

# THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BENUE STATE

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## **Abstract**

*This study assesses the role of teachers in classroom management in secondary schools in Benue State. The study was guided by four research questions. Four hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of the study consisted of 3878 teachers in the 197 public secondary schools Benue State out of which a sample of 363 respondents in 24 public secondary schools in Benue State representing 12% of the public secondary school in the study Area was sampled. The instrument used for data collection was titled "Role of Teachers and Classroom Management Questionnaire (RTCRMQ)" Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The Chi-Square Statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that the role of teachers' communication has significant impact on the classroom management in secondary schools in Benue State. The study also found that seating arrangement made by teachers has significant impact on classroom management of in secondary school. It was therefore, recommended among others that school should organize workshops and sensitize teachers on current trends that support effective communication in the class for an enhance classroom management. Teachers should be abreast with skills that are required to improve seating arrangement in the class through seminars organized by the school.*

**Keywords:** Assesses, Role of teachers, Classroom management, Teachers' communication and Teachers' seating arrangement

## **Introduction**

It is universally recognized that the teacher is the backbone of any educational system because knowledge is transferred from the teachers to the learners. Every country is giving prime importance to the quality of teachers and national policies have been influenced by the growing realization that teachers have a key role to play in determining the quality of the output of educational institutions. Even modern technology has its own important roles in supporting the educational system; the teacher is still the vital element in the teaching and learning process especially in the classroom. The classroom can be defined as a room set aside and specifically designed and furnished for the purpose of teaching and learning. Agabi (2012) as cited in George, Sakirudeen and Adam (2017) described it as a room where students converge for the purpose of learning under the guidance of a teacher. The number of classrooms in a school is determined by the school population. It is also determined by the number of learners admitted into the school. Again, the number of teachers available, the landmass occupied and government policy affect the number of classrooms in a school. Akubue (2011) defined classroom as a place where educational plans are implemented and research findings tested. According to Akinwumiju and Agabi (2018) the classroom has the following features: the chalkboard, seat and desks, ventilation and lighting, classroom hygiene and classroom environment.

What happens in the classroom determines what the child eventually becomes morally and academically. This goes to prove how indispensable the provision of adequate, conducive, suitable and child-friendly classroom is for school children to achieve their goals (Omenyi, 2007). This implies that the classroom occupies a very important place in any system of education. It therefore implies that the classrooms need to be properly managed. Many research studies (Adegbesan 2011; Asiyai 2011; Iwuji 2012; and Osakwe 2014) reported that a conducive classroom environment is needed to promote students' academic achievement in secondary schools. Given the above situation, there is the need for the proper management of the available classrooms in secondary schools for quality and sustainability in the system.

Classroom management is an essential instrument which supports teachers' effectiveness in the discharge of their duties. A teacher is a manager who is in-charge to handle and control his/her classroom. It demands talent, skills, energy and ability from teachers to manage classrooms because it directly deals with the behaviours of learners. Teachers with highly practical vision, strategies, skills and knowledge could manage classroom effectively. According to Brophy (2016), classroom management refers to actions taken to create and maintain a learning environment conducive to successful instruction through arranging the physical environment, establishing rules and procedures, maintaining students' attention to lessons and engagement in activities. Froyen and Iverson (1999) opined that the

purpose of classroom management is to encourage students towards learning and to promote their positive behaviours. These writers further argue that positive classroom management contributes to enhanced academic achievements of students, increased teacher efficacy, improved students behaviour and teachers teaching. In the opinion of Olowo and Fashiku (2019) teachers' classroom management is referred to as actions and strategies that teachers use in the classroom to solve the problem of order in the classrooms creditably by preparing good lesson notes, make judicious use of available learning resources, make use of appropriate teaching methodology, maintain discipline and assess or evaluate students with the purpose of achieving objectives.

