CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT APPROACHES ADOPTED BY JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN GWAGWALADA AREA COUNCIL OF FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA

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Abstract

This study aimed at investigating classroom management approaches of junior secondary school teachers. The sample consisted of 78 junior secondary school teachers working in Gwagwalada Area Council. Data were gathered from the participants via Classroom Management Approach Questionnaire developed by the researcher. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized to analyze the data. ANOVA was employed to investigate the dominant classroom management approaches that teachers use and to explore the effect of some variables on classroom management approaches of teachers. Findings of the study indicated that junior secondary school teachers use both student and teacher centered management approaches in classroom management. A significant difference was found in classroom management approaches of teachers with respect to teaching experience, while no significant difference was found with respect to gender variable. Consequently, the study recommended that teachers should adopt classroom management approaches that will bring about a desirable result in a particular classroom situation and the teachers that are more experienced should be allowed to teach classes that need special attention with respect to classroom management.

Keywords: Classroom management, student-centered approach, teacher-centered approach, junior secondary schools

Introduction

Classroom management and organization have generated much concern among stakeholders in education. It is also among the most frequently addressed topic for teachers in service and gain more attention from the school administrators, teachers, educators and researchers because a teacher's ability to effectively manage the classroom and to organize instruction are basic components of teaching (Evertson & Harris, 1999). Moreover, as classroom management approaches have a strong potential to positively influence student achievement and learning, they are of paramount concern for many teachers, especially novices and teachers who are contemplating new instructional approaches for the first time (Delong & Winter, 1998).

Studies have shown that classroom management is one of the crucial factors that influence learning (Wang, H and Walberg, 1993; Marzano and Marzano, 2003). Ben (2006) states that effective classroom management approaches are significant to a successful teacher's delivery of instruction. This statement of the researcher explains the reason why classroom management is important. Effective classroom management prepares the classroom for an effective instruction which is crucial for the progress of learning. Classroom management refers to the actions and approaches that teachers use to maintain order (Doyle, 1986). According to Martin, Yin and Baldwin (1998), classroom management is a broader and comprehensive construct that describes all teacher efforts to oversee a multitude of activities in the classroom including learning, social interaction and students' behaviours. It constitutes three broad dimensions: person, instruction and discipline. (Martin & Baldwin, 1992).

For many years, traditional approaches which are mostly based on the behavioral principles and laws of learning (Goffin, 1994) were dominant in teaching and learning practices in Nigerian schools. The child was often viewed as the recipient of knowledge and teacher had the control over the students and subject matter. As a result of behavioral approach to instruction, teachers preferred behavioral classroom management techniques that were consistent with their way of instruction. The behavioral model requires strong intrusion and management techniques on the part of the teacher (Garrett, 2005). Teacher is the leading person and therefore, has the responsibility of all ongoing issues in the classroom; from students' motivation to misbehaviours.

Rogers and Freiberg (1994) opine that for effective learning outcome, the teacher is required to shift from adoption of teacher-centered to student-centered approach, which features shared relationship and community building. The role of a teacher changes from a control agent, who is dominant in the classroom, makes all the decisions and demands respect from the students into a guide who facilitates students' learning, encourages students' efforts and is open to discussions. Such a shift, however, will only be successful when the main actors, i.e., teachers and students, understand and agree with the keystones of so-called 'student centered learning environments' (Elen et al., 2007). As Brophy (1986) states, the teacher is a facilitator, not a prison warden, and the student is a well-intentioned, reasonable human being, not a wild animal in need of training or a weak individual dominated by emotions or compulsions that he or she cannot control.

In line with this shift, teachers have needed to adapt their classroom management techniques approaches into the learning environment while trying to achieve the lesson objectives. Therefore, the thrust of this study is to identify classroom management approaches of junior secondary school teachers. By identifying teachers' classroom management approaches, it will be understood whether teachers' classroom management approaches are conducive to implementation of the current basic curriculum in junior secondary school classrooms or not.

Aim and objectives of the Study
The aim of this study is to identify classroom management approaches of junior secondary school teachers. Specifically, the study sought to identify:
(i)   Student-centred management approaches of junior secondary school teachers
(ii)   Teacher-centred management approaches of junior secondary school teachers

Research Questions
(i)   What are the Student-centred management approaches of junior secondary school teachers?
(ii)   What are the Teacher-centred management approaches of junior secondary school teachers?

Hypotheses
The following null hypotheses guided the study:
HO_1:   There is no significant difference in approaches of male and female teachers to classroom management.
HO_2:   There is no significant difference among classroom management approaches of teachers with respect to the years of experience.

