DETERRENTS OF CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NGOR-OKPALA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF IMO STATE

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the deterrents of classroom discipline management in public secondary schools in Ngor-Okpala LGA of Imo State. It adopted a descriptive survey design. A sample of 158 teachers from the 12 public secondary schools in the area was sampled through purposive sampling technique. As item modified 4-point likert type rating scale was used to collect data for answering 3 research questions. The instrument was checked by fellow researchers and validated by two experts in measurement and evaluation and approved by the project supervisor with a reliability score of 0.83 gotten by using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) method. Mean were used to answer the research questions. It was found among others that: the classroom misbehaviors found among secondary school students were talking while teacher is teaching as well as leaving classroom without permission. It was also found that lack of instructional materials; over emphasis by parents towards the punishment among other factors impede effective classroom discipline in secondary schools. It was recommended among others that: teachers should take time to study the misbehaving students in order to help them adjust.

Keywords: Deterrent, Classroom, discipline, management, public secondary school, Ngor-Okpala

INTRODUCTION

Education is universally acknowledged as a veritable instrument for socioeconomic transformation. It is seen as a panacea for addressing underdevelopment and a practical means of improving the welfare of individuals (Okeke, 2013). This explains why nations of the world accord priority attention to education in their development plans. Hence, the development of

every society depends on the nature and functionality of its educational system (Kamoh, Ughili & Abada, 2013). This development is realized through the different kinds of instruction that are carried on by teachers in the classroom. For effective teaching and learning to take place, it is important to recognize and arrange the classroom environment, top suit the learners who can only learn when conditions that encourage learning are provided. There is need to understand what will be involved in the environment. Idu (2012) observed that a number of environmental factors influence the child such as home, social, school and so school experience exert dynamic effects on children's learning behavior. According to Kochhar (2001), discipline is coined from a Latin word "Discipulus' meaning to learn. It therefore calls for the submission of one's impulses and powers to a regulation, which prevents chaos and brings efficiency where there would otherwise be ineffectiveness and waste. The term discipline means and implies so many things and can only clearly understood within the context in which it is used. It contains positive and negative values in the characterization of behavior and it connotes "good" as well as "bad". It means a mode of life in accordance with rules many definitions that have been put forward by different writers. Peretomode (1993) defined discipline as the process whereby one comes to regulate his own behavior to fit in with large purpose or norms of the society. He believes that one of the biggest problems confronting Nigeria as a developing nation is the dwindling standards of discipline. This view was supported by Nakpodia (2003) that suggests that discipline is a system guiding the individual to make reasonable and responsible decisions. Indiscipline, on the other hand, is a breach of social order, good moral behavior; self-accepted and self-maintained social values of life. The concept of indiscipline in schools has been contentious issue in recent years.

School discipline can be described as all the strategies that can be used to coordinate, regulate and organize individuals and their activities in the school (Thornbrg, 2008:37) and put in place the provision and procedures necessary to establish and maintain an environment in which teaching and learning can take place. This definition is comprehensive and a helpful starting point to understand school discipline in that it includes all activities used to maintain discipline-from cruel and coercive to the nurturing and liberating. From this definition, it is easy for researchers to categorize disciplinary strategies. What emerges from these viewpoints is that discipline in the school may be seen as the exhibition of the spirit of right conduct by students and teachers in conformity with societal norms and school regulations which help in the smooth running of the school. Hence, Nakpodia (2006) also maintained that discipline in school is used to refer to the maintenance of general conditions or order without which nothing can be effectively achieved.

School disciplinary problems can be defined as attitudes or behaviors that run contrary to laid down rules and regulations of the school. All behavior problems include physical fighting, stealing, disobedience, smoking, dishonest act, purposeful destruction of school property, cheating in examinations, immoral acts, noise making, impersonations, lateness, absence from school, lying, wearing incorrect school uniform, and extortion of money and property form junior students by senior students. Hamza (2006) grouped these signs of indiscipline into anti-social acts, acts of defiance, and acts of negligence. As the society gets more corrupt, it seeps

into the school and aggravates the situation. This is why all efforts by government to introduce reforms have failed. There is need for teachers to devise techniques that will be effective in tackling problems discipline in class if lessons and overall school objectives are to be achieved.

