

The Influence of Classroom Management on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in English Language and Mathematics in FCT Abuja

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Abstract

The study investigated the Influence of Classroom Management of Senior Secondary School Students in Mathematics and English language in FCT Abuja. The study has two research question and two hypotheses tested on 0.05 level of significance. The descriptive survey research design was employed for the study with a population of 24,771 SSII students from the 77 public senior secondary schools in Abuja. A sample of 377 students was selected for the study using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of determining sample size. Two instruments were used for collecting data on a four-point rating scale. The instrument was subjected to expert validity which yielded a validity index of 0.71. Also, a reliability was conducted on a population which is not part of the sample for the study and yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.84. The study analyzed the collected data using mean and standard deviation for the research questions while the t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance using statistical package for social sciences SPSS, version 23. The study finds out that there is a significant influence of seating arrangement on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory Abuja. The study recommends that a code of conduct regulating the management of schools should be reviewed in order to ensure that appropriate disciplinary measures are taken against students who disrespect teachers. The study also concludes that classroom management are capable of causing disruption of normal teaching and smooth learning in the classroom.

Keywords: classroom, classroom management, classroom setting arrangement, and academic achievement

Introduction

Academic achievement is the extent to which students have attained their short or long-term educational goals. It is the measure of the effectiveness and efficiency of the education enterprise (Lukman, 2021). The academic achievement of secondary school students in overall West African Examination Council result 2021 - 2023 was discovered to be generally below average. Mehta (2019) posited that academic achievement includes both curricular and co-curricular performance of the students. Sam (2019) laments the disappearance of academic excellence from Nigeria in the last two decades, as evident in the yearly below average achievement of thousands of students in final examinations for secondary school students conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and the National Examination Council (NECO).

However, academic achievement is generally regarded as the display of knowledge attained or skills developed in school subjects (Alhassan, 2021). Academic achievement represents performance outcomes that indicate the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environments, especially in school, college and university. In the school setting therefore, the level of performance in school subjects as exhibited by individual students' with marks assigned to them by teachers during internal or external examinations are indicators of their achievement. This means that, academic achievement could either be passed or failed. In Nigeria, among all the problems facing the education system and most agonizing is the poor achievement of students' in Mathematics and English. School system mostly defines cognitive goals that either apply across multiple subject areas (e.g., critical thinking) or include the acquisition of knowledge and understanding in a specific intellectual domain (e.g., numeracy, literacy, science, history). Therefore, academic achievement should be considered as a multifaceted construct that comprises different domains of learning. Despite the importance given to both subjects, the achievement in both internal and external examinations have been disturbing and alarming. Mathematics and English Language are not just mere subject but a requisite for furthering education to the next level.

Mathematics and English Language are two fundamental subjects that play a crucial role in the academic and professional development of secondary school students. According to Alhassan (2019), Mathematics and English Language are essential subjects for secondary school students, as they develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. Proficiency in these subjects can enhance career opportunities, academic success, and real-world applications. A student must credit them before he/she can gain admission into any higher institution of learning (FBN, 2007).

Olorundare (2021), reports that about 20% of candidates are often reported to pass these examinations at acceptable credit level. In the opinion of Akinsolu (2010), the rate of poor academic achievement of secondary school students in Nigeria is alarming and has been an issue of great concern to all stakeholders. Mir, Said, Idris, and Hussain (2018) argues that academic achievement is affected by a number of factors. These factors range from the parents, through the background of the students, to the school environment. By school environment, it is implied that the whole academic system established for the purpose of teaching and learning. The observable decline in the academic achievement of secondary school students in Nigeria may be said to be a reflection of the institutional, instructional and structural qualities of Nigerian schools in terms of

ineffectiveness of teachers in the classroom with regard to interaction with students, infrastructural faults and inadequacies as well as the nature and state of facilities.

