



Disciplinary Measures of Teachers as Correlate of Classroom Management in Government Owned Secondary Schools in Rivers State

Okanezi, Chisa Caroline

Department of Educational Management,
Faculty of education, University of Port Harcourt
chisambadike@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study examined disciplinary measures of teachers as correlate of classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State. Three objectives with corresponding research questions and null hypotheses guided the study. Correlational survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of this study comprised of all the 6,893 teachers of 291 government owned senior secondary schools in Rivers State. A sample size of 689 teachers representing 10% of the entire population was drawn for the study using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Two questionnaire instruments titled: Disciplinary Measures of Teachers Scale (DMTS) and Classroom Management Scale (CMS) were used for this study. Cronbach alpha reliability test was conducted to ascertain the reliability of the instruments, of which the reliability coefficients of DMTS and CMS were 0.89 and 0.83 respectively. Research questions 1-3 were answered with the use of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC), while same correlation statistics was used to test the corresponding hypotheses at 0.05 significance level with the help of statistical package in social science (SPSS). The findings of the study revealed that, there is a strong and significant relationship between changing of student's seat arrangement, rewards and classroom management, while there is moderate and significant relationship between deprivation of privileges and classroom management in government owned senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that teachers should consolidate on disciplinary measures like changing of student's seat arrangement, considering the fact it has proven to be effective in classroom management. Also, teachers in collaboration with school management should always find ways to reward students' good behaviour, in order to discourage wrong behaviours of some other students for effective classroom management.

Keywords: Disciplinary Measures, Teachers, Classroom Management

Introduction

Classroom management is one of the most pressing issues in school administration as it concerns administrators, teachers and students. This is quite imperative because no meaningful academic achievement can be attained in any educational setting where there is disorder, disobedience, anarchy and lack of self-control among students. Classroom management can be defined as the orderly control of students, the class environment and teaching materials in order to obtain the desired learning objectives which can enhance the academic achievement of students and as well teachers' effectiveness. Akpakwu (2022), defines classroom management as the orderly control of the learners, teaching materials and teaching aids in order to obtain the desired teaching and learning objectives.

Classroom management has to do with handling what goes on in the classroom as it affects teaching and learning. The teacher manages the physical as well as the psychological environment to create an atmosphere that is conducive for learning. Classroom management according to Igbacha (2016) is a process involving planning, organizing, coordinating, motivating and controlling the actions of learners and materials in order to achieve instructional objectives. The art of classroom management encompasses all the functions of a classroom teacher in instructional procedure. Such activities include lesson planning and presentation, organization of the classroom facilities, coordination of learning activities, and proper implementation of disciplinary measures (Nwankwo as cited in Ubah, 2023).

Disciplinary measures are vital tools adopted by teachers for classroom management. In the school system, discipline is necessary to control students behaviour, if the goals of the schools are to be attained. It is an element of teacher managerial tasks that involves the measurement and correction of the performance of the students to make sure that the objectives of the school and plans desired to attain them are accomplished. Discipline is among the most difficult and unpleasant part of teaching profession considering many students misbehaviour in the classroom. Students' misbehaviour is a prevailing problem affecting not only classroom activities but also the students as well (Ubah, 2023). Students' misconduct in the classroom interferes with teaching and learning and is thought to be precursor to later school dropout and similar negative social outcomes.

The indiscipline problem in schools is ranked as a major problem among students of secondary schools in Nigeria. More than ever before, teachers are faced with critical problems in their classrooms, and are confronted (on a daily basis) with unacceptable learner behaviour and threatening situations. Disruptive behaviour is a concern to teachers and parents and to fellow students, whose education may be adversely affected (Willems, 2021). So it cannot be ignored, and teachers must tailor a well-understood sound behaviour and discipline technique. Disciplinary measures of teachers include any rational approach adopted by teachers to overcome the problems of students misconduct that disorganize classroom activities. These measures are plan of action designed to achieve classroom management or conducive classroom environment where teaching and learning can take place (Dodge, 2019).

Disciplinary measures are approaches occasionally adopted by teachers to correct a situation where a student has broken the rules or is not putting in the required amount of effort in the classroom. The approach taken to the disciplinary action often determines the classroom effectiveness. Many traditional approaches to discipline are negative, punitive and reactive, which result in bad feelings for all parties involved (Willems, 2021). A positive approach to discipline involves a process designed to solve performance problems and encourage good performance. The basic theory behind the positive discipline approach is that when a student is treated as an adult who must solve a problem, rather than as a child who must be punished, the student is more likely to respond positively and correct the problem (Borrero & Vollmer, 2022).

