

# Classroom Management Strategies among Basic School Teachers: Toward Holistic Teacher Education

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## ABSTRACT

There have been cases when students depict unacceptable behavior traits, which need to be managed by teachers during instructional hours. Using Wolfgang and Glickman Teacher's Behavior Continuum as the theoretical framework, this study reports classroom management strategies among basic schoolteachers and their implications for teacher education in Ghana. Descriptive research design and a quantitative approach were used; questionnaire was used to gather data from the respondents. One hundred and five (105) teachers were selected using simple random sampling technique. Validity and reliability of the research instrument were tested using expert judgement and Cronbach's alpha, respectively. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were used in the analyses of the research questions. The findings were that the majority of teachers used a teacher-centered approach. It was also discovered that teachers had difficulty in managing some disruptive student behaviors, as the most prevalent disruptive behavior exhibited by students was noise making. Some teachers also agreed that once the classroom environment is conducive, it makes teaching easier because the teacher gets the full attention and concentration of students. Teachers should set an example for students by acting appropriately at all times; especially, in the classroom. It was recommended, among other things, that teachers pay extra attention to the special needs of students and encourage them to behave in the classroom. While holistic education is governed by a single underlying principle, teachers need to use a variety of approaches and strategies to foster a holistic learning culture.

**Keywords:** behavior modification, classroom management, disruption, teacher education.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Over many years, a poor learning environment in public schools has significantly hurt pupils' academic achievement. Every day, this trend has been accelerating. Teachers, parents, guidance counsellors, and other researchers have expressed concern about it due to its prominence.

At educational conferences and workshops, effective classroom management has received a lot of attention in an effort to find a long-term solution to the issue of students' subpar academic performance that exists in schools. The pupils' abilities and skills must be developed in order for them to accomplish the intended outcomes. The main areas that have been taken into account include, classroom management strategies, traditional and consistency management and co-operative discipline within the classrooms, theoretical framework: classroom management approaches, classroom management interventions, the effect of classroom management on task-behavior, the effect of task-behavior on student learning, the role of instruction and effects of classroom management on student's behavior. The main purpose of this research is to understand the impact of classroom management on student's behavior.

It appears that copious studies emerged in Ghana have not yet addressed the issue of classroom management strategies and disruptive behavior of students, especially in the Junior High School level. For instance, Ergin (2019) looked at how classroom management aided effective teaching and learning. Aliakbari *et al.* (2015) examined Iranian EFL instructors' ideas about classroom management, as well as the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their actual classroom management practices in relation to individual variables such as gender, education degree, and teaching experience.

Osai (2021) also worked on classroom management but was more concerned with the teachers' experiences with overcrowded classrooms in basic schools in Ghana. Students' behavioral concerns lead to a disruptive classroom, emphasizing the value of a teacher implementing the right management techniques in the classroom. If not changed, these negative attitudes and behaviors will hinder the children's growth and ability to get an effective education. This, therefore, precipitates the need to examine classroom management strategies in primary schools in the Sunyani West Municipality.

### A. Research Questions

- 1) What is the perception of teachers' classrooms management strategies adopted?
- 2) What prevalent disruptive behavior do students exhibit in class?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework: Wolfgang and Glickman Teacher's Behavior Continuum.

In 1980, Wolfgang and Glickman proposed a framework to describe teachers' attitudes toward discipline based on a set of psychological interpretations. Wolfgang and Glickman (1980) devised a classroom management model that progresses from interventionist to non-interventionist, with interactionist bridging the two extremes. The interventionist responds to student behavior with consequences in the light of this theory. They focused on what the human organism's external environment (people and objects) does to influence it to develop in a certain way. Non-interventionists, rather of reacting to pupils, arrange their environment in order to control the classroom proactively. The non-interventionist approach assumes that the learner has an inner desire that has to be expressed in the world. The interventionist and non-interventionist approaches are combined by the interactionist. The interactionist (who bridges the gap between the two extremes) places equal emphasis on how an individual affects his or her environment and how that environment affects that person.

Teachers may hold beliefs in and behave in accordance with all three models of discipline, but only one typically predominates, according to Wolfgang and Glickman (1980). As a result, the theory's implementation places emphasis on teachers acting in a way that reflects the equivalent amount of power that both they and their students wield. The three disciplinary models in the series are used by the teacher to govern a class, making this theory pertinent to the study. Additionally, the theory aims to clarify classroom management, the various approaches and techniques used, as well as how classroom management affects students' academic lives.

The best teachers, according to Walker *et al.* (2021), teach people rather than just concepts. Students' academic lives are supported by a well-organized classroom that fosters efficient teaching and learning. (Moore, 2020) evaluated 270 children and 19 grammar schoolteachers and found a correlation between specific classroom management techniques and learners' test scores in a number of basic schools.