Yoloye (2014), and Adeyemo (2015), who have interrogated the issue of poor academic achievement in Nigeria opine that academic achievement among secondary school students may be adducible to several pedagogical and socio-psychological factors. Relevant to this study are the disruptive behaviours and classroom management which have been identified as the factor responsible for students' poor achievement. The implication of this is that, since the non-direct players in educational activities have over the years doggedly contributed immensely to education, it became "compulsory" for direct players such as educationists' scholars, and researchers to relentlessly, tirelessly and courageously work to grow and develop education.

The school is being held liable for every aspect of students' achievement by members of the society. The school environment is organized to shape a student's learning behaviour. So, classroom management plays a significant role in students' academic achievement. Effective classroom management put the teacher in firm control of the classroom and provides orderliness and safety needed for instruction and learning. Classroom management refers to the strategies, techniques and methods used by teachers to create and maintain a productive respectful, and safe learning environment. Effective classroom management enables teachers to minimize disruptions, promote students' engagement, and maximize instructional time (Alhassan, 2017).

Classroom management as a whole is the process of organizing and conducting the business of the classroom. The classroom is an environment where the teacher is expected to exercise control. This has important role in teaching and learning. Many perceive it as the presentation of order through teacher control. It is much more than that as it involves establishing and maintaining of the classroom environment so that educational goals can be achieved (Adeyemo, 2015).

On the other hand, effective classroom management strategies that address disruptive behavior contribute to a positive learning environment where all students feel supported, safe, engaged, and motivated to learn. When this occurs, there is greater potential for improved student achievement as they are able to fully engage with the material being taught (Adeyemo, 2015). Ultimately, the key to effective classroom management is to find an approach that works for you as the classroom teacher and your students. And to be consistent, flexible, and supportive for effective classroom management, the classroom must have a good classroom settings and classroom seating arrangement.

Classroom settings refer to the physical and social environments in which teaching and learning take place. Alhassan (2017), opined that classroom settings can be seen as the physical, social, and educational environments in which teaching and learning take place, that encompasses various aspects that influences the learning experience, including: physical environment (i.e layout and design, lighting and acoustics, and technological integration), social environment (i.e teacher-students relationships, peer relationships, and classroom culture), educational environment (i.e curriculum and instruction, teaching style, and assessment and feedback), and other factors (including class size and composition, time and scheduling, and resources and materials). The classroom setting plays a crucial role in shaping the learning experience and can significantly impact student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement.

However, classroom seating arrangement refers to the physical layout of the classroom, specifically the arrangement of desks, chairs, and other furniture to facilitate teaching and learning. The seating arrangement can significantly impact student engagement, participation, and overall learning experience (Alhassan, 2017). The classroom seating arrangement could include the following: physical layout (i.e the arrangement of desks, chairs and other furniture in a classroom to facilitate teaching and learning), instructional design (i.e the intentional arrangement of students and furniture to support specific instructional goals and activities), learning environment (i.e the physical and social arrangement of the classroom that influences students learning, behavior, and engagement), student-centered (i.e a seating arrangement that promotes student interaction, collaboration, and autonomy, while minimizing teacher-centered instruction), flexible learning (a seating arrangement that adapts to different learning activities such as lectures, discussions, and group work, to support student learning and engagement) and inclusive design (i.e seating arrangement that considers the diverse needs of students, including those with disabilities, to create an inclusive and accessible learning environment).

According to Walter (2016), classroom management differs from one teacher to another because of the teacher's personality, teaching style, preparedness, and number of students in the classroom. Umoren (2015), notes that the concept of 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 and create conducive learning environment. The various reforms in education, like the National Policy of Education of 2014, failed to mention or address classroom management and the connectivity between students' academic achievement and classroom management. Classroom management is one of the neglected areas in our secondary schools, despite the fact that the success or failure of any teaching and learning process depends on the way classroom are managed. Failure to effectively manage the classroom seems to have an overall negative influence on the entire school, especially in terms of sound academic achievement of the school. When this happens other negative consequences follow such as the depletion of the student population of the school because parents/guardians prefer to enrol their children and ward in schools that are doing well academically.

