

PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE

NWISAGBO, EBUNOLU AYODELE

**Department of Educational Management,
Faculty of Education,
Rivers State University**

And

BLESSING WEY-AMAEHULE PhD.

**Department of Educational Management,
Faculty of Education,
Rivers State University**

Abstract

The study investigated perceived influence of classroom management strategies on students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 7,425 teachers in the 268 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. A sample size of 380 teachers was used for the study. The Taro Yamen technique for minimum sample size determination was used to obtain the sample size. A 16-item instrument titled "Perceived Influence of Classroom Management Strategies on Students' Academic Achievement Questionnaire (PICMSSAAQ)" was used for collecting data. The questionnaire was structured using the five point modified Likert rating scale response pattern of Very High Extent (VHE) = 5 points, High Extent (HE) = 4 points, Moderate Extent (ME) = 3 points, Low Extent (LE) = 2 points and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1 point. The face and content validity of the questionnaire were assessed by the researcher's supervisor and two other experts in measurement and evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was determined through test-retest technique. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics was used to arrive at a reliability index of 0.80. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study found that male and female teachers agreed that appropriate use of rewards or punishment, and establishment of rules and regulations as classroom management strategies to a high extent influence students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. It was recommended that classroom managers should use rewards and punishment to enhance students' career prospects in schools, and classroom teachers should establish class rules and regulations in order for students to participate in learning activities with minimum wasted time and confusion.

Introduction

A classroom is the immediate management environment for formal knowledge acquisition. It is a shelter for both teachers and learners so as to engage in educative activities. Atanda (2009) averred that a classroom is described as a room where a class of pupils/students having similar characteristics is taught. It is the geographical space occupied by a group of students. Classroom is made up of the teacher, the learners, learning equipment and the environment. Kimberly (2001) stated the five characteristics of a classroom as security, open communication, mutual likeness, shared goals and connectedness.

Management on the other hand has different meanings to different people. Some people refer to management as a group of individuals who have the responsibility of running an organization while others refer to it as the function of those who manage (Abali & Asodike, 2012). Hornby (2010) referred to it as the act of running and controlling an organization. Management involves the coordinating or controlling of skill of dealing with people or situations in any way (Adeyemo, 2012). It is a method where a group of people at the highest level of an organization plan, organize, communicate, coordinate, control and direct the actions and activities of people who work for the organization toward the achievement of organizational objectives (Loomiz in Adeyemo, 2012).

Eke (2018) posited that the student's achievement in academics is largely dependent on factors such as classroom environment, content delivery or teaching approach, teacher and student's relationship. This is because learning cannot be effective in an environment that is not friendly for learning. Students' academic achievement can be regarded as the total experience in classroom teaching and learning rhetoric and emphasis on the reinforcement of both internal and external thinking process, which makes the learner in most cases learning meaningfully. Eke further avers that before an effective learning activity would reflect on the students' academic achievement, repeated perceptions must be seen as "objects", which in time and space must be differentiated, and its independence must be emphasized in the motion and experience of the subject.

Students' undesirable behaviour in classrooms is increasingly causing concern among teachers. Such behaviour poses enormous challenges for classroom management, not only in its potential for causing difficulties in teaching and learning but also for causing disruptions in the operations of the classroom. For these reasons, appropriate use of rewards or punishments would enhance the teachers' ability to control behaviour in their classrooms. Summer (2009) perceived reward as the driving force through which people achieve their goals. Ogwudire in Mbadugha (2013) viewed reward as any material or non-material stimulus which when present in a learning situation, increases the probability that a desirable behaviour that occurred before it was presented, will occur again, or a non-desirable behaviour will be dropped for a desirable one. Onyeabako (2014) posited that reward is compensation for performing an assigned task. It is a means to celebrate achievement or excellent behaviour.

One of the major measures taken by teachers to motivate students for better performance and satisfaction is an effective reward system. Wonah (2014) opined that teachers should from time to time reward the students that are well behaved physically, emotionally and academically. This will enhance good performance. Mbadugha (2013) opined that classroom teachers should have a way of rewarding students who are well behaved and discouraging those with noticeable bad behaviour. The positive reward given to well behave students should be done openly in the presence of all students. This will attract other students to receive such reward if they believe that can get it also behaving well.

Kapur (n.d) asserted that when students are given assignments or projects, or other activities by their teachers, they need to work towards them with diligence and conscientiousness. When they have performed well, they should be rewarded. The rewards should be in the form of scholarships, good grades, and appreciation in a verbal or written manner, certificates, medals, trophies or gifts in the form of certain items such as, stationary, other opportunities and others. Kapur reiterated that when students acquire different types of

rewards, they are regarded as favourable and beneficial to them in enhancing their career prospects. The students aspire to achieve rewards and hence make attempts to put in their efforts to the best of their abilities in enhancing their performance. The giving of rewards is vital in stimulating the mind-sets of the students towards learning and developing their knowledge as well as in the management of the classroom. Therefore, it can be stated, that giving of rewards arouses interest and enthusiasm among students, so they are able to contribute towards management of the classroom in an agreeable manner.