Managing classrooms means more than merely avoiding chaos in the classroom but establishing a routine that enables learning activity to proceed smoothly. Arikewuyo (2004) saw classroom management as the process of efficiently and effectively organizing the classroom so that learning objectives can be achieved. Organizing classroom efficiently and effectively for positive learning outcome is largely dependent on the ability of the teachers. According to Biodun (2000) as cited in Nwankwo, Omebe and Anikeze (2019) good classroom management helps to prevent unnecessary discipline problems by students in the classroom and promotes good behaviour and better academic results.

From a pedagogical standpoint, teaching and learning can only occur in an orderly and well managed classroom. Orderliness here does not only imply quiet or rigid classroom but it refers to a classroom whose activities indicate engaging students in meaningful learning. The teacher does this by adopting some practices. Classroom management practices according to, Asiyai (2011) also refer to the strategies the teacher employs in the classroom for better teaching and learning. These strategies of organizing the students in the class include: having better seating arrangements, co-coordinating their activities, monitoring their behaviours, ensuring effective learning process, providing instruction through interactive communication, getting feedback from students, preparing and utilizing instructional materials in facilitating learning, maintaining discipline among learners, evaluating learning outcome, serving as a role model, reinforcing their performance through motivational techniques, giving clear and simple directions, among others.

An important factor to consider in classroom management is classroom communication. Communication simply refers to the process of sending and receiving messages through a medium. Communication means the process which one adopts while sharing views with others. For a teacher, it is necessary to have good communication skills for the effective learning of the students. Teachers need good communication skills for facilitating the students and achieving good professional goals. Effectiveness of teaching is not dependent on technicality but on the method adopted by the teacher while teaching the students. Teachers need

clear communication for the good understanding of students and avoiding the problems for students while learning from their lecture. It is also needed by the teachers to understand first himself before teaching students (Loss, 2000). Classroom communication involves four basic factors or elements: the source (Teacher or sender, the message (lesson), the channel or means (Language-oral or written, demonstration, teaching aids etc) and the receiver (learners). Communication takes place or is achieved when a message sent is received and understood. With classroom teaching, effective communication is achieved when the learning experience presented to learners by a teacher is verified when learners use the knowledge gained from the lesson to solve practical problems. However, when the content does not take place as expected then classroom communication is said not to be effective. Good communication skills of a teacher are the basic needs of academic success of students, and professional success of life. Teachers communicates more instructions orally in classroom to students. Teacher with poor communication skills may cause failure of students to learn and promote their academics. Students need to understand what is right, and what is wrong while it totally depends upon the communication skills of teachers which in the class-room (Sherwyn, Morreale, Michael, Osborn & Pearson, 2000). Good communications minimizes the potential of unkind feeling during the process of teaching. For successful learning, the learners must be attentive toward their teacher during the lecture. Loss (2000), recommended that a teacher should communicate in clear and understandable manner. Communication is a dynamic process which needs a stable state of mind and courage to face the other and convey his/her message in effective way. Alamgir (2019) studied classroom management and pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Rivers State. The study revealed that; classroom discipline influences pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Rivers State; effective teaching enhances pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Rivers State; teacher's reward influences pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Rivers State and delegation of duties influences pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Rivers State.

Another important factor is seats and Sitting Arrangements: The desk/chairs, tables etc. should be orderly and neatly arranged with space in between seats to create room for easy movement for both a teacher and students. The arrangement of students should be such that short ones are in front and taller ones at the back except in special cases like students with short sightedness and impaired hearing or otherwise. Ezemba, Nnorom, Anyaeji and Aloysius (2021) studied the effect of classroom management practices and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Enugu State. The study found among other classroom management practices that seating arrangement have tremendous effect on

classroom management and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

The management of a classroom is to a large extent the responsibility of the classroom teacher, even though he or she can involve students or any of his colleague in this, yet the entire result of well managed or wrongly control class rests on him or her. Nwankwoala (2016) defined management as an effective and efficient organization and utilization of the available human and material resources in a certain system with the purpose(s) of achieving the set goal(s) of that system. It involves exercising of designated authority and control. Classroom management has been highlighted across numerous research studies as a major variable that affects students' academic performance (Marzano, 2018). The most obvious reason for this assertion is that, effective classroom management sets the stage for teaching and learning. It sets a tone in the classroom that captures students' attention as a necessity for effective teaching and learning (Marzano, 2008). This statement is obvious since a classroom which is chaotic and disorganized as a result of poor classroom management is highly unlikely to enhance expansive learning and students' academic performance and might, indeed, inhibit it.