Hence, there is no gainsaying that Secondary education is a critical stage in the educational journey of students, and academic performance during this stage has a significant impact on future educational and career prospects. However, disruptive behaviour and poor classroom management have been identified as major challenges facing secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, potentially undermining academic achievement. Despite the claimed huge government investments towards enhancing the quality of education in Nigeria and FCT in particular, students' academic achievement in Mathematics and English language has continued to decline at an alarming rate. Classroom management in Nigeria, particularly in Abuja are prevalent issues in secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, potentially undermining students' academic achievement. For instance, according to WAEC report 2020, student academic achievement in Mathematics and English language has not been encouraging. There was 65% failure in Mathematics and English language WAEC result. In 2021, 48.84% failed the Mathematics and English language WAEC examination. In 2022, 35.74 % failed Mathematics and English language WAEC, and in 2023, 23.64% failed woefully. The academic achievement

of students in the examination has been declining between 65% to 23.64% in the last four years. This development has raised concerns among stakeholders and concern citizens of the Country. Some have attributed this ugly trend to ineffective classroom management skills adopted by the stake holders in the school system. Attempts to control disruptive behaviors cost considerable teachers' time at the expense of academic instructions in the class.

Research Questions

1. What is the influence of classroom settings on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?
2. What is the influence of classroom seating arrangement on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital territory, Abuja?

Hypotheses

HO¹ There is no significant influence of classroom settings on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja

HO² There is no significant influence of classroom seating arrangement on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja

This study is anchor on two theories: Classroom Management Theory, Jacob Kounin (1970), and Don Elger's theory of Academic Productivity.

Classroom Management Theory, Jacob Kounin (1970)

Interestingly, the classroom management theory refers to strategies and techniques teachers use to create a productive and respectful learning environment. Effective classroom management ensures student engagement, minimizes disruptions, and promotes academic achievement. This theory emphasized the importance of effective classroom management in creating conducive learning environment without which disruptive behaviour can mess up the environment, leading to poor academic performance.

Actually, the basic tenet of the Classroom Management Theory upholds that: a positive learning environment must be created such that fosters a supportive, inclusive and engaging atmosphere. Within this environment, rules, consequences and expectations for students' behaviour should be clearly established. Likewise, the physical space (classroom) of the learning environment must be well arranged to promote learning and ward-off distractions. Even so, teachers are to students' participation and active involvement and engagement in lessons.

In order to maintain the continued involvement and engagement of students in lessons, strategies like positive reinforcement, redirection and conflict resolution must be imbued to address misbehavior. These further enhance the relationship between students and teachers in a positive and respective manner. And it will instill in the students a sense of community. Gradually, the students develop a sense of autonomy; independence and responsibility.

Essentially, the classroom management theory is fundamental to this study as it underscores effective classroom management as being crucial for academic success, student well-being, and clear teacher satisfaction. By understanding and applying these theories and components, teacher can create a positive and supportive learning environment.

Don Elger's theory of Performance (2007)

This theory was propounded by Elger (2007). The theory states that “performance develops and relates concepts to form a framework that was used to explain results as well as improvements”. According to Elger, to perform is to produce valued results. He said further that developing performance is a journey, and level of performance describes location in the journey. Theory of performance informs learning in contexts that are not traditionally conceptualized as learning environments. Examples of these contexts include academic advising, self-developments, departments, academic committees, professional research groups, colleges. The Theory of Performance develops and relates six foundational concepts to form a framework that can be used to explain performance as well as performance improvements. A performer can be an individual or a group of people engaging in a collaborative effort. Current level of performance depends holistically on 6 components: context, level of knowledge, level of skills, level of identity, personal factors, and fixed factors. Three axioms are proposed for effective performance improvements. These involve a performer's mind set, immersion in an enriching environment, and engagement in reflective practice.