Mbadugha (2013) stated that reward in a classroom comes in many forms depending on the educational level of the students. Paton (2009) identified praise, certificate of merit, recognition, prizes and referral letters as tangible and intangible examples of reward. Other forms of reward are smile, nodding, friendly look, movement towards the students, repeating the students answer as well as writing down the students answer on the blackboard. The purpose according to Paton is to restore self-esteem or confidence in the learner. Incentives provided by teachers to their students are to reward them for proper behaviour. Mbadugha (2013) highlighted that motivating students with appropriate reward mechanism is an important task teacher should undertake. Such varieties of reward systems include written praise, year reports, small prizes, certificate of merit, making learning more visual, involving students in practical learning activities, teaching, inductively, aware of praise in front of students or class and assignments of special projects.

Samer Rabadi (2017) noted that rewards only work if the student finds them reinforcing, so rewards may need to be tailored for individual students. According to the scholar, student praise is one of the most effective ways of increasing positive behaviour. Giving behaviour-specific praise that identifies what the student has done correctly is a powerful strategy for increasing good behaviour. One specific antecedent method that can easily be incorporated into classrooms and has been shown to be effective at increasing appropriate behaviour (Kern & Clemens, 2007), decreasing inappropriate behaviours (Leflot et al., 2010), and increasing overall academic engagement in general education classrooms is verbal praise (Sutherland et al., 2000). According to Reinke et al. (2008), praise is any verbal statement or gesture that indicates teacher approval of desired student behaviour beyond confirmations of correct academic responses. Verbal praise has been shown to allow for more instructional time in the classroom, increase students' intrinsic motivation, facilitate students' feelings of competence (Sutherland et al., 2000), and increase the appropriate behaviour of students who observe others being praised for appropriate behaviour (Kern & Clemens, 2007).

Consequent upon the aforementioned facts therefore, Onyeabako (2014, pp. 146 – 147) identified the following as types of reward to students:

Reward for Academic Performance:

Students can be rewarded for excelling in projects like science fairs, speeches, essay competition, mathematics competition and others. A deserving student can be scored an "A" Grade in an examination in recognition for the student's outstanding and meritorious performance. That grade earned the student a distinction as an excellent student and encourages continued success.

Reward for Good Character:

Student's good character and behaviour counts. Schools usually reward students that are well behaved. Such students are assigned leadership roles by appointing them school functionaries like, Head girl or boy, Librarian, Refectorian, Labour prefect, chapel prefect and others. These appointments are seen as challenges by other students.

Recognition:

Deserving students are rewarded by recognizing them through public praise. This is usually done during assembly or an emergency assembly may be called just to recognize excellent performance by students.

Extracurricular Activities:

Student participation in school sport programme enables students to be rewarded for participation and excellence in specific sports, which sometimes leads to such students being awarded or recommended for scholarships or offered professional careers like football. Activities like drama, cultural event, debate and press clubs provides opportunity for students to show-case their talents and potentials while those that performed extraordinary well are rewarded either by recognition, recommendation and or presentation of plaque or certificate of honour. Others include, pasting and posting such deserving students; pictures on the notice board, issuance of testimonials and recommendations, verbal praise and encouragement and the use of body language like smiling, nodding of head and so on.

Reward for Attendance:

Regular attendance to school earns students commendation in the end of the year report card. Students that turn in their assignment and homework are usually rewarded immediately by the teacher either by bringing them in front of the class to be appreciated by others or giving them merit marks. Students of all ages appreciate been appreciated for their hard work and look forward to it. Therefore, management of schools should endeavour to reward students accordingly. Reward is an effective way not only to the school community but to parents. It fosters students self confidence.

Onyeabako (2014) affirmed that rewards serve as incentives to both deserving students and fellow students as they strive to maintain such positions or attain them respectively. Mabadugha (2013) posited that the skillful use of rewards helps teachers to influence students, to create environments that are conducive to learning and to motivate them to achieve higher level of school outcomes. Therefore rewards helps to motivate students; it creates a secure, orderly and learning environment; it raises students' self-esteem and makes them feel valued; the use of rewards induces students to do their best; to aspire to greater achievements and to assume responsibilities; when students are praised for excelling in any particular task or assignment, the chances are that they may continue to work hard so as to continue to earn the praise; reward in schools should be competitive to encourage students' desirable behaviour; the use of rewards by teachers has the capacity to increase the students' efforts, improve students' zeal, students' interest and student's participation when students' reward is objective, equitably and properly used.