### **Statement of the problem**

Teachers are responsible for the overall classroom management and instruction of their students. In order to provide a successful class, it is important that teachers have a comprehensive understanding of classroom management. Classroom management in education is very important in the realization of the objective of the education system. Good classroom management enhances teacher's effectiveness, therefore it is pertinent to note that for effective teaching and learning to take place, there should be conducive classroom environment. A conducive classroom environment increases the desire for knowledge and heightens creativity in learners. Classroom setting helps to eliminate social prejudices among learners because complexes that many arise from economic and cultural backgrounds are thereby eliminate. It also strengthens the spirit of team work and tolerance. The classroom protects learners from the vagaries of nature such as rain, storm, wind, excessive cold, heat and sunlight. A comfortable classroom allows teaching and learning to take place in spite of the season of the year or the weather condition. The professional skill of a teacher is sharpened in the classroom. Instructional activities with learners in the class help the teacher to identify his strong and weak areas. The classroom therefore provides a basis for relevant decision on the professional development of the teachers. (Akinwumiju & Agabi, 2008).

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Classroom Management is one of the neglected areas in our public primary schools, despite the fact that the success or failure of any teaching and learning process depends on the way classrooms are managed. Failure to effectively manage the classroom can have an overall negative influence on the entire school, especially in terms of sound academic performance of the school. When this happens other negative consequences such as the depletion of the student population of the school because parents/guardians prefer to enroll their children and wards in schools that are performing well academically. Bassey (2012) opined that the wider view of classroom management shows increased engagement, reduction in inappropriate and disruptive behaviours, promotion of student responsibility for academic work, and improved academic performance of students.

Teachers are facilitators of student learning and creators of the productive classroom environment. A good teacher has effective discipline skills and can promote positive behaviours and change in the classroom. A great teacher has the classroom management skills and can ensure good student behaviour, effective work in the classroom. Teachers set the class of their classroom, build a warm environment, mentor and nurture students, become role models, and listen and look for signs of problems. The classroom teacher is charged with a lot of functions to perform in the teaching and learning process. One of the most challenging functions of the classroom teacher is classroom management and control.

In the area of study, some schools have more than 40 students per class as against the teacher student ratio of 1:40 recommended by the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2013). This situation has led to spreading resources thinly and inability of the teachers to manage the class effectively, thereby, affecting the quality of education. As a result of this, indiscipline among students abounds and quality hindered. The need for the classroom teachers to possess the necessary skills to manage instruction and behaviour in secondary schools in Benue State seems to be neglected. Many studies have not been carried out on the extent of teachers' use of classroom management practices for quality teaching and learning in public and private secondary schools in the state. Hence the need for this study to upgrade the little information that is almost not in existence.

### ***Purpose of the Study***

The aim of this study is to assess the role of teachers in classroom management in secondary schools in Benue State. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Evaluate the role of teachers' communication in classroom management in secondary schools in Benue State.
2. Assess the role of teachers' seating arrangement in classroom management of in secondary school.
- 3.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions are raised to guide the study:

1. What is the role teachers' communication in classroom management in secondary schools in Benue State?
2. What is the role of teachers' seating arrangement in classroom management of in secondary school?