Classroom management, a term used by teachers to describe the process of ensuring that classroom lessons run smoothly despite disruptive behavior by students, also implies according to Barbetta, Patricia, Norona, Kathleen, Leong, Bicard and David (2005), as the prevention of disruptive behavior. Learner behavior management, a broader concept to classroom management involves the management of learner's behavior within the classroom and outside the classroom. This possibly is one of the most difficult aspects of teaching for many teachers in Nigeria. The greatest challenge of an educator is to maintain order in the classroom so as to achieve academic objectives thus creating an optimal work environment (Shechman & Leichtentritt, 2004). As such, discipline which ensures the safety of educators and learners and create an environment conducive to teaching and learning is of great importance in schools today and requires attention.

Methods such as expulsion, suspension, physical punishment, detention, reprimanding, kneeling, guidance and counseling, rewards, etc, are used in managing students' behavior problem in schools and these methods of establishing and maintaining student discipline in schools could not be applied wholesale, but they were contingent upon the environment (Enose, 2012). Thus the effectiveness of each method depended on the tradition ethos of schools and their environment. Principals of secondary schools should help teachers and students to overcome disciplinary problems by employing management techniques that will help achieve the objectives of secondary education. Bear (2010) suggested the following as management techniques for resolving disciplinary problems: develop social problem-solving and decision-making skills with each student's, establish and maintain close communication with each student's parents/guardians; provide academic instruction and activities that motivate learning; create a physical environment that is conducive to teaching and learning; frequent monitor student behavior and respond immediately to signs of misbehavior; and use praise and rewards strategically to maximize effectiveness in improving while minimizing the risk of diminishing intrinsic motivation. Based on the above settings, the researcher therefore investigates on the deterrents of classroom discipline management in public secondary schools in Ngor-Okpala LGA of Imo state. The problem of indiscipline in schools has persisted over the years. These acts have either been carried out individually by the students or as a group which result to rioting or revolts. There is no doubt that student indiscipline generally militates against effective teaching and learning in school. It is therefore, observes that some parents appear to have left their parental roles or responsibilities towards their children. If the teachers are frustrated and lack motivation in them, they are not likely to motivate others to learn, or occupy their time in productive education. The government contributes to indiscipline by not providing adequate facilities/equipment in the school. The problems of this study posed as a question is what are the deterrents of classroom discipline management in public secondary schools in Ngor-Okpala LGA of Imo State.

The general purpose of this study is to investigate the deterrents of classroom discipline management in public secondary schools in Ngor-Okpala LGA of Imo State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Identify the nature of classroom misbehaviors among public secondary school students.

2. Assess the strategies adopted by the teachers to manage classroom misbehaviors for effective classroom discipline.

3. Explore the deterrents to classroom discipline management in public secondary schools.

Research Questions

The researcher posed the following research questions to guide the study:

1. What is the nature of classroom misbehaviors among public secondary school students?

2. What are the strategies adopted by the teachers to manage classroom misbehaviors for effective classroom discipline?

3. What are the deterrents to classroom discipline management in public secondary schools?

Theoretical Framework

Choice Theory

Choice theory, according to Glasser (2009) involves Bringing learners to an awareness of their responsibility to make their own decision about learning and behavior in the classroom. This philosophy posits that students must have a choice, and that if they help choose their curriculum and decide on the rules in the classroom, they will then have ownership of their learning, have pride in their participation, will have higher self-esteem and will exhibit greater levels of self-confidence and higher levels of cognition. This approach to classroom management creates a safe space to learn, as mainly it is their space, their classroom, and they own it. When this sense of ownership is established, they will come to class willingly and with enthusiasm because they want to be challenged.

Empirical Studies

Osakwe (2013) explained the management technique of principals for resolving disciplinary problems. Two research questions and two hypotheses were raised and tested at 0.05 level significance. Two hundred randomly selected principals from Delta State constitute the sample. The questionnaire was the instrument used. The face and content validity of the instrument was established, and the r-value of 0.70 was obtained using the split half method which measured the internal consistency. Simple regression and means were the statistical tools used to analyze the data collected. Results revealed a significant positive relationship between male and female principles management techniques for handling disciplinary problems. It also showed that there is a significant positive relationship between male and female principal's management

techniques and their assessment of student's behavioral outcomes. It was recommended that there should be re-orientation by way of counseling to fight against manifested disciplinary problems. Also, there should be adequate funding. Teachers should be motivated in order to pay proper attention to the psychological and emotional needs of the students.

Maphosa (2011) sought to establish educators insight on the disciplinary measures used to deal with minor and major forms of indiscipline in selected South African schools. The study was a descriptive survey that utilized a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. It looked into insights of 125 educators selected from 15 independent schools in one educational district in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. Data were collected mainly through a semi structured questionnaire administered on educators as well as interviews. The SPSS version 17 software was used to analyze quantitative data while content analysis was used to analyze quantitative data.