Reward is an action or attitude to respect, in order to ensure that students successfully participate and perform well. Students are rewarded for some desired outcome, while

inappropriate behaviours are disregarded. Rewards may include items such as sweets, extra time off, no homework, among others. Teachers can also use a pleasant smile, a nod of approval or a pat on the back to strengthen positive behaviour (Sidin, 2020). Rewards for some behaviour are tangible items. Rewards can make students happy, as Jones and Skinner in Sidin (2020) stated that there are various advantages of rewarding students in teaching, including: firstly, students will become happy to learn and indirectly try to be the best. Secondly, the teachers and students will have a good relationship to make students feel comfortable learning.

Thirdly, it trains students to be more enthusiastic and to study. Fourthly, it enhances students' learning abilities and skills.

Happy students would lead to be successful students. To ensure that students are happy in the classroom, teachers could apply reward and punishment system. This is intended to motivate students to learn both at schools and at home. The most effective rewards are those that motivate the students intrinsically. This is because human's action and or behaviour normally are derived from the desires or needs from within oneself. In other words, the actions and behaviour themselves are self-rewarding. For this reason, people actually do not really need externally driven reward for their achievement.

Skinner in Sidin (2020) divided reward to be positive and negative reward.

Positive Reward:

A positive reward is an indefinite expression of appreciation, a sense of accomplishment, or conscious satisfaction. For example, you know you have done something right or have helped others to improve their day. Since the intrinsic rewards are intangible, they generally appear from the person who performs the activity or behaviour. In this case intrinsic means, that the reward is inherent to the person performing the activity or behaviour. As an example, your teacher gives you some sweets every time the homework is completed as a reward. In this case, you will be more likely to do the homework and repeat this action in future, thus enhancing the behaviour of completing the homework.

Negative Reward:

The elimination of an unpleasant reinforcement can also reinforce behaviour. This is referred to as negative reinforcement because it removes an adverse stimulus that rewards the animal or person. Negative reinforcement strengthens behaviour because an unpleasant experience is stopped or removed. If the students do not complete their homework, for instance, giving some sweets to the teacher might change the students' perception. So in the future, the students will complete their homework to avoid giving some sweets, thus strengthening on homework's behaviours. Sincero (2011) regarded reward or reinforcement as an endeavour teacher can do to increase the frequency or a behaviour rate of the students by means of showing or introducing a short stimulus after displaying the behaviour. An activity that intensifies the possibility of the behaviour changes is referred as reinforcement.

Kyriacou (2008) averred that the use of rewards in the classroom situation helps teachers improve student motivation in learning. Reward provides information about one's abilities when related the real success or development, such as when a teacher commends students for learning new skills or gaining new knowledge. Santrock (2011) pointed out that classroom rewards can be beneficial. When a teacher offers a reward, students can be correlated with behaving and acting in a feeling of pleasure. Typically, students are going to do

something that constantly activities reward. Besides, reward is intended to make students do all they can to raise the score more faithfully. Rewards can be a successful way to inspire students to do so which motivate the students to become involved in learning. In general, reward can be understood as one of the strategies that can increase students' interest and motivation in learning to achieve success. A proper reward also provides students positive encouragement. It will show interest and increase students' participation in everyday classroom duties and responsibilities (Sidin, 2020).

One of the strategies of classroom management that teachers could use to motivate students' achievement in the class is to implement reward and punishments to the students. The reward and punishment might vary since different teachers have different kinds of award and penalty policies, but nearly all of the teachers have a similar purpose of inspiring students to learn (Sidin, 2020). Ching (2012) wrote that the effective system of rewards and penalty should encourage appropriate outcomes and regular participation, which are fundamental to creative learning and teaching environment. Sidin (2020) posited that punishments in education are the response against a lack of discipline, so teaching and encouraging discipline are the first step to prevent punishment. Punishment is closely related to strengthening because it defines both its effects.

Punishment in schools are considered as a disciplinary measure and therefore used as a means to maintain good discipline, referring to conformity and order in schools. Punishment is intended to control, correct or bring into desired line, in the individual or group of individuals' behaviour. In line with this opinion, Okumbe in Kanu (2020) stated that punishment is meant to instill discipline and is meted on students who violate the school rules and regulations and that it is administered to bring about the desired change in behaviour and improve school discipline if commensurate with the offense committed. Cotton in Kanu (2020) posited that punishments in the school system are expected to teach students accountability for their mistakes, that is, to teach them the relationship between their behaviours and the outcome.

