An Assessment of Classroom Management Practices in Tertiary Institutions in Kebbi State

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DOI: 10.56201/ijssmr.vol.11no4.2025.pg.287.295

Abstract

This study assesses classroom management practices in tertiary institutions within Kebbi State, Nigeria, with the aim of identifying both existing and best practices. Effective classroom management is vital for fostering a conducive learning environment and ensuring academic success in higher education. The study employed a descriptive survey design, targeting 904 academic staff across the six tertiary institutions in Kebbi State, with a sample of 269 respondents determined using Research Advisors and selected through proportional sampling techniques. Data collection was carried out using a validated instrument titled Classroom Management Questionnaire (CMQ which has a reliability index of 0.961.the data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency count and percentages. The findings revealed that current classroom management practices include lesson planning, effective communication, discipline enforcement, student engagement, and the use of instructional materials and technology. These practices contribute significantly to maintaining order, promoting student participation, and enhancing the learning environment. The study also identified best practices such as establishing clear classroom rules, using positive reinforcement, building respectful teacher-student relationships, incorporating technology, and involving students in decision-making processes. These strategies were considered most effective in managing student behavior and boosting academic performance. The study concluded that adopting a combination of proactive and student-centered strategies is essential for successful classroom management. The study recommends that educational authorities and institutions invest in continuous professional development for lecturers to enhance their classroom management skills, with a focus on inclusivity, communication, and engagement. The findings provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders seeking to improve the quality of instruction and classroom experiences in higher institutions in Kebbi State.

Keywords: Classroom Management, Classroom Management Practices, Tertiary Institution

Introduction

Effective classroom management is pivotal to the success of the teaching and learning process in educational institutions. It encompasses a broad spectrum of strategies and practices employed by educators to create an environment conducive to academic achievement and personal growth. In tertiary institutions, where students are expected to engage in higher-order thinking and independent learning, the significance of robust classroom management practices cannot be overstated. Classroom management involves the orchestration of the learning environment to promote positive student behavior and academic engagement. According to Fasasi (2018), it includes the organization of instructional activities, the establishment of behavioral expectations, and the maintenance of a supportive classroom atmosphere. Effective management strategies are essential for minimizing disruptions and maximizing instructional time, thereby enhancing the overall educational experience.

The role of the teacher's personality in classroom management has been highlighted in various studies. Andabai and Basuo (2013) assert that a teacher's demeanor, communication style, and interpersonal skills significantly influence student behavior and engagement. Teachers who exhibit empathy, consistency, and fairness are more likely to foster a positive learning environment, which is crucial for effective classroom management. In the context of Nigerian tertiary institutions, classroom management practices are influenced by several factors, including institutional policies, cultural norms, and resource availability. Alabi (2019) emphasizes the need for lecturers to be well-prepared, establish clear rules, and build cordial relationships with students to create a conducive learning atmosphere. These practices are instrumental in promoting student discipline and academic success. Furthermore, the integration of instructional media has been identified as a vital component of effective classroom management. Muyiwa and Oyedeji (2022) discuss how the use of instructional media can enhance student engagement and facilitate the teaching-learning process, thereby contributing to better classroom control and management.

Despite the recognition of various classroom management strategies, there is a paucity of research focusing specifically on the practices employed in tertiary institutions in Kebbi State. This study aims to fill this gap by identifying the classroom management practices currently in use and determining the best practices that can be recommended for adoption. By doing so, it seeks to contribute to the enhancement of teaching and learning experiences in the region's higher education institutions.

Concept of Classroom Management (CM)

Effective teaching-learning process cannot be accomplished without a good classroom management and control. What goes on in the classroom among the teacher, students, and all other resources in the classroom, are important determinants of the success or otherwise of the teaching service delivery in schools. According to Egbule in Osakwe (2014) opined that Classroom management includes all efforts teachers make in the following areas, organizing the students, coordinating their activities, monitoring their behaviour, ensuring effective learning process, providing instruction through interactive communication, getting feedbacks from learners preparing and utilizing instructional materials in facilitating learning, maintaining discipline among learners, evaluating learning outcome, ensuring that the problems of above average learners are being solved, relating on one to one basis with learners, being mindful of other basic needs, providing basic information to learners, assisting learners to developing coping skills, providing an exemplary behaviour for learners to imitate, and generating interest among learners as well as reinforcing their performance through motivational techniques. Classroom management is the

process of organizing and running the classroom business. Many see it as maintaining order through the control of teachers. However, classroom management is much more than that. This also includes setting up and maintaining the teaching environment so that the educational goals can be achieved (Savage and Savage, 2010).