Well before any disciplinary measure is required, there must be acceptance and understanding of the rules of conduct and the disciplinary system by both teachers and students. Students should know exactly what is expected of them and what the consequences will be if they do not meet those expectations. The rules should be consistent and fair. The discipline system will be more effective when the disciplinary technique is meant to tackle the root cause of indiscipline behaviour of the students. There are many disciplinary measures a teacher can adopt for classroom management, but for this study the researcher considered few as identified by some scholars. Ezeugbor and Eboatu (2018) noted that some teachers' disciplinary measures include; changing of students seat arrangement, rewards and deprivation of privileges.

Changing of student seat which is a teacher's disciplinary measure has to do with moving a student away from his or usual sitting place and position that seem to be aiding the student misbehaviour to a different seat. Teachers adopt this measure when they find out the sitting position of a student may be disrupting teaching and learning process in the classroom or distracting student from participating in some classroom activities. This could be resorted to when some other measures of discipline have failed. Also, reward which is another disciplinary measure is doing something or giving something to student to increase appropriate behaviour or skill. There is a belief that reward is not only right and desirable but also indispensable as it tends to discourage wrong behavior of those not rewarded. It can be given for attendance, conduct, progress, games, and many more.

In addition, deprivation of privilege is useful and efficient form of punishment. It simply a way of denying a student of certain freedoms and right that they previously enjoyed as a form of discouraging wrong behaviour. Dodge (2019) affirmed that loss of position, prohibition from playing any game in the school compound for a certain period could go a long way in changing a wrong doer. In view of these discussions, the study examined disciplinary measures of teachers as correlate of classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

The classroom play an important role in the learning process of the student, their time management and respect for others as well as in regulating their conduct. However the current situation in Rivers State education system as reported by the media and concerned individuals in the state has shown that indiscipline among students in the classroom is escalating rapidly with notable strikes like noise making, bullying, theft, truancy, molestation, cultism, sexual related activities, vandalism of school property, general refusal to follow rules and regulations as well as increasing alcoholism. An increasing numbering of secondary school head teachers and teachers are reporting a wide range of potentially disruptive behaviours in the classrooms and around the schools. Many students are seen loitering in streets, villages, game/cinema halls and other places in their uniforms, which affects their behaviour during class time, causing them to violate classroom rules and regulations resulting in poor time and classroom management.

This has therefore created a big concern for head teachers, teachers and other stakeholders in education about the lack of opportunity for students to concentrate on the academic work for attainment good performance in their tests, internal exams and national level examination as well as becoming better citizens of the society. The ripple effect of this increasing trend of indiscipline act in the classrooms is what prompted the researcher to carry out this study to ascertain if there is a relationship that exist between disciplinary measures of teachers and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between disciplinary measures of teachers and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State. To achieve this aim, the objectives of the study sought to:

1. ascertain the relationship between changing of student's seat arrangement and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. find out the relationship between rewards and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. establish the relationship between deprivation of privileges and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the relationship between changing of student's seat arrangement and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between rewards and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between deprivation of privileges and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis

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

1. There is no significant relationship between changing of student's seat arrangement and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant relationship between rewards and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant relationship between deprivation of privileges and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

Methodology

This study adopted a correlation survey design to ascertain if there is a relationship among the variables (i.e. dependent and independent). The population of this study was made up of all the 6,893 teachers (i.e. 3,490 male and 3,403 female) of 291 government owned (public) senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Source: Planning, Research and Statistics Department, Rivers State, 2022. The sample size for this study was 689 teachers representing 10% of the entire population. Kpee (2015) considered such percentage appropriate to serve as an acceptable sample for a population running into thousands. The sample size was drawn from the entire population using the proportionate stratified random sampling technique. This ensured that all members of the population are given equal opportunity of being selected. Questionnaire was the research instrument for the study which was titled: Disciplinary Measures of Teachers Scale (DMTS) and Classroom Management Scale (CMS). The instruments have two sections (A and B). Section A elicited demographic information from the respondents, while section B elicited information on DMTS and CMS. The two instruments were coded in line with the modified four-point Likert rating scale as follows; Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 Points, Agree (A) = 3 Points, Disagree (D) = 2 Points, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 Point respectively. Cronbach Alpha reliability statistics was used to test the reliability of the two instruments. The reliability coefficients of DMTS and CMS are 0.89 and 0.83. For the data that were analyzed, research question 1 to 3 were answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC), while same statistics was used to test the corresponding hypotheses at 0.05 significance level with the help of Statistical Package in Social Science (SPSS). As part of data collection efforts, the researcher designed and distributed 689 copies of the questionnaire to the respondents. Six hundred and sixty one (661) copies were retrieved and found suitable for analysis resulting in 95% retrieval rate.