Corporal punishment may instill fear in the minds of students or may lead to physical injury if not well administered by the teacher. Both situations may lead to absconding or absence from school and consequently reducing the academic achievement of the students. Hence, it is important that teachers need to always realize the appropriateness of a punishment before meted it out on the student. It is important to ensure that the best behaviour and condition are established, inculcated and maintained for effective learning to take place in our secondary schools. This could be achieved through the teacher's effective classroom management and advanced planning by the school administrator and the teacher. Effective teaching and learning is correlated with higher academic outcome and this is better achieved in a disciplined school environment in which the student and teacher know that they are on the same side working together to achieve higher academic outcome.

Teachers often select punishments if the students do not follow the rules after setting out the rules at the beginning of the year and listing the punishments. Penalties or consequences usually involve holding something that students enjoy. A disruptive student may, for example, be held in recesses or detained after school. A student who often distracts his peers will be disappointed if he knows that at the end of the month he will not receive class treatment. LeFrancois in Sidin (2020) stated that there are two kinds of punishment, positive and negative punishment. When it comes to positive punishment, it generally happens when a

positive contingency is eliminated. An example of this may be penalty. It is often referred to as elimination punishment. Furthermore, negative punishment happens when a negative contingency follows behaviour. This is when they think of the idea of punishment. Many people sometimes refer to this term to be presentation punishment.

Holth in Sidin (2020) described punishment as an action that can decrease the frequency of unwanted action or behaviour. Jones and Skinner in Sidin (2020) outlined that benefit of punishment. The first is restricting unwanted behaviour. Punishment prevents unexpected behaviour from being repeated. Secondly, there is an educational reason to educate the students to behave properly. Thirdly, punishment may increase the motivation of students to have the expected behaviour. Fourthly, the control of punishment is to prevent undesirable behaviour for students, to facilitate the learning process. Conclusively, both reward and punishment are essentially used for educational purposes. They are deliberately chosen by teachers to make learning process effective. It further aims to improve students' learning achievement. A well-selected reward and punishment contribute to students' learning effectiveness (Sidin, 2020).

The term "rules" and "regulations" have been defined in varied perspective. Hornby (2010) perceived rules as state situation. Arogundade (2009) posited that rules and set to guide and facilitate student learning and behaviour. According to Hornby, regulations are official rules made by an authority. When rules are properly stated, students will know what is expected of them. Examples of rules are what to do when a question is asked, when to talk, and when to submit assignment. To be effective, rules should not be too many and the expected behaviour should be clearly spelt out (Arogundade (2009).

A well arranged classroom can also be in Chaos without rules of engagement and enforcement for offenders. This is not in any way to create a stereotyped class, but to help in the maintenance of law and order which in future stands as a critical factor towards the learner's attitude to constituted authorities. Just like the society outside, a classroom that is devoid of rules are bound to experience lawlessness and further encourage negative behaviour, Arogundade (2009) commented that students should be involved in determining classroom behaviour so that rules and procedures will be more meaningful and relevant to the entire class. By establishing what is expected of students, behavioural problems will be minimized and classroom management will be easier.

Olanruwaju (2017) opined that a well planned classroom have clearly defined boundaries and designations where different rules and types of activities take place. Classroom rules, ethnic and reinforcement are what give the students the sense of belonging on the "dos and don'ts" in the classroom and to a large level, keep some tranquility in the classroom learning environment recently many schools have zero tolerance to indiscipline, which is usually a case of expulsion as an outright punishment for grievous offenders, but unfortunately, they do not threaten the welfare of others. This happens as a result of not constantly keeping a reminder on the student on rules and regulations of the classroom. Kapur (n.d) noted that formation of simple rules and regulations within the classroom settings is regarded as one of the in-dispensable strategies of classroom management. Within the classroom settings, there is a need to form simple rules and regulations. These rules and regulations are related to various aspects within the classroom settings, i.e teaching-learning methods, use of technologies and

teaching-learning materials, utilization of equipment, resources tools and implementation of other tasks and activities.

Teachers are vested with the authority and responsibility of forming rules and regulations when there are formations of rules and regulations and tasks are carried out in accordance to them, they will be able to get implemented in a well-organized and regimented manner. The rules and regulations need to be favourable to the academic goals and objectives (Kapur, n.d). Kapur averred that the overall system of education also needs to be taken into consideration in the formation of rules and regulations within the classroom settings. Normally, before the initiation of the academic session, teachers need to focus upon the formation of rules and regulations to a major extent. According to Canter (2003), Marzano (2003) and Daly (2005) in Sowell (2013), disruptive behaviour does not only affect the student who is noncompliant with the rules, but every other student in the classroom. In designing rules for the classroom, Foley (2011) highlighted that the teacher should put the following into consideration:

1. There has to be an established procedure and rules for behavioural issues (either positive or negative), that may disrupt the school's physical characteristics and routine.
2. School with rules regarding certain Kinds of misbehavior.
3. Plan and procedures of enforcing and executing consequences for misbehaviours and also for encouraging positive behaviour.
4. Vigilance system in trying to detect early signals for misbehaviours from students
5. Establish a consistent and fair plan and ways in dealing with positive and negative behaviours, and always enforce positive before negative.
6. The rules have to be reasonable, observable, stated with a positivity mindset and in a complete thoughts and sentences.
7. The rules must have some basic components such as following directions, walking habits, being nice to classmates, using of vocal range in class and sharing with others.