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses are formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. The role teachers' communication has no significant effect on the classroom management in secondary schools in Benue State.
2. The role of teachers' seating arrangement has no significant effect on classroom management of in secondary school.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted a survey research design. The survey research is a quantitative research method used for collecting data from a set of panel or respondents. The population of this study consisted of 3878 respondents out of which 197 are principals and 3681 the teachers 197 public secondary schools Benue State. (Source: Benue State Teaching Service Board, TSB, 2022). The sample size for this study comprised 363 respondents in 24 public secondary schools in Benue State representing 12% of the public secondary school in the study Area (Nwogu, 2006). The 363 respondents was based on Taro Yamene (1967) who states that for a study of known population  $N$  and error level, the minimum sample size requirement should be given by the formula.

A structured questionnaire titled: Communication and Principal-Teacher Relationship Questionnaire (CPTRQ) developed by the researcher was used for data collection. The instrument contains 10 items, which is divided into 4 clusters: A - D with each cluster addressing a research question. A four-point rating scale is provided for each item of the questionnaire as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4; Agree (A) = 3; Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

Data from the respondents were collated and analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions.

### **Results**

The researcher administered 380 copies of questionnaires to respondents and 361 were completed and returned, and data were presented according to the research questions and the hypotheses that guided the study.

**Research Question 1:** What is the role teachers' communication in classroom management in secondary schools in Benue State?

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of downward communication pattern on principal-teacher relationship in secondary school in Benue State**

S/N	Item Description	N	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	Std
1	Teachers' effectiveness in classroom communication helps to create a conducive learning environment avoid of distraction.	361	131	94	105	31	2.90	1.00
2	Good communication of the teacher helps the teacher to sustain students' interest and avoid distraction.	361	147	82	76	56	2.89	1.11
3	Good communication of the teacher instill discipline in students and helps to avoid distraction.	361	132	86	103	40	2.86	1.04
4	Effective communication engages students in class activities and this enhances good control.	361	125	65	101	70	2.68	1.14
5	Good communication in the class enables the teacher to keep the class under control.	361	128	77	98	58	2.76	1.10
<b>Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation</b>							<b>2.82</b>	<b>1.08</b>

Table 1 reveals that the mean of the 5 items ranges between 2.68 – 2.90 and S.D 1.00 to 1.14 while the grand mean is 2.82 and S.D 1.08. This result indicates that all the items have a mean score greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. This result implies that teachers' effectiveness in classroom communication helps to create a conducive learning environment avoid of distraction, good communication of the teacher helps the teacher to sustain students' interest and avoid distraction, good communication of the teacher instills discipline among students and helps to avoid distraction, effective communication engages students in class activities and this enhances good control and that good communication in the class enables the teacher to keep the class under control. The result depicts that communication is a significant role teachers played in classroom management in secondary schools in Benue State.

**Research Question 2:** What is the role of teachers' classroom seating arrangement in management of in secondary schools?



**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation the role of teachers' classroom seating arrangement in management of in secondary schools**

S/N	Item Description	N	SA	A	D	SD	x	Std
6	Proper arrangement of seats in class helps the teacher to access all students which enhances effective class management.	361	135	68	109	49	2.80	1.09
7	Well-arranged seats in class enhances teachers' effectiveness in teaching which motivates students to cooperate and avoid distraction.	361	126	67	113	55	2.73	1.10
8	Teachers seat arrangement enhance sdtudents' active participation in the class, this tends to good class management.	361	112	71	129	49	2.68	1.06
9	Teachers seat arrangement enable students to pay attention in teaching and learning process instead of distraction.	361	116	71	116	58	2.68	1.09
10	Good seating arrangement enables teachers to attend to students' individual problems and lowered distractions.	361	117	81	119	44	2.75	1.04
<b>Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation</b>							<b>2.73</b>	<b>1.08</b>

Table 2 reveals that the mean of the items 6-11 ranges between 2.68 – 2.80 and S.D 1.04 to 1.09 while the grand mean is 2.73 and S.D 1.08. This result indicates that all the items have a mean score greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50. The result entails that proper arrangement of seats in class helps the teacher to access all students which enhances effective class management, well arranged seats in class enhances teachers' effectiveness in teaching which motivates students to cooperate and avoid distraction, teachers seats arrangement enhances to active participation in the class, this tends to good class management, teachers seats arrangement enables students to pay attention in teaching and learning process instead of distraction and that good seating arrangement enable teachers to attend to students'

individual problems and lowered distractions. The result means that seating arrangement plays a potential role a teacher played in classroom management in secondary schools.