Results and Analysis

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by their Gender

S/No	Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Male	374	56.58
2	Female	287	43.42
	Total	661	100

From the above Table 1, it was revealed that 374 of the respondents were male representing 56.58%, while the remaining 287 were female representing 43.42% of the total respondents.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between changing of student's seat arrangement and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between changing of student's seat arrangement and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between changing of student's seat arrangement and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State

Variables	n	df	r	p-value	Decision
Changing Student's Seat Arrangement	661	659	0.621	0.000	Reject Ho ₁
Classroom Management					(Significant)
	661				P < 0.05

Decision Rule: 0.00 – 0.19 = Very Weak, 0.20 – 0.39 = Weak, 0.40 – 0.59 = Moderate, 0.60 – 0.79 = Strong, 0.80 – 1.00 Very Strong

To answer the research question 1, results from Table 2 produced a correlation coefficient, 'r' of 0.62; which by percentage is 62%. This value shows there is a strong and positive relationship between changing of student's seat arrangement and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State. In other words, changing of student's seat as teacher disciplinary measure correlates with classroom management. Hence, any act of changing a student's seat as teachers' disciplinary measure will lead to an improvement in classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

For hypothesis 1 tested, it is revealed also from Table 2 that the correlation for hypothesis one shows a significant correlation at $r = .62$, where $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ($P < 0.05$). Since the $p\text{-value} 0.000$ is less than the alpha level of 0.05, we therefore reject the null hypothesis, thus, there is a significant relationship between changing of student's seat arrangement and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between rewards and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between rewards and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between rewards and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State

Variables	n	df	r	p-value	Decision
Rewards	661	659	0.712	0.000	Reject Ho ₂
Classroom Management	661				(Significant)
					P < 0.05

Decision Rule: 0.00 – 0.19 = Very Weak, 0.20 – 0.39 = Weak, 0.40 – 0.59 = Moderate, 0.60 – 0.79 = Strong, 0.80 – 1.00 Very Strong

To answer the research question 2, results from Table 2 produced a correlation coefficient, 'r' of 0.712; which by percentage is 71%. This value shows there is a strong and positive relationship between rewards and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State. In other words, rewards as teacher disciplinary measures correlates with classroom management. Therefore, any increase in teachers' rewards as disciplinary measure will lead to a corresponding improvement in classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

For hypothesis 2 tested, it is revealed also from Table 3 that the correlation for hypothesis two shows a significant correlation at $r = .712$ where $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ($P < 0.05$). Since the $p\text{-value} 0.000$ is less than the alpha level 0.05, we therefore reject the null hypothesis, thus, there is a significant relationship between rewards and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between deprivation of privileges and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between deprivation of privileges and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between deprivation of privileges and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State

Variables	n	df	r	p-value	Decision
Deprivation of Privileges	661	659	0.572	0.001	Reject Ho ₃
Classroom Management	661				(Significant)
					P < 0.05

Decision Rule: 0.00 – 0.19 = Very Weak, 0.20 – 0.39 = Weak, 0.40 – 0.59 = Moderate, 0.60 – 0.79 = Strong, 0.80 – 1.00 Very Strong

To answer the research question 3, results from Table 4 produced a correlation coefficient, 'r' of 0.572; which by percentage is 57%. This value shows there is a moderate and positive relationship between deprivation of privileges and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State. In other words, deprivation of privileges as teacher disciplinary technique correlate with classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

For hypothesis 3 tested, it is revealed also from Table 4 that the correlation for hypothesis three shows a significant correlation at $r = .572$ where $p\text{-value} = 0.001$ ($P < 0.05$). Since the $p\text{-value}$ 0.001 is less than the alpha level 0.05, we therefore reject the null hypothesis, thus, there is a significant relationship between deprivation of privileges and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding of this study revealed that there is a strong and positive relationship between changing of student's seat arrangement and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State. This implies that changing of student's seat as teachers disciplinary measure correlates with classroom control. In other words, any act of changing a student's seat as teacher disciplinary measure will lead to an improvement in classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding is consistent with the studies of Cosden, et al (2015) and Dunlap, et al (2019) on students seating arrangements and classroom control. Their studies reported that teachers manage inappropriate behavior of students more effectively during class activities by changing seating arrangement of students in rows. Dunlap, et al (2019) observed that providing students with choices for seating may not produce positive outcomes in the classroom or help in classroom control. In fact from his observation, allowing students to make their choice on where to seat in the classroom resulted in increase in disruptive behavior witnessed within and outside the classroom. Borrero and Vollmer (2022) asserted that when students seats are not determined by the teacher and the students are given the opportunity to select their seating position, it is likely that they choose to sit next to other students who will influence them negatively. Thus, the self-selection arrangement may set the occasion for more dense reinforcement and higher quality reinforcement for disruptive behavior than appropriate behavior. Hence, this evident in the hypothesis tested which revealed that there is a significant relationship between changing of student's seat arrangement and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