Wong (2011) averred that the most successful classes are those which the teacher has a clear idea of what is expected from students and the students have a clear idea of what the teacher expects from them. before consequences are to be meted out, the teacher must first, determine what effective consequences will be appropriate for the students; make the students understand the consequences of their misbehavior; follow the consequences accordingly to show the students that the teachers is very keen and serious, because of this; the students will take the teacher seriously for rules and regulations to be effective they must be planned in advance, be relatively few, communicated to students and have explicit consequences if not respected.

In the light of the above facts therefore Wong (2011) identified the following as reasons for rules and regulations in classrooms:

- a. It helps create a productive learning environment.
- b. It provides students with structure and achievable goals
- c. It helps form responsible individuals
- d. It allows for various activities to occur during the day, with a minimum of wasted time and confusion.
- e. Students know what is expected of them

f. It increases on-task time and reduces classroom disruption.

The University of the People (2021) asserted that having a discussion about classroom rules, and allowing students to weigh in on the dos and don'ts of classroom etiquette will ensure more compliance in the long run. This is a discussion that can take place in the beginning of the school years, and depending on the classroom dynamics, may help students see classroom rules in a more positive light. The scholar avers that once classroom rules are established, the teacher should make sure that students have a way to keep track on them; whether they are written out in the classroom or the syllabus. This ensures that the rules are concrete, not just up in the air, and this will hold students accountable to them. Guido (2021) posited that to create a safe and caring school community, develop classroom rules your students understand and hopefully respect. While it may not be fun, be sure to communicate that breaking classroom rules will have concrete yet fair consequences.

The establishment of rules and regulations are regarded as essential, not only in educational institutions as a whole, but also within the classrooms. Within the classrooms, the establishment of rules and regulations are in terms of various aspects, i.e teaching and learning processes, utilization of modern, scientific, technical and pioneering methods, teaching-learning materials, utilization of technologies, equipment, materials, tools and others and implementation of other tasks and activities (Kapur, n.d). The teachers are vested with the authority and responsibility of establishing rules and regulations. The students need to adequately understand and abide by them. therefore, when the rules and regulations will be established in a well-organized and appropriate manner, they will not only prove to be beneficial in leading to the overall functioning of the classroom settings in an efficient manner, but requirements of the overall system of education (Ka-pur, n.d).

Oliver and Reschly (2007) averred that the use of rules is a powerful, preventive component of classroom organization and management plans. Rules establish the behavioural context of the classroom by specifying what behaviours are expected of students, what behaviours will be reinforced, and the consequences for inappropriate behaviour. According to Colvin, Kame'enui, & Sugai (1993) and Kerr and Nelson (2002), if rules are stated or worded positively to describe the expected behaviour, rather than what not to do, problem behaviour is more easily prevented. Oliver and Reschly (2007) asserted that teachers should identify the following guidelines for the construction of classroom rules:

1. Rules should be kept to a minimum to allow students to remember them.
2. Rules should contain language that is simple and appropriate to the developmental level of the developmental level of the students and classroom.
3. Rules should be positively stated.
4. Rules should be developed for various situations or contexts as needed (e.g physical education class, field trips).
5. Rules should be consistent with the school wide behaviour plan (Martella et al, 2003).

In addition to establishing rules, effective teachers also incorporate routines into their efforts to organize the classroom. Routines for turning in homework or engaging in small-group activities allow the classroom to run efficiently with fewer disruptions from students, thus enabling the teacher to attend to other aspects of instruction. Effective teachers teach rules and routines systematically, not only at the beginning but also throughout the school year. They

emphasize these rules and routines on occasions when increased violations are likely to occur. After classroom rules and routines are established, strategies to acknowledge and encourage students' appropriate use of these rules and routines must be incorporated into the classroom management plans. Arranging consequences in order to increase desired behaviour is a critical component of effective classroom organization and management (Oliver & Reschly, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

Creating a conducive classroom environment is a strategy for effective classroom management in any educational system. When the classrooms are made conducive for learning it improves students' cognitive ability. Unfortunately the reverse is the case in most of our secondary schools in Rivers State. An intrinsic look at the learning atmosphere and environment is a proof that something is fundamentally wrong and as a matter of fact requires urgent attention to be fixed so as to influence students' academic achievement positively. The most common problems reported by principals are those that relate to behaviour management in the classrooms (Okulovie-Obhoo, 2016). Teachers' capabilities play a major role in classroom management, which enhances lesson delivery. The challenge have been how capable are teachers in managing classrooms, as the academic achievement of secondary school students depends on the delivery of lessons. The evidence is undeniable; surveys of graduates of secondary schools according to Okulovie-Obhoo indicated that sometimes in an attempt to maintain order in the classrooms, teachers make the problem worse, which leads to implications such as nonchalant attitude towards learning, loss of interest in the subject and eventually to poor academic achievement of students.