This theory exactly connects the present investigation since the present study embraces the influence of home background on academic achievement of students. The performer is not only the students or the school but the home must be part of the performer in the academic achievement of the students. Since performance is a journey, the home is where the journey begins and for good performance the students' needs to be helped on this journey. As the academic department and home improves its level of performance to help the students they are able to produce more effective students learning, more effective research, and a more effective culture that lead to the desirable academic achievement of the students.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was employed for the study. According to Tanmy (2018), descriptive survey research design are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population. The population of the study is 24,771 SSII students' from the 77 public senior secondary schools in Abuja. SSII students were selected because their availability as at the time of conducting this research. SSI are newly admitted and SSIII are preparing for their exit examination. (statistics from FCT Secondary school board 2023/2024). A sample of 377 students' was selected for the study using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of determining sample size. Cluster sampling techniques was used to draw the sample for the study. During the process, each area council of the FCT were treated as cluster, using simple random sampling. The six areas council were drawn by balloting with replacement. Again using simple random sampling three schools each were selected from the six area council. A (cluster) totaling twelve schools and students (respondents) were selected from schools also using simple random sampling. In all 12 schools and 377 students were selected for the study.

The researcher used two instruments in collecting data from the respondents. The first instrument for this study was a self-developed questionnaire title; Disruptive Behaviour Scale (DBS). Basically, the questionnaire has section A-D. Section A, covers 5 items on disrespectful language, while section B, takes care of items 6-10 on incivility and section C deals with items 11-

15 on aggressive behavior. The second instrument is the Mock examination scores of SS2 in Mathematics and English Language which are the core subjects for both science and arts students used for the study to measure their academic achievement. To ensure the validity of the instrument, they were given to two experts in the Department of Educational Foundations, Educational Psychology Unit and STME Department in the Faculty of Education, Nasarawa State University, Keffi for validity. The experts subjected the instruments to critical appraisal for face construct and content validity which gave 0.71 as rated by the experts.

A reliability study was conducted on 30 respondents from schools within the study area that will no longer participate in the main study. Questionnaires were administered once to a group of respondents. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient to determine the internal consistency. It yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.84. Denga (2013), stated that a reliability coefficient of 0.84 and above is strong enough to be used for a study. The study analyzed the collected data using mean and standard deviation for the research questions while the t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance using statistical package for social sciences SPSS, version 23.

Results

Data collected were presented, analyzed, interpreted and discussed here. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer and analyze research questions. Any mean value below 3.00 is considered low while those above it were considered high. The hypotheses were however tested at 0.05 level of significance using t-test obtained from statistical package for social science (SPSS) application with the significance level. For hypotheses whose p-values were found to be less than 0.05, they were rejected while for those greater than 0.05 they were accepted.

Data Presentation

Research question 1: what is the Influence of classroom settings on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students?

Table 1: Influence of Classroom Settings on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students

Influence of Classroom Settings on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students		AL	OT	ST	RY	Mean	StdDev
1 I stick gum on the seats		282	58	33	4	3.64	0.69
2 The Influence of Classroom change (Hassan et al. 2019)		75	43	251	8	2.49	0.83
3 I believe if I seat with my friend, I read harder		164	184	22	7	3.34	0.67
4 My class teachers usually change our seats for us to concentrate		208	62	35	12	3.55	0.79
5 I pay attention to my teachers rule of seating arrangement even after the teacher leaves the class		82	82	199	14	2.62	0.87
6 I like playing with my peers in the classroom during break		294	66	17	0	3.82	0.47
7 I like asking my friends questions when writing test and exams		60	68	247	2	2.54	0.78
Average mean						3.13	0.77

Table 1 indicates the influence of classroom settings on academic achievement of Secondary School Students. Results show that the mean average of items 1 to 7 is given as 3.13. This value is above the minimum acceptance value of 3.00 for a four-point rating scale. Hence, classroom management has a high influence on academic achievement of Secondary School Students

Table 2: Influence of Classroom Seating arrangement on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students