The second finding of the study revealed that there is a strong and positive relationship between rewards and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State. This implies that, rewards as part of teacher disciplinary measures correlates with classroom control. In other words, any increase in teachers' rewards as disciplinary measure will lead to a corresponding improvement in classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding is in consonance with Willems (2021) who in his study reported that reinforcement/reward of students good behaviour worked particularly well in discouraging other misbehaving students. According to Willems, a student may not like his name to be used in a whole group class setting, therefore rewarding others for their right conduct get his attention to do what is right. In other words, his wrong behaviours are often corrected with just one or two positive reinforcements of other good behaving students. There is a belief that reward is not only right and desirable but also indispensable. In view of this, Ajibola and Ali (2014) concurred that reinforcement/rewards determine students' conduct in the classroom. Reward of good behavior of a student discourages the misconduct of others, and thereby fostering classroom control for good school spirit to be secured (Ajibola & Ali, 2014). This is apparent is the hypothesis tested which revealed that there is a significant relationship between rewards and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

The third finding of the study revealed that there is a moderate and positive relationship between deprivation of privileges and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State. This implies that, deprivation of privileges as teacher disciplinary technique correlate with classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding is tandem with Dodge (2019) who observed that depriving misbehaving students to a moderate extent predict classroom control. Dodge (2019) noted that deprivation of privilege is a useful and efficient form of punishing misbehaving students. Ajibola and Ali (2014) affirmed that students loss of position, prohibition from playing any game in the school compound for a certain period could go a long way in improving their wrong behavior or conduct. This is further substantiated by the hypothesis tested which showed that there is a significant relationship between deprivation of privileges and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be deduced that there is a strong and significant relationship between changing of student's seat arrangement, rewards and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State, while there is moderate and significant relationship between deprivation of privileges and classroom management in government owned secondary schools in Rivers State.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are hereby made based on the findings and conclusion of the study:

1. Teachers should consolidate on disciplinary measures like changing of student's seat arrangement, considering the fact it has proven to be effective in classroom management.

2. Teachers in collaboration with school management should always find ways to reward good students behaviour, in order to discourage wrong behaviours of some other students for effective classroom management.
3. Teachers should approach the adoption of deprivation disciplinary technique with caution and empathy, considering the possible problems that students may be experiencing at home or at school that cause their poor behaviour. Teachers should know when to apply this method in order not necessitate further misconduct from the students.

References

- Ajibola, A. L., & Ali, A. H. (2014). Disciplinary measures in Nigerian senior secondary schools: Issues and prospects. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)*, 4(3), 11-17. www.iosrjournals.org
- Akpakwu, S. O. (2022). *Educational management: Theory and practice*. Destiny Ventures.
- Borrero, J. C., & Vollmer, T. R. (2022). An application of the matching law to severe problem behavior. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 35, 13–27.
- Cosden, M., Gannon, C., & Haring, T. G. (2015). Teacher-control versus student-control over choice of task and reinforcement for students with severe behavior problems. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 5, 11–27.
- Dodge, A. (2019). *Beyond discipline world prosperity*. ASCD.
- Dunlap, G., dePerczel, M., Clarke, S., Wilson, D., Wright, S., White, R., et al. (2019). Choice making to promote adaptive behavior for students with emotional and behavioral challenges. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 27, 505–518.
- Ezeugbor, C. O., & Eboatu, V. (2018). Discipline and control of teachers in school administration. *Unizik Journal of Educational Management and Policy (UJOEMP)*, 2(1), 87-100.
- Kpee, G. G. (2015). *Research methods in education. A made easy approach*. Uzopietro Publishers.
- Nakpodia, E. D. (2010). Teachers' disciplinary approaches to students' discipline problems in Nigerian secondary schools. *International NGO Journal*, 5(6), 144-151.
- Nwankwo, A. (2014). *Management in education*. Giraffe Books.
- Ubah, I. I. (2023). *Teacher disciplinary techniques and classroom control in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State*. A Dissertation Proposal Submitted to the Department of Educational Management, University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.
- Willems, A. (2021). *Disciplinary measures in primary classrooms*. <https://red.mnstate.edu/thesis/614>