Eke (2018) averred that an improper and uncoordinated classroom learning experience would to a greater extent lead to half-baked learners, and in turn affect their overall achievement in learning. This indicates that the learning environment and classroom organization is key to effective learning. The absence of it causes anxiety and unease mindset which distorts the learning process. Considering these observations, one wonders the extent teachers are aware of, and apply rewards or punishment, enforce class rules and regulations, effectively use time allotted for instruction, manageable class size, and create conducive classroom environment in the delivery of their lessons. It is against this background, that this research sought to investigate the perceived influence of classroom management strategies on students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate perceived influence of classroom management strategies on students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives were to:

- i. Find out the extent to which appropriate use of rewards or punishment as a classroom management strategy influences students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- ii. Examine the extent to which establishment of rules and regulations as a classroom management strategy influences students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study:

1. To what extent does appropriate use of rewards or punishment as a classroom management strategy influence students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does establishment of rules and regulations as a classroom management strategy influence students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent to which appropriate use of rewards or punishment as a classroom management strategy influences students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent to which establishment of rules and regulations as a classroom management strategy influences students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey design with a population of 7,425 teachers in the 268 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State (source: RSSSSB, 2018). The sample size comprised 380 teachers. Taro Yamen technique was used to place the 268 public senior secondary schools in the state under three senatorial districts. Rivers East senatorial district had 102 schools comprising of 4,001 teachers, Rivers South East had 71 schools comprising of 1,710 teachers while Rivers West had 95 schools comprising 1,714 teachers. The purposive sampling was used to select 204 teachers in Rivers East, 86 teachers in Rivers South East and 90 teachers in Rivers West making up the 380 teachers used for the study. A validated 16 – item instrument tagged “Perceived Influence of Classroom Management Strategies on Students' Academic Achievement Questionnaire (PICMSSAAQ)” developed by the researcher was used for data collection. The instrument was structured using the 5-point summated rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE) = 5 points, High Extent (HE) = 4 points, Moderate Extent (ME) = 3 points, Low Extent (LE) = 2 points, and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1 point.

To ascertain the reliability of the research instrument, a test-retest technique was adopted. The responses were collated and analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient (Pearson r .) that yielded a reliability index of 0.80. Out of 380 copies of questionnaire administered, only 368 (182 male and 186 female teachers) were correctly filled and retrieved, representing 97% retrieval rate. This was used for the study. Mean and standard deviation statistics were used to answer the two research questions while z-test statistics was used to test the two null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. In scoring the questionnaire, decisions were taken based on the mean of the boundary limits of five responses pattern of VHE, HE, ME, LE, and VLE. Any value from 4.50 – 5.00 was regarded as Very High Extent, any value from 3.50 – 4.49 was regarded as High Extent, any value from 2.50 – 3.49 was regarded as Moderate Extent, any value from 1.50 – 2.49 was regarded as Low Extent, and any value from 1.00 – 1.49 was regarded as Very Low Extent. A null hypothesis was accepted when the

calculated z-value was less than the critical z-value of 1.96 and rejected when the calculated z-value was greater than the critical z-value of 1.96.

Results

Research Question 1:

To what extent does appropriate use of rewards or punishment as a classroom management strategy influence students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Responses of Male and Female Teachers on the Extent Appropriate Use of Rewards or Punishment as a Classroom Management Strategy Influences Students' Academic Achievement

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Male Teachers N=182		Remarks	Female Teachers N = 186		Remarks
		\bar{X}_M	SD_M		\bar{X}_F	SD_F	
1.	Students' career prospects are enhanced when they acquire rewards.	4.07	0.95	High Extent	3.82	1.12	High Extent
2.	Students' mindsets towards learning are stimulated when given rewards.	4.05	0.92	High Extent	3.75	1.11	High Extent
3.	Giving rewards arouses enthusiasm among students.	4.03	0.99	High Extent	3.81	1.17	High Extent
4.	Students' feelings of competence are facilitated when rewards are appropriately used.	3.99	0.99	High Extent	3.92	1.06	High Extent
5.	Skillful use of rewards motivates students to achieve higher level of school outcomes.	3.93	1.09	High Extent	3.96	1.05	High Extent
6.	The use of rewards induces students to aspire to greater achievements academically.	4.09	0.93	High Extent	4.02	0.95	High Extent
7.	When students are praised for excelling in an assignment they will continue to work hard so as to continue to earn the praise.	4.01	1.05	High Extent	3.83	1.11	High Extent
8.	Students will be happy and continue to be the best when they acquire rewards.	4.13	0.87	High Extent	3.89	1.12	High Extent
Grand Mean/SD		4.04	0.97		3.88	1.09	