Methodology
Cross-sectional survey method was used in the study. The subjects were administered a questionnaire in which they were asked to answer questions related to the approaches adopted in classroom management. Items used in the questionnaire were prepared

according to the related literature and interview results conducted with some junior secondary school teachers. Descriptive and inferential analyses were conducted to get a deeper insight into the research questions. In this study, a questionnaire was administered to collect data on the classroom management approaches of teachers. To identify the classroom management approaches of teachers, two groups of items related to student-centered and teacher-centered classroom management approaches were included in the questionnaire. The participants were asked to determine the statements that describe them better and to add their comments and suggestions if necessary.

On the basis of the related literature, an instrument that consists of 22 items in a five point Likert scale format by scoring 5 to "Strongly Agree", 4 to "Agree", 3 to "undecided", 2 to "Disagree", and 1 to "Strongly Disagree" was designed to identify teachers' classroom management approaches. The final form of the scale was revised utilizing the responses and comments of two experts, one of whom has worked on classroom management area, and they were from the Department of Education and Administration, University of Abuja. This helped to eliminate the ambiguities and unfamiliar terms and to examine the face validity. Pilot testing was conducted with 15 junior secondary school teachers. For the overall reliability coefficient Alpha calculated to measure internal consistency of questionnaire of questionnaire with 34 items was 0.62.

Population of this study included all the teachers working in the public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, in 2016. From the list of 33 junior secondary schools, 15 of them were selected by considering convenience. Then all of the teachers were given the questionnaire. The participants consisted of 265 (157 males and 108 females) teachers from different schools.

Mean and Standard deviation was employed to analyze the research questions. Mixed ANOVA was employed for three times to compare the mean scores of teachers on both groups of questions, as well as to explore whether teachers' selection of a classroom management approach is changed according to some background variables. The .05 alpha level was accepted as a criterion of statistical significance for all the statistical procedures performed.

Results
Research Question One: What are the Student-centred management approaches of junior secondary school teachers?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of Teachers on student-centred approach adopted by the teachers

Item No	Items of the Questionnaire	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	I encourage students to solve their problems between each other independently when doing group work.	3.55	0.69
2	I often use group works since they are necessary for students' social and cognitive development.	3.56	0.66
3	I encourage students to propose and negotiate new classroom rules if the current ones are not working.	3.08	0.64
4	In order to foster sense of responsibility it is important to give students chance to decide on and agree with the rules	3.15	0.64
5	If a student is off-task, I try to understand the reason of it.	3.21	0.63
6	I think students should evaluate their works by themselves	3.97	0.57

7	I ask students to come up with the suggestions for the class rules during the first weeks of the class.	4.23	0.51
	I do not interfere with the class-discussions in order that they can progress in the control of students.	2.35	0.47
9	I think that students should have the chance of pursuing their own interests.	4.17	0.58
10	I do not limit the time of activities since the students pass from one learning activity to another in different times according to their own rate.	3.66	0.72
11	I provide opportunity for students to solve the problems between each other's by themselves.	3.96	0.41
12	I believe that students should take the responsibility of their own behaviors.	4.11	0.63
		3.77	0.61

Table 1 reveals that all items regarding the student-centred approach adopted by the teachers in junior secondary schools were accepted except item 8 as indicated by their high mean which is above 3.00. This is also shown by the high grand mean of 3.77 on the table. The standard deviation of the items ranges between 0.39 and 0.72 which signifies that respondents are not far from each other and from the mean in their responses.

Research Question Two: What are the Teacher-centred management approaches of junior secondary school teachers?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of teachers on teacher-centred approach adopted by the teachers

S/N	Item	Items of the Questionnaire	Mean	Standard Deviation
1		I function like a learner and a companion for the students in the classroom.	3.59	0.61
2		Evaluation should be made by teachers since the students cannot know what is necessary for them.	4.10	0.53
3		I immediately tell students the correct answers when they cannot figure them out by themselves.	3.74	0.64
4		I immediately tell students the correct answers when they cannot figure them out by themselves.	4.16	0.74
5		I certainly direct the students' transition from one learning activity to another.	4.31	0.79
6		I assign students to specific seats in the classroom during the first weeks of the class.	4.23	0.49
7		I do not exceed the time plan that I specified for the activities beforehand.	2.40	0.47
8		When the rules do not work, I replace them with the new ones based on my experience.	3.67	0.58
9		Students need my help during the transition between different learning activities.	3.33	0.49
10		For instance, if a student comes class late, I do not permit him/her to come in.	3.57	0.63
			3.97	0.59

Table 2 shows that all items regarding the teacher-centred approach adopted by the teachers in junior secondary schools were accepted as indicated by their high mean which is above 3.00. This is also shown by the high grand mean of 3.97 on the table. The standard deviation of the items ranges between 0.47 and 0.79 which signifies that respondents are not far from each other and from the mean in their responses.

Hypotheses
HO_1:   There is no significance difference in approaches of male and female teachers to classroom management.
HO_2:   There is no significant difference among classroom management approaches of teachers with respect to the years of experience.