Influence of Classroom Seating arrangement on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students		AL	OT	ST	RY	Mean	StdDev
8	Back seaters always make noise that disrupt the classroom even when teachers are around	282	58	33	4	3.64	0.69
9	I always close the window by my side so that I can play with my friends in the class when lesson is going on	75	43	251	8	2.49	0.83
10	I often find it difficult to agree with what other students say especially how we seat in the class	164	184	22	7	3.34	0.67
11	I always make other students feel comfortable when I am around them in the classroom	208	62	35	12	3.55	0.79
12	I usually seat with only my friends in the classroom	82	82	199	14	2.62	0.87
13	I take refreshments in the class without permission	93	42	240	2	2.60	0.86
14	I can drop my point of arguments even if I am right in the classroom	39	72	262	4	2.39	0.68
15	We use to play with papers inside the class even if lesson is going on	79	121	177	0	2.74	0.78
Average mean						3.13	0.77

Table 2 indicates the influence of classroom seating arrangement on academic achievement of Secondary School Students. Results show that the mean average of items 8 to 15 is given as 3.13. This value is above the minimum acceptance value of 3.00 for a four-point rating scale. Hence, classroom management has a high influence on academic achievement of Secondary School Students.

Test of Hypotheses

HO¹ There is no significant influence of classroom settings on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja

Table 3: t-test statistic showing Influence of classroom settings on Academic Achievement of secondary school students.

S/N	Variables	N	Mean	StdDev	Df	t-cal	p-value	Decision	Conclusion
1	Classroom management	377	3.13	0.77	376	19.42	0.000	Reject H ₀	Significant
2	Academic Achievement	377	64.12	8.01					

Table 3 above shows the t-test statistics on the influence of classroom setting on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory Abuja. The result reveals that the calculated value of t-test was 19.42. the p-value of 0.000 was less than 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), hypothesis 1 is therefore rejected indicating there is a significant influence of classroom settings on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory Abuja.

HO² There is no significant influence of classroom seating arrangement on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja

Table 4: t-test statistic showing Influence of Classroom Seating Arrangement on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students

S/N	Variables	N	Mean	StdDev	Df	t-cal	p-value	Decision	Conclusion
1	Aggressive behaviour	377	3.26	0.63	376	25.11	0.041	Reject H ₀	Significant
2	Academic Achievement	377	64.12	8.01					

Table 4. above shows the t-test statistics on the influence of classroom seating arrangement on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory Abuja. The result reveals that the calculated value of t-test was 25.11. the p-value of 0.041 was less than 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), hypothesis 3 is therefore rejected indicating there is a significant influence of classroom setting arrangement on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory Abuja.

Discussion of Findings

Finding on hypothesis one and two shows that there is a significant influence of classroom management on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory Abuja. Findings of study is in line with the study of George, Oladeni and Adam (2017), which examined “Effective Classroom Management and Students’ Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwalbom State.” The study established significant relationship between effective classroom management and students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwalbom State. Furthermore, findings from the study of Titus and Adu (2017), which conducted a research on “Teachers’ Classroom Management Proficiency as a Correlate of Students’ Academic Performance in Social Studies in secondary school in junior secondary schools in Lagos state showed there was a significant relationship between teachers’ classroom management proficiency and students’ academic achievement.

Therefore,

1. There is a significant influence of classroom settings on the academic achievement of senior secondary school students in the FCT, Abuja.
2. There is a significance of classroom seating arrangement on academic achievement of senior secondary school students in FCT, Abuja.

Conclusion

The study concluded that, classroom management provides oversight on all matters involved in the implementation of the policy and the achievement of goals.

Recommendations

1. Workshops and seminars should be organized by the Ministry of Education in order to educate classroom teachers on the need to pay more attention on classroom settings strategies that will help improve students’ learning outcomes.
2. Effort should be made by authorities to educate teachers on the need to pay more attention on seating arrangement of students to avoid distractions and disturbance.

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