The data on Table 1 revealed the extent to which appropriate use of rewards or punishment as a classroom management strategy influences students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 with mean values of 4.07, 4.05, 4.03, 3.99, 3.93, 4.09, 4.01, 4.13 and standard deviation values of 0.95, 0.92, 0.99, 0.99, 1.09, 0.93, 1.05, and 0.87 for male teachers; and mean values of 3.82, 3.75,

3.81, 3.92, 3.96, 4.02, 3.83, 3.89 and standard deviation values of 1.12, 1.11, 1.17, 1.06, 1.05, 0.95, 1.11 and 1.12 for female teachers respectively fell within the range of high extent.

Therefore, with a grand mean of 4.04 for male teachers and 3.88 for female teachers, it was evident that male teachers and female agreed that appropriate use of rewards or punishment as a classroom management strategy to a high extent influence students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question 2:

To what extent does establishment of rules and regulations as a classroom management strategy influence students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Responses of Male and Female Teachers on the Extent Establishment of Rules and Regulations as a Classroom Management Strategy Influences Students' Academic Achievement

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Male Teachers N=182		Remarks	Female Teachers N = 186		Remarks
		\bar{X}_M	SD_M		\bar{X}_F	SD_F	
9.	Establishment of rules and regulations helps to create a productive learning environment for students.	4.14	0.93	High Extent	3.88	1.05	High Extent
10.	Students participate in learning activities with minimum of wasted time and confusion when there are class rules and regulations.	4.07	0.96	High Extent	3.99	1.00	High Extent
11.	Students know what is expected of them when there are rules and regulations in their classrooms.	3.85	1.08	High Extent	3.88	1.05	High Extent
12.	Rules and regulations provide students with structure and achievable goals.	3.99	1.05	High Extent	3.73	1.20	High Extent
13.	Students' on-task time and classroom disruptions are increased when there are classroom rules and regulations.	3.99	1.02	High Extent	3.63	1.22	High Extent
14.	When rules and regulations are established it leads to implementation of tasks that are beneficial to students.	3.97	1.06	High Extent	3.72	1.27	High Extent
15.	Rules establish the behavioural context of the classroom by specifying what behaviours are expected of students.	3.90	1.09	High Extent	3.85	1.09	High Extent
16.	The duties of the teachers as well as the students are influenced by the establishment of rules and regulations.	3.88	1.15	High Extent	3.71	1.11	High Extent
Grand Mean/SD		3.97	1.04		3.80	1.12	

The data on Table 2 revealed the extent to which establishment of rules and regulations as a classroom management strategy influence students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Items 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 with mean values of 4.14, 4.07, 3.85, 3.99, 3.99, 3.97, 3.90, 3.88 and standard deviation values of 0.93, 0.96, 1.08, 1.05, 1.02, 1.06, 1.09 and 1.15 for male teachers; and mean values of 3.88, 3.99, 3.88, 3.73, 3.63, 3.72, 3.85, 3.71 and standard deviation values of 1.05, 1.00, 1.05, 1.20, 1.22, 1.27, 1.09, and 1.11 for female teachers respectively fell within the range of high extent. Therefore, with a grand mean of 3.97 for male teachers and 3.80 for female teachers, it was evident that male and female teachers agreed that establishment of rules and regulations as a classroom management strategy to a high extent influence students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 1:

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent to which appropriate use of rewards or punishment as a classroom management strategy influences students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 3: Z-test Analysis of Difference in Responses between Male and Female Teachers on Influence of Appropriate use of Rewards or Punishment

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	DF	Level of Sign.	Z-Cal	Z-Crit.	Decision
Male Teachers	182	4.04	0.97	366	0.05	1.49	1.96	Ho ₁ Accepted
Female Teachers	186	3.88	1.09					

Table 3 showed a summary of mean, standard deviation and z-test of difference between male and female teachers on the extent to which appropriate use of rewards or punishment as a classroom management strategy influence students' academic achievement. The z-test statistics calculated and used in testing the hypothesis stood at 1.49 while the critical z-value stood at 1.96, using 366 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated z-value was less than the critical z-value, the researcher therefore, accepted the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent to which appropriate use of rewards or punishment as a classroom management strategy influence students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent to which establishment of rules and regulations as a classroom management influence students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: Z-test Analysis of Difference in Responses between Male and Female Teachers on Influence of Establishment of Rules and Regulations