### A. The Concept of Classroom Management

Wolff *et al.* (2021) sees classroom management as the procedures and techniques a teacher uses to keep a setting that is helpful to learning and student achievement. Classroom management has two distinct purposes: "It not only seeks to establish and sustain an orderly environment so students can engage in meaningful academic learning, but it also aims to enhance student social and moral growth" (Evertson & Weinstein, 2013, p. 4).

Activities in the classroom are supervised by the teacher.

Managing the classroom effectively is crucial to the teaching and learning process. Any educational system's success is greatly influenced by how well it manages the classroom. The two main parts of classroom management strategies are behavioral control and instructional management (Martin & Sass, 2021).

### B. Managing Classroom Behavior

According to Aliakbari and Heidarzadi (2015), classroom management enhances students questioning and exploration only if the learning environment is conducive. Classroom management techniques as used in this study refers to strategies adopted by teachers to ensure decorum in the classroom to and to create a conducive atmosphere for learning.

Three words that best describe effective classroom management are firm, fair, and friendly. To address inappropriate behaviors, classroom teachers use a variety of ideas and approaches-based tactics. The establishment of rules and regulations in the classroom is one illustration of a different strategy to deal with disruptive behavior. Regulation and rules play a critical role in reducing disruptive behaviors. The teacher must provide reinforcement when establishing regulations to ensure that the students will adhere to them. The reinforcement may be constructive or destructive.

Nanyele *et al.* (2018) stressed the need for creating classroom rules to involve the entire class in establishing such rules for confirming a greater extent of students' ownership and shared commitment while implementing such rules in action.

A study conducted by Al-Wadi (2018), shows that when a teacher uses positive reinforcement coupled with consistent disciplinary consequences, pupils' behavior improves. It is important to note that learners know what is expected of them. According to Canter's assertive theory, pupils must know beforehand what will happen when they comply with rules. This enables learners to be aware of their actions and inactions in the classroom. Another thing that needs consideration is that teachers should explain to the pupils why their behaviors are considered disruptive. Otukile-Mongwaketse (2018) found that what was happening in schools and classrooms to adopt inclusive education was not reflected in policy recommendations. This demonstrated a misalignment between policy and practice.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### A. Research Design and Type

In this study, a descriptive research design was used. This involves gathering and presenting data methodically in order to create a comprehensive picture of the subject under research. A descriptive design was adopted because the study's focus was to analyze classroom management and practices in selected primary schools in the Fiapre community. Sarantakos (2017) considers utilizing a descriptive survey when the goal of the research is to reach a sample of the chosen group and collect extensive data from respondents. As a result, a descriptive survey was the best design for answering the research question.

## B. Population

The target population that served as respondents for the study were schools in the district. The accessible population were teachers in the Public Basic Schools at Fiapre community on the Bono region of Ghana. The target population is the group of individuals that possess the information required by the researcher and those to which inference are to be made (Creswell, 2014). The population for this study includes students and teachers at Notre Dame Junior High School, R\C J.H.S, Presby J.H.S, Methodist J.H.S in the Fiapre community. The results of the study would have been significantly improved by studying the entire population. However, this is often impracticable owing to the limited period for the study.

## C. Sample and Sampling Technique

Out of the 143 total population, 105 teachers from the selected Junior high schools as well as teachers and heads. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a population of about 143 will take an estimated sample size of 105. Hence, the sample size for this study was determined using Krejcie and Morgan Table.

Simple random method was, the, used to select the respondents since it is free from bias and prejudice.

## D. Research Instrument

Questionnaires were used to gather data. The items on the questionnaire were adapted from Classroom Management Questionnaire (CMQ) and relevant literature. The use of the questionnaire ensured that quantifiable responses were obtained for the purpose of establishing relationships between the identified variables and the responses. Other reasons for the choice of the instrument were that questionnaire is described as structured instrument for gathering data from a potentially large number of respondents, within a shorter possible time when especially the population is easily accessible (Creswell, 2014).

## E. Validity and Reliability

To ensure validity of instrument, it was developed under close guidance of colleagues who have in-depth knowledge in Educational Administration, since content validity is determined by expert judgment. On Reliability, the questionnaire was pre-tested at Methodist Basic School on 98 teachers. The pre-test showed that the items on the instrument were adequate and covered all the objectives. Cronbach's alpha values of the test items were between 0.9 and 0.8. Pallant (2020) posits that reliability coefficient above 0.7 may be regarded satisfactory. This implies that all the items on the questionnaire were acceptable.

## F. Data Analysis

Data gathered were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Specifically, all the research questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviations). Descriptive statistics was used because it helped to describe the data in ways that could help achieve the focus of the study.

# IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

## A. Results

### 1) Perception of classrooms management strategies

TABLE I: PERCEPTION OF CLASSROOMS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
I believe a learner should be rewarded for good behavior	3.04	1.56
Learners are easily controlled through the use of punishment	3.19	1.48
Punishment makes instructional sessions easier	3.63	1.34
When students deviate, I ensure they are put back on track	3.37	1.39
I make sure classroom rules are followed by students	3.76	1.27
I monitor off task behavior of students	3.29	1.58
I use kind words as a means to encourage students	2.86	1.34
I reward learners' gifts to encourage good behavior to encourage good behavior	2.71	1.39
I use different kinds of rewards to encourage to good behavior among students	2.80	1.40

The responses on the first item 'I believe a pupil should be rewarded for good behavior' mean value of 3.04 and a standard deviation of 1.56. The standard deviation for the statement means that the responses were heterogeneous. The result implies that not many pupils should be rewarded for good behavior. It was also observed that pupils are controlled through the use of punishment, this recorded a mean 3.19 and standard deviation of 1.48. 'Punishment makes instructional sessions easier' recorded a mean of 3.63 and standard deviation of 1.34. This also had a mean value of above the cut-off point of 3.0; however, there was heterogeneity in the responses. A cursory look at the table (see Table I) suggests that respondents' perception of classrooms management strategies is not high at all. The overall mean and standard deviation were 3.18 and 1.48, respectively. This implies the perception of classroom management strategies was moderate and the corresponding standard deviation also suggests that the responses were heterogeneous.

TABLE II: PREVALENT DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR OF STUDENTS

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sleeping in class	3.20	0.60
Not complying to rules	3.35	0.54
Entering and leaving class at without permission	3.30	0.64
Eating in class	3.43	0.63
Moving about in class	3.43	0.63
Noise making	3.53	0.67
Spitting on the floor	3.25	0.69
Sleeping in class	3.20	0.60
Not complying to rules	3.35	0.54

The criterion mean score (established mean cut off point) for the prevalent behavior was 2.50. To attain the test value as the criterion measure, responses on the four-point Likert scale were scored from 4 to 1. From the Table II, it could be inferred that prevalent disruptive behavior response to the

items “not complying to rules” ( $M=3.35$ ,  $SD=0.60$ ), Moving about in class ( $M=3.43$ ,  $SD=0.63$ ), Eating in class ( $M=3.43$ ,  $SD=0.61$ ), noise making ( $M=3.53$ ,  $SD=0.673$ ), and Preventing others from contributing in class ( $M=3.35$ ,  $SD=0.604$ ), is an indication of the prevalent disruptive behavior exhibited by the students in the classroom having high levels. So, the major prevalent disruptive behavior in the schools was noise making. The result shows that much noise was experienced in most classrooms during teaching and learning. The standard deviation of all the variables implies that the responses were homogenous in nature. This could influence teachers' effectiveness in achieving their goals. In classrooms noise was more possibly attributed to the inability of teachers to lay down laws and regulations for students to comply.

### B. Discussion

Most of the teachers tend to dominate in class, neglecting students during teaching and learning. This revelation contradicts Otukile-Mongwaketse's (2018) study who found student-centeredness as a preferred classroom management style by most teachers. By not adopting student-centeredness, students would be denied valuable resources that improve learning outcomes in both academic and social trajectories of educational goals (Nanyele *et al.*, 2018).

So, the major prevalent disruptive behavior in the schools was noise making. The result shows that much noise was experienced in most classrooms during teaching and learning. The standard deviation of all the variables implies that the responses were heterogenous in nature. This could influence teachers' effectiveness in achieving their goals. In classrooms noise was more possibly attributed to the inability of teachers to lay down laws and regulations for students to comply. Wong *et al.* (2012) also found out that rules agreed upon when applied by students and teachers appear to limit dialogue. The making of noise continues to be an oddity and an iguana on certain instructors' necks. Literature results from previous studies that noise emission is an obstruction encountered by teachers.

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings above, the following are some significant conclusions drawn. Students who are allowed to take active part during instructional hours by their teachers' turns out to benefit more than students whose teachers do not allow them to take part during instructional hours. Recommendations have implications for policy makers and teachers. Teachers must be encouraged and reminded to use a student-centered approach to classroom management. Teachers practice skills that would enable them to create an environment that supports and encourages teaching and learning. Students might be better taught about the negative repercussions of disruptive behavior in class and the need to modify their ways.

The use of corporal punishment as a classroom management approach should be avoided by school authorities and teachers. Teachers, especially in the classroom, should be role models for excellent behavior in terms of how they dress, talk, and act. Teachers must also ensure that a favorable learning atmosphere is created.

Students will acquire a favorable attitude about schooling and remain attentive in class during instruction if the physical learning environment is conducive. To this end, teachers need to embrace themselves psychologically, socially, morally, and emotionally to manage people from different socio-cultural orientations.

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### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that he does not have any conflict of interest.

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