Classroom Management Practices in Nigeria

Effective classroom management is crucial for creating a positive and productive learning environment. Numerous strategies and techniques have been developed and implemented by educators and researchers to promote effective classroom management. The following are some of the technique's lecturers need to apply in classroom management. According to Isuku (2018), sixteen strategies are essential for achieving effective classroom management:

1. Thorough Lesson Planning: Investing time in lesson planning enables a structured and logical flow of content, helping students grasp the subject effectively.
2. Effective Classroom Arrangement: A well-organized classroom setup contributes to smooth teaching and learning, allowing teachers to recognize students' individual needs, such as sight or height differences.
3. Respecting Student Rights: Teachers should acknowledge students' rights to ask questions, express opinions, and participate freely in class discussions without fear of suppression.
4. Choosing Suitable Teaching Methods: Instruction should be delivered using methods that are relevant and effective for student comprehension.
5. Using Relevant Teaching Materials: Educational tools like textbooks and graphic organizers should be carefully selected to support and enhance learning outcomes.
6. Setting Rules and Procedures: Establishing clear guidelines for classroom behavior, such as punctuality and the use of mobile phones, promotes discipline. Breaches should have corresponding consequences.
7. Mastery of Subject Content: Teachers must have a solid understanding of the topics they teach, which keeps students engaged and builds trust in the teacher's expertise.
8. Avoiding Inappropriate Behavior: Teachers and students should refrain from unprofessional habits, such as using offensive language or exhibiting distracting actions during lessons.
9. Knowing Students Personally: Educators should recognize students' individual differences and adapt teaching approaches accordingly. Learning student names and building familiarity helps personalize instruction.
10. Creating a Safe Classroom Climate: Threatening students can harm their confidence and impede their ability to learn. A nurturing environment is more effective.
11. Maintaining Good Teacher-Student Relationships: A healthy interaction fosters student confidence and promotes a supportive classroom atmosphere, though boundaries must be maintained.
12. Treating All Students Equally: Teachers must avoid favoritism and treat each student fairly, regardless of their background.
13. Effective Use of Voice: Teachers should speak loudly and clearly enough to be heard by all students, ensuring inclusive communication, especially for those with hearing challenges.
14. Being Observant and Sensitive: Educators need to be attentive to the varying needs and behaviors of students, including those with physical or emotional challenges, and respond appropriately.
15. Demonstrating Flexibility: Teachers should be adaptable with classroom rules and methods to suit particular situations or student needs.

16. Using Questioning Techniques: Engaging students through questions based on previous lessons or familiar topics can spark interest and deepen understanding.

Objectives of the Study
The study seeks to accomplish the following objectives:
1. To identify classroom management practices used in tertiary institutions in Kebbi State.
2. To identify best classroom management practices in tertiary institutions in Kebbi State.

Research Questions
The following research questions were raised to guide this study:
1. What are the classroom management practices used in tertiary institutions in Kebbi State?
2. What are best classroom management practices in tertiary institutions in Kebbi State?

Methodology
The study utilized a descriptive survey design, enabling the gathering and statistical evaluation of quantitative data to outline the attributes of the target population. The target group consisted of 904 academic staff members from six higher education institutions in Kebbi State. A proportional sampling method was applied, selecting a sample of 269 participants to ensure balanced representation from each institution. The "Classroom Management Questionnaire" (CMQ), served as the principal tool for data gathering. The instrument's validity was determined through expert evaluations, and its reliability was verified through a pilot test using Cronbach's Alpha, which produced a reliability coefficient of 0.961, demonstrating strong internal consistency. The data were analyzed with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), using descriptive statistics like frequency counts and percentages to analyze the results.

Data Presentation and Analysis
This section is concerned with the presentation and analysis of data collected at the field

Research Question One: What are the classroom management practices used in tertiary institutions in Kebbi State?
In order to answer this research question, responses on items 1-10 under section B of the instrument titled classroom management practices were analyzed and the results are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Classroom Management Practices

S/N	ITEMS	SA		A		D		SD	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1.	Proper planning and organization of lessons contribute to a more controlled and engaged classroom environment.	193	73.7	60	22.9	5	1.9	4	1.5
2.	Frequent and proper communication with students promotes effective classroom management.	190	72.5	60	22.9	8	3.1	4	1.5
3.	Responding to behavioural issues promptly and providing appropriate consequences for misconduct is crucial for classroom discipline.	195	74.4	49	18.7	11	4.2	7	2.7
4.	Establishing mutual respect and rapport with students aids in effective classroom management	194	74.0	54	20.6	8	3.1	6	2.3
5.	Effective time management skills ensure that all topics are covered adequately and maintain student engagement.	200	76.3	47	17.9	8	3.1	7	2.7
6.	The use of positive reinforcement helps in maintaining discipline and behaviour in the classroom.	202	77.1	42	16.0	7	2.7	11	4.2
7.	Providing a variety of instructional strategies caters to different learning styles, keeping students engaged and focused.	186	71.0	55	21.0	9	3.4	12	4.6
8.	Incorporating technology in teaching enhances student interest and attentiveness in the classroom.	200	76.3	46	17.6	6	2.3	10	3.8
9.	Clear and consistent expectations and rules promote a sense of structure and discipline among students.	178	67.9	66	25.2	10	3.8	8	3.1

| 10. | The use of proactive strategies such as building positive relationships and preventive classroom management techniques reduce disruptions and promote a positive learning atmosphere. | 190 | 72.5 | 54 | 20.6 | 7 | 2.7 | 11 | 4.2 |

Source: Field work (2024)

The data from Table 1 above shows the frequency and percentage of respondent's opinion on classroom management practices. All items had a high response, items 1,2,3,4,5,6,7, and 10 had 70% and above on the strongly agree option compared to disagree with less than 5% responses which indicates that Proper planning and organization of lessons, proper communication, class discipline, establishing mutual respect and rapport with students, time management skills, positive reinforcement, incorporating technology in teaching and learning, clear consistent expectations and rules, building positive relationships and preventive classroom management techniques are the classroom management practices.