Table 3: Results of ANOVA applied to the student-centered and teacher-centered subscale scores of teachers with respect to gender and experience

Between subjects	df	F	p	η^2
Gender	1	.72	.39	.00
Experience	3	4.98	.00	.08
Gender * Experience	3	.11	.95	.00
Within Subjects				
C.M * Gender	1	.30	.57	.00
C.M * Experience	3	1.01	.38	.01
C.M * Gender * Experience	3	1.34	.26	.01

Table 3 revealed the results of tests of between subjects effects revealed that main effect for gender was not significant [$F(1, 265)=.72$, $p=.39$ $\eta^2=00$]. This means that if all other variables are ignored, male teachers' overall mean scores were basically the same as females' mean scores.

The results of tests of between subjects effects revealed that main effect for teaching experience was significant [$F(3, 265)=4.98$, $p<.00$ $\eta^2=08$], which means that if all the other variables are ignored, years of teaching experience made a significant difference in overall classroom management scores of teachers.

Discussion
The results obtained from research question one indicated that junior secondary school teachers adopted students-centred approaches such as encouraging students to solve their problems between each other independently when doing group work, giving students chance to evaluate their works, pursue their own interests, learn according to their rate and speed, take responsibilities of their behavior and among others in the classroom. While the results obtained from research question two showed that junior secondary school teachers adopted teacher-centred approaches such as functioning like a learner and a companion for the students in the classroom, telling students correct answers where necessary, giving direction to students where necessary, replacing rules with another one for efficiency in the classroom. Behaviorism is more focused on teacher directed methods; whereas, cognitive theory emphasizes student-centered methods. According to Rogers and Freiberg (1994), the child centered classroom management model started from criticizing the perspective of behaviorism, which is considered as a teacher-centered classroom discipline approach. The Classroom Management Inventory (CMI) used in the present study is based on this rationale.

That is, specific items make up each of two subsets in the inventory, student-centered and teacher-centered approaches towards classroom management. These two approaches are the opposite ends of a continuum; and it is difficult to say that a teacher has just student-centered approach or teacher-centered (Freiberg, 1999). However, this classification is useful to find out which orientation is dominant on teacher's classroom management approach.

The results of hypotheses showed that there was not a significant mean difference between student-centered and teacher centered management scores of teachers with respect to gender. That is to say gender difference does not affect the selection of a classroom management approach in junior secondary schools. This result is consistent with the other studies conducted in Turkey (Otluca, 1996; Terzi, 2001; Öğ, 2003) and in the other countries (Martin, Yin & Baldwin, 1997) in order to explore the effect of gender on different classroom issues such as classroom management style, teacher-student relations, teachers' communicative skills, democratic attitudes. Researchers came up with no gender differences related to any of the classroom management approaches. However, some other studies revealed a significant gender difference regarding classroom management approaches. In a separate investigation of gender differences, Martin and Yin (1997) concluded that females were significantly less interventionist than were males regarding instructional management and regarding student management. On the other hand, in another recent study, Martin, Yin, and Mayall (2006) found that females scored more interventionist than males. The inconsistency in the results of these studies may result from the uncontrolled effect of other variables on classroom management approaches and different settings of the studies.

The main effect of experience between subjects variable was found significant, which means that experienced and novice teachers did not have same classroom management orientation. The result of this study is consistent with the previous research findings reporting the effects of experience on classroom management approach. Martin and Baldwin (1994) and Laut (1999) found that novice teachers were significantly more interventionist than were experienced teachers. It can be concluded that years of experience in the teaching profession alone influence the extent to which a teacher exercises influence over classroom procedures. Different life experiences contribute to the formation of strong and enduring beliefs about teaching and learning and Foxworthy's (2006) study supported the idea that experience is a major contributor to the development of classroom management beliefs. Living and teaching in different settings might broaden the perspectives of teachers; provide them with tools of understanding and tolerance that benefit teaching students in today's changing classrooms. However, in other studies investigation of the impact of teachers' experience levels on classroom management practices revealed contradictory results. Martin and his colleagues (Martin & Baldwin, 1992; Martin & Sohoho, 2000) came up with the result that experienced teachers were significantly more interventionist than were novice teachers regarding people and behavior management, but not regarding instructional management.

Conclusion
Students' autonomy-ability to cognitively construct the meaning from their experiences in a learning environment should be fostered by the teachers. A basic principle for classroom management is that management system needs to support instructional system. In a learning environment that emphasizes promotion of self-regulated learning, a management approach that orients students towards compliance and passivity will be an impediment for achievement of the learning outcomes. That's why teachers should adapt their classroom management approaches to the new learning environments and enhance students learning outcome.

Recommendations

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

(i)   Teachers should adopt classroom management approach that will bring about a desirable result in a particular classroom situation.

(ii)   The teachers that are more experience should be allowed to teach classes that need special attention with respect to classroom management.

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