Methodology

The study was a survey research design. The survey plan specifies how data will be collected and analyzed (Chukwuneke, 2008). This design was one in which a group of people or item is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few. The research was carried out in Ngor-Okpaia LGA of Imo State. The population of the study was made up of all the 158 teachers in the 12 public secondary schools in Ngor-Okpala LGA of Imo State (SEMB, 2012/2013). There was no sampling since the whole population was used. This is because of the size of the population. The study used a questionnaire as its research instrument. A researcher structured questionnaire titled "Deterrents of Classroom Discipline Management Questionnaire" (DCDMQ) was the instrument for collecting data for this study. The questionnaire consisted of (2) sections; Section A and section B. Section A seeks information on the personal data of the respondents while Section B contains items that were used to assess the personal opinion based on the purpose of the study. The questionnaire consisted of items on the research questions using the modified 4-point likert type scale questionnaire of strongly agreed (SA) 4 points, Agreed (A) 3 points, Strongly Disagree (SD) 2 points and Disagree (D) 1 point. The questionnaire contains 15 items researcher structures questionnaire of 1-5 items in three clusters. The instrument was validated by 3 research experts from Department of Social Science Education and 2 research experts in Educational Measurement and Evaluation, all in Imo State University, Owerri. Reliability coefficient of 0.83 was realized indicating that the instrument was reliable for the study. The researcher personally administered the copies of the questionnaires to the selected sample for the study, and on the spot collection was made in order to ensure maximum return. The collected questionnaires were analyzed using mean score. A mean score of 2.5 and above were seen as (Agreed) significant while below 2.5 were considered as insignificant (Disagreed).

Results

Research Question One: What is the nature of classroom misbehaviors among secondary school students?

Table 1: Teachers mean response scores on the nature of classroom misbehaviors among secondary school students?

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	∑FX	N	X	DECISION
1.	Talking while the teacher is teaching	87	49	22	-	539	158	3.41	Agreed
2.	Eating during lesson	71	37	34	16	470	158	2.97	Agreed
3.	Fighting in the classroom	81	73	4	-	551	158	3.49	Agreed
4.	Sleeping during lesson	72	44	42	-	504	158	3.19	Agreed
5.	Leaving classroom without permission	69	47	31	11	490	158	3.10	Agreed

Table 1 revealed that the respondents agreed to all the items in this cluster with their mean score of 2.50 this indicated that all the items in this cluster are classroom misbehaviors exhibited among secondary school students.

Research Question Two: What are the strategies adopted by the teachers to manage classroom misbehaviors for effective classroom discipline?

Table 2: Strategies adopted by the teachers to manage classroom misbehaviors

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	∑FX	N	X	DECISION
1.	Giving strokes of cane	121	45	1	-	585	158	3.70	Agreed
2.	Moving student from one seat to another	74	46	36	2	508	158	3.22	Agreed
3.	Making the students to stand at the back of the classroom	86	51	21	-	539	158	3.41	Agreed
4.	Teacher asks the misbehaved student to kneel down	97	53	8	-	563	158	3.58	Agreed
5.	Giving advice to the student	101	56	1	-	574	158	3.63	Agreed

The analysis above shows that the respondents agreed to all the items in table 2 as the strategies adopted by the teachers to manage classroom misbehaviors for effective classroom discipline since their mean scores were above the accepted mean score.

Research Question Three: What are the deterrents to classroom discipline management in public secondary schools?

Table 3: Teachers mean response scores on the factors that impede effective classroom discipline in secondary schools.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	∑FX	N	X	DECISION
1.	Lack of instructional material	121	32	-	-	595	158	3.77	Agreed
2.	Unconducive learning environment	31	36	42	49	365	158	2.31	Agreed
3.	Over emphasis by parents towards the punishment given to their ward	82	44	32	-	524	158	3.32	Agreed
4.	Banish of corporal punishment	79	41	38	-	515	158	3.26	Agreed
5.	Inappropriate use of instructional material by some teachers	68	53	35	2	503	158	3.18	Agreed

All the items in table 3 were rated and sourced above the expected mean of 2.50 excerpt item 12 showing that the respondents agreed to most of the items as the factors that impede effective classroom discipline in secondary schools.