Research Question Two: What are best classroom management practices in tertiary institutions in Kebbi State?
In order to answer this research question, responses on items 1-10 under section C of the instrument titled best classroom management practices were analyzed and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 3: Best Classroom Management Practices

S/N	ITEMS	SA		A		D		SD	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1.	Establishing clear expectations and rules helps in managing a classroom effectively in tertiary institutions	206	78.6	45	17.2	5	1.9	6	2.3
2.	positive reinforcement and rewards are effective strategies for promoting good behaviour and classroom management in tertiary institutions	200	76.3	47	17.9	9	3.4	6	2.3
3.	Proactive approach in handling disruptive behaviour is vital for successful classroom management in tertiary institutions	200	76.3	45	17.2	11	4.2	6	2.3
4.	Being aware of individual student needs and provision of necessary support fosters effective classroom management in tertiary institutions.	152	58.1	31	11.8	42	16.0	37	14.1

No.	Statement							
5.	Incorporating technology and multimedia resources can enhance classroom management in tertiary institutions	210	80.2	34	13.0	9	3.4	9	3.4
6.	Use of group work and collaborative learning positively impact classroom management in tertiary institutions	199	76.0	41	15.6	16	6.1	6	2.3
7.	Building relationships and rapport with students is a key element of effective classroom management in tertiary institutions	200	76.3	39	14.9	17	6.5	6	2.3
8.	Implementing a variety of instructional strategies and engaging activities contribute to improved classroom management in tertiary institutions	196	74.8	43	16.4	13	5.0	10	3.8
9.	Establishing effective communication channels with students helps to manage classrooms successfully in tertiary institutions	215	82.1	17	6.5	21	8.0	9	3.4
10.	Involving students in the decision-making process can lead to better classroom management outcomes in tertiary institutions	156	59.5	62	23.7	20	7.6	24	9.2

Source: Field work (2024)

Table 2 above clearly shows that the agree option had a good percentage of responses for instance items 1,2,3, 95.8, 94.2, and 93.5 respectively compared to the disagree for instance items 1,2, with 4.2 and 5.8%. This implies that the best classroom management practices in Kebbi State high institutions are Effective communication, use of different instructional strategies to carter for the individual differences, building a good relationship with students, incorporating technology and multimedia resources, involving students in the decision-making process concerning their learning, providing support for students, establishing clear expectations and reinforcement.

Discussions of Findings
This section will discuss findings of the study
The findings from research question one revealed that majority of the respondents indicated the following, as the classroom management practices; proper planning, class discipline and time management skills. By combining these practices, lecturers can create a supportive and nurturing environment that encourages positive behaviour and academic achievement. The studies of Adedeji & Akomolafe (2022) support these findings. They found that proper planning, effective communication, and positive reinforcement were significant predictors of effective classroom management in Nigerian schools. Similarly, Ezechukwu (2020) identified establishing mutual respect and rapport with students, time management skills, and incorporating technology as essential classroom management practices.

Findings from research question two revealed that Effective communication, use of different instructional strategies to carter for the individual differences, building a good relationship with students, Incorporating technology and multimedia resources, Involving students in the decision-making process concerning their learning, providing support for students, and establishing clear expectations and reinforcement are some of the best classroom management practices identified in Kebbi State high institutions.

The studies of Oladele & Oyewumi (2020) support these findings. They found that effective communication and building a good relationship with students were significant predictors of effective classroom management in Nigerian secondary schools. Similarly, Adeyemi and Afolabi (2019) identified the use of different instructional strategies and incorporating technology as essential in managing diverse classrooms.

Conclusion

This study examined the classroom management practices adopted in tertiary institutions across Kebbi State, focusing on identifying both the commonly employed and the most effective strategies. The findings demonstrated that effective classroom management is multidimensional, encompassing lesson planning, communication, discipline, rapport-building, and technology integration.

Recommendations

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

1. The Kebbi State Ministry of Education should prioritize the provision of regular professional development opportunities for educators in tertiary institutions to enhance their classroom management skills, focusing on effective communication, technology integration, and behaviour management techniques.
2. Kebbi State high institutions should adopt a student-centered approach to learning, involving students in the decision-making process concerning their learning, using different instructional strategies to cater to individual differences, and providing support for students to enhance their engagement and participation in the classroom.

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