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	DF	Level of	Z-Cal	Z-Crit.	Decision
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		Sign.						
Male Teachers	182	3.97	1.04	366	0.05	1.51	1.96	Ho ₂ Accepted
Female Teachers	186	3.80	1.12					

Table 4 showed a summary of mean, standard deviation and z-test of difference between male and female teachers on the extent to which establishment of rules and regulations as a classroom management strategy influence students' academic achievement. The z-test statistics calculated and used in testing the hypothesis stood at 1.51 while the critical z-value stood at 1.96, using 366 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated z-value was less than the critical z-value, the researcher therefore, accepted the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent to which establishment of rules and regulations as a classroom management strategy influence students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The z-test analysis of difference in responses between male and female teachers on influence of appropriate use of rewards or punishment on students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State indicated that there is no significant difference in their mean responses. On the extent to which appropriate use of rewards or punishment as a classroom management strategy influences students' academic achievement, the results from the findings of this study revealed that students' career prospects are enhanced when they acquire rewards; students' mindsets towards learning are stimulated when given rewards giving rewards arouses enthusiasm among students; students' feelings of competence are facilitated when rewards are appropriately used; skillful use of rewards motivates students to achieve higher level of school outcomes; the use of rewards induces students to aspire to greater achievements academically; when students are praised for excelling in an assignment they will continue to work hard so as to continue to earn the praise; and students will be happy and continue to be the best when they acquire rewards.

The above findings are in agreement with Kapur (n.d) who averred that when students acquire different types of rewards, they are regarded as favourable and beneficial to them in enhancing their career prospects. The students aspire to achieve rewards and hence make attempts to put in their efforts to the best of their abilities in enhancing their performance. The giving of rewards is vital in stimulating the mind-set of the students towards learning and developing their knowledge as well as in the management of the classroom. Therefore, it can be said that giving of rewards arouses interest and enthusiasm among students, so that they are able to contribute towards management of the classroom in an agreeable manner.

Collaborating with the above findings, Sutherland et al. (2000) posited that verbal praise has shown to allow for more instructional time in the classroom, increase students' intrinsic motivation, and facilitate students' feelings of competence. Mbadugha (2013) averred that the skillful use of rewards help teachers to influence students, to create environments that are conducive to learning and to motivate them to achieve higher level of school outcomes. Therefore, the use of rewards induces students to do their best; to aspire to greater achievements and to assume responsibilities. When students are praised for excelling in any

particular task or assignment, the chances are that they may continue to work hard so as to continue to earn the praise. Consequently, Sidin (2020) asserted that rewarding students will make them become happy to learn and indirectly try to be the best.

The z-test analysis of difference in responses between male and female teachers on influence of establishment of classroom rules and regulations on students' academic achievement in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State indicated that there is no significant difference in their mean responses. On the extent to which establishment of classroom rules and regulations as a classroom management strategy influences students academic achievement, the results from the findings of this study revealed that establishment of rules and regulations helps to create a productive learning environment for students; students participate in learning activities with minimum of wasted time and confusion when there are class rules and regulations; students know what is expected of them when there are rules and regulations in their classrooms; rules and regulations provide students with structure and achievable goals; students' on-task time in classroom are increased when there are classroom rules and regulations; when rules and regulations are established it leads to implementation of tasks that are beneficial to students; rules establish the behavioural context of the classroom by specifying what behaviours are expected of students; and the duties of the teachers as well as the students is influenced by the establishment of rules and regulations.

The above findings are in agreement with Wong (2011) who asserted that rules and regulations help create a productive learning environment, provides students with structure and achievable goals, help form responsible individuals, allow for various activities to occur during the day with a minimum of wasted time and confusion, students know what is expected of them, and increase on-task time and reduces classroom disruptions. Corroborating with the above view, Kapur (n.d) posited that when rules and regulations are established in a well-organized and appropriate manner, they will not only prove to be beneficial in leading to the overall functioning of the classroom setting in an efficient manner, but also their management in accordance to the needs and requirements of the overall system of education.

Conclusion

Managing classrooms for effective teaching and learning is a task that must be accomplished in the present circumstance. There are many strategies that could be employed to bring about effective management of classrooms in our secondary schools. Amongst the strategies that could be employed are appropriate use of rewards or punishment, and establishment of rules and regulations. Students' career prospects are enhanced when they acquire rewards, and students participate in learning activities with minimum wasted time and confusion when there are class rules and regulations.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following were recommended by the researcher:

1. Classroom managers should use rewards and punishment to enhance students' career prospects in schools.
2. Classroom teachers should establish class rules and regulations in order for students to participate in learning activities with minimum wasted time and confusion.

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