroom activities to create conducive learning. One of the most important fact about successful or effective classroom management is the anticipation of potential problems and thereby pre-planning key activities to prevent problems.

Learning Environment That Promote Classroom Management:

The learning environment greatly affects students and their learning, it is also an extremely important part of classroom management. The learning environment is the way the classroom works. It includes the physical environment as well as the social environment within the classroom. The physical environment

includes physical aspects such as desk arrangement, decorations, lighting, temperature etc. The physical resources/environment that promote learning include the following:

(a) **Classroom:**

Physical facilities are very essential aids to effective instruction. Adelabu and Alege (2004), and Abraham (2000) all agree on the importance of physical facilities in teaching and learning. They hold the view that children learn better when they have to explore an environment that is rich in materials. Environment influences the outlook and general behaviour of children. Psychologists have found that poor environment could make children grow up to be aggressive; withdrawn or even violent. Good environment on the other hand makes children grow up in a state of complete health; physically, mentally and socially. A well planned classroom environment is very crucial to learning.

According to Abraham (2000), the classroom must be comfortable for the teacher to give his best and the students to learn effectively. Teachers can only teach and manage his class effectively if the facilities are adequate and of high standard. The classroom in which children spend more of the active hours of each day must be friendly with proper illumination, devoid of noise, painted with friendly and calm colours with seats arranged in rows. Each child must sit free from other pupils. They should not sit shoulder to shoulder. Modern classroom should have decent lavatories attached to them as well as challenging aids, including computers, overhead projectors, etc (Okafor, 2012).

(b) **Instructional Materials:**

The provision of instructional materials to the teacher will enable him/her to teach and manage the class effectively. According to Omabe (2009), instructional materials help the teacher to increase his students learning experiences as children learn with materials, they become conversant with many issues or ideas. Through the use of instructional materials, the teacher gather more information about his or her topic of discussion, which makes his lesson delivery easy and appropriate. Adekole (2008), opines that instructional materials that appeal to the learners' senses of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching facilitate teaching and learning. Instructional materials when properly applied by the teacher, make teaching and learning more effective (Obi, 2017).

Teachers Control Techniques of the Classroom

Some techniques which could be adopted for effective classroom management include:

1. Reinforce sanctioned behaviour and ignore any deviances. All desirable behaviour should be rewarded and reinforced. Reward must not always be tangible. Giving gifts and awarding prizes is only one kind of reinforcement. The more usual type of reinforcement employed by the teacher is in tangible. These include: praising a given action, smiling,

nodding the head approvingly and applause. When ever possible, deviant behaviour should be ignored, but sometimes, other techniques may be required to restore normalcy.

2. Attack the deviancy, not the person. It was Hall (2010) who insisted that teachers should address themselves to a given unsatisfactory situation rather than attacking the child's personality.
3. Be indignant without subjecting the student to indignity: Fostering discipline for example does not imply that the teacher should be a saint or a super human. Teachers can get angry but should always apply control. There is no reason they should hide this from the students. The only requirement of this approach is that he learns to express his anger without belittling or humiliating the student. The teacher can learn to express his feelings harmlessly by using "I" rather than "you" when a student violates laid down rules of behaviour, instead of saying "you are stupid" who do you think you are" it is better for the teacher to express his feeling by statement such as I am annoyed, I am sad, I can not permit this behaviour. This type of creative self expression enables the teacher to let off steam without threatening the student or attacking his character.
4. Be careful about the use of punishment; the teacher technique advocated here is reinforcement of desirable behavior by showing approval in one form or another. Undesirable behaviour is ignored where necessary, disapproval is shown by the use of congruent communication.

However, this does not rule out the use of punishment when it becomes unavoidable.

Professional Consideration of Punishment:

Since punishment are not likely to be completely avoided in the classroom, some professional guide lines are necessary to ensure that they serve the intended ends. These include among others.

1. Punishment must be legal. This means that certain due process must not be ignored. For example, most education laws in Nigeria insist that on no condition should a male teacher administer corporal punishment on female student.
2. Punishment must be infrequent. Frequent use of punishment can be counter productive in the sense that it can reduce the impact of punishment.
3. Punishment must be prompt so that it can be related to the behaviour and its proper impact felt.
4. Punishment must be appropriate so as to suit the crime and the person who committed it.

5. Punishment has to be impersonal. This is necessary so as not to introduce personal ill feelings in which the teacher begins to view deviant behaviour as a personal insult or threat.
6. Punishment must not be wild to prevent physical injury.
7. Punishment must not be inflicted in a fit of anger.
8. Punishment must be just. Justice and fair play should be the guiding principles, especially when treating a group of offenders.

Ways of Inculcating Discipline in the Classroom

One of the best proven ways of establishing and maintaining discipline in the classrooms is for the teacher to conscientiously prepare and teach his lesson. The students who are involved in interesting and purposeful activity will have no time for disorderly behaviour. As a result of effective teaching and good classroom management, students will form the habit of behaving in an orderly way in the class. If the teacher dresses neatly, is friendly, considerate and helps the students with their problems, the desirable qualities of the teacher will make the students like the teacher, the students will voluntarily submit to the teacher's control.

When students are involved in making rules and regulations that guide them, they voluntarily submit to these rules that they understand and accept.

According to Marizano (2003) and Blair (2016), transparency, honesty and firmness by the teacher makes the students respect and accept the teacher's judgement. If the teacher punishes one offender, he should also punish another student who commits the same offence. This raises questions of consistency. If the class knows for certain that a particular misbehaviour will attract a certain matching punishment, self control will be achieved. Therefore the teachers' consistency has the propensity of securing pupils assurance of living in a classroom characterized by discipline and good behaviour.

Conclusion

No matter how fantastic the teacher's lesson may be, the students will not gain anything unless there is order in the class. Order can be achieved if the pupils are treated fairly, held responsible for their action and gainfully occupied. The more occupied the pupils are, the less time they have to engage in acts of indiscipline.

The teacher should organize a pleasant classroom atmosphere. The classroom can be made viable and psychologically pleasant through the display of colours, posters and teaching aids. The classroom must be kept tidy all the time with wash basins, towels, water pots and waste basket. The teacher should create a mini class library containing interesting children's books, newspapers, cut out pictures etc.

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