Discussion of Findings

From the result of the analysis to research question one; it was observed from the study that the following are the nature of classroom misbehaviors found among secondary school students: talking while the teacher is teaching, eating during lesson, fighting in the class, sleeping during lesson and leaving classroom without permission, hence, causing disruption of classroom activities. These misbehaviors are apparent in most of the schools in Imo State and the reason for this may be as a result of the students wanting to express themselves and the need to exercise their freedom. It may also have to do with the stage of development these students are in, most of them are in their adolescent years. These results are in line with the findings of Slavin (2000); and Hussain (2003) as in attention was identified as one of the types of misbehaviors in the schools studied. The causes of inattention were identified as a result of lack of interest on the part of the students in the lesson and lack of material for teaching and learning. Inattention might have also set in if the method of teaching is boring and if the time-table is badly arranged.

Strategies adopted by the teachers to manage classroom misbehaviours for effective classroom discipline, include among others: giving strokes of cane, moving misbehaved students from one seat to another, making the misbehaved student to stand at the back of the classroom and

giving advice to the students. These results are in line with the findings of Oladele (2004) who discovered that teachers could manage classroom misbehavior through preaching discipline in the classroom by ensuring orderliness, and power of cooperation among the students. The results showed that all the strategies adopted by the teachers were capable of controlling classroom misbehaviors among secondary school students. If the teachers are committed to using these strategies, there will be great improvement in the student's behaviors and academic performances. Furthermore, the factors that impede effective classroom discipline in secondary schools revealed that the following impedes effective classroom discipline in secondary schools: lack of instructional materials, over emphasis by parents towards the punishment of their ward, banishment of corporal punishment and inappropriate use of teaching methods by some teachers. Adentwi (1998) reporting on discipline issues in Ghanaian schools perceives school disciplinary problems as caused by teachers themselves. He enumerated certain teacher behavior, which affects student's behavior as physical appearance, lesson preparation and presentation, administration of rewards and punishment and teachers personality (i.e. whether he or she is an extrovert or introvert). He mentions shabby dressing and indecent attires by female teachers denoting nudity as a cause of indiscipline. Also, included in his account are teachers communicative pattern in which the student feels disrespected. Unsuitable lesson delivery, unfairness and inconsistency with rewards and punishments are also found to promote discipline problems in schools (Yaroson, 2004). School authorities could also cause disciplinary problems through organizational lapses manifesting in inappropriate policies and programmes.

Summary of Findings

This study presented a background that necessitated the need for the study. The study further established some objectives upon which researcher questions were raised. The study also, reviews some literatures in related areas. Among the areas reviewed were Conceptual Framework, Theoretical Framework, Empirical Studies and Summary of Literature Review etc. the study was also designed using questionnaires. The data that were collected were calculated using the mean scores. From the analysis above, the following findings were made:

1. The classroom misbehaviours found among secondary school students include among others, talking while the teacher is teaching, eating and sleeping during lessons as well as leaving classroom without permission.

2. Teacher give strokes of cane, move students from one seat to another as well as give advice to the misbehaved student as a strategy to manage classroom misbehaviors for effective classroom discipline.

3. Lack of instructional materials, over emphasis by parents towards the punishment given to their ward and banishment of corporal punishment among other factors impede effective classroom discipline in secondary schools.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the classroom misbehaviors found among secondary school students are talking while teacher is teaching as well as leaving classroom without permission. Teacher gives advice to the misbehaved student as strategies to manage classroom misbehaviors for effective classroom discipline. It was also found that lack of instructional materials; over emphasis by parents towards the punishment given to their ward and banishment of corporal punishment.

Recommendations

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

- Teachers should take time to study the misbehaving students in order to help them adjust.

- There should be re-orientation by the way of counseling in secondary schools to fight against manifested disciplinary problems. Parents are the primary custodians of morality and value system. Therefore, they should collaborate with teachers in the quest of training children/students to behave adequately well and obey school rules and regulations.

- Teachers should attend seminars organized by the state government on the need to improve the educational standard in the state.

- Parents should make themselves more available and accessible to their adolescent children. This will help to know them better and help them make positive use of their time.

- Principals should help teachers and students to overcome disciplinary problems by employing various management techniques to achieve the objectives of secondary education.

- The government should without further delay, improve on the funding of secondary schools by providing adequate instructional and infrastructural facilities necessary for effective teaching and learning. They should also workout ways of improving the social and psychological status of teachers so that they (teachers) will be motivated to pay appropriate attention to the psychological and emotional needs of the students.

- Parents should monitor what their children watch on television and the internet. The government at the state level should ensure that each school has at least one trained counselor instead of leaving the teachers to do all the work.

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