### **Testing of Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1:** The role of teachers' communication has no significant impact on the classroom management in secondary schools in Benue State.

**Table 3: Chi-Square Analysis of the Impact of the Role of Teachers' Communication on Classroom Management in Secondary School**

Responses	o	e	df	$\chi^2$	p	Remark
Strongly Disagree	51	90.3	3	38.634	.000	Significant
Disagree	96.6	90.3				
Agree	80.8	90.3				
Strongly Agree	132.6	90.3				
Total	361					

Table 3 revealed that  $p$  (sig.) is 0.000 while  $\bar{p}(x) = 0.05$  at  $df = 3$  therefore, the hypothesis of no significance is rejected. This result implies that the role of teachers' communication has significant impact on the classroom management in secondary schools in Benue State.

**Hypothesis 2:** The role of teachers' seating arrangement has no significant impact on classroom management of in secondary school.

**Table 4: Chi-Square Analysis of the Impact of the Role of Teachers' Seating Arrangement on Classroom Management in Secondary School**

Responses	o	e	df	$\chi^2$	p	Remark
Strongly Disagree	51	90.3	3	39.166	.000	Significant
Disagree	117.2	90.3				
Agree	71.6	90.3				
Strongly Agree	121.2	90.3				
Total	361					

Table 4 shows that  $p$  (sig.) is 0.000 while  $\bar{p}(x) = 0.05$  at  $df = 3$  therefore, the hypothesis of no significance is rejected. This means that the role of teachers' seating arrangement has significant impact on classroom management of in secondary school.s

### **Discussion of Finding**

Based on the analysis of the data of this study, the following findings are discussed:

The first finding revealed that communication is an enormous role teachers play in classroom management in secondary schools in Benue State. This finding means that teachers' communication creates a conducive learning environment, sustains students' interest and avoid distraction, instills discipline among students, engages students in class activities and hence, enables the teacher to keep the class under control. This finding is confirmed with test of hypothesis 1 which revealed that the role of teachers' communication has significant impact on the classroom management in secondary schools in Benue State. This finding is in line with Alamgir (2019) who found that teacher's communication skills have significant role in the academic achievement of the students.

The second finding revealed that seating arrangement is a potential role a teacher plays in classroom management in secondary schools. This finding implies that teachers' seating arrangement helps the teacher to access all students, enhances teachers' effectiveness in teaching, it enhances students' active participation in the class, enables students to pay attention in teaching and learning process and also enables teachers to attend to students' individual problems and lowered distractions. This finding is also confirmed with test of hypothesis 2 which revealed that the role of teachers' seating arrangement has significant impact on classroom management of in secondary schools. This finding is consistent with that of Ezemba, Nnorom, Anyaeji and Aloysius (2021) who found among other classroom management practices that seating arrangements have tremendous effect on classroom management and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it has been established that, teachers play significant roles in classroom management in secondary school. These roles were observed in the areas of communication and seating arrangement. The study established that teachers' communication role creates a conducive learning environment, sustains students' interest and prevents distraction, instill discipline among students, engages students in class activities and hence, enables the teacher to keep the class under control. Teachers' seating arrangement helps the teacher to access all students, enhances teachers' effectiveness in teaching, it enhances students' active participation in the class, enables students to pay attention in teaching and learning processes and also enables teachers to attend to students' individual problems and lowered distractions.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study the following are the recommendations:

- i. Schools should organize workshops and sensitize teachers on current trends that support effective communication in the class for an enhance classroom management.
- ii. Teachers to be abreast with skills that are required to improve seating arrangement in the class through seminars organized by the school.

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