

# **PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS' COMPETENCE IN CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OSHIMILI SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, DELTA STATE.**

**BY**

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## **Abstract**

*The study investigated principals' perception of the extent of teachers' competence in classroom management in secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, Delta State. The study was guided by three research questions. It was a descriptive survey design. The population of study was 81 principals and vice principals who were all used because of their small size. An instrument was developed by the researchers titled: Principals' Perception of Teachers' Classroom Management (PPTCM) and was used for data collection. The face and content validation of instrument was done by three experts in measurement and evaluation from School of Education, Federal College of Education, (Technical), Asaba. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the internal consistency which yielded 0.82 indicating that it is reliable for use. 78 out of the 81 instruments administered were retrieved. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The result of the data analyzed revealed that teachers' technical, human relation and conceptual competence in the classroom was poor and needs much to be desired. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended amongst other things that teachers in secondary schools should be assessed by their students in classroom management through the provision of assessment form by the principal. Also, attendance to professional seminars and workshops by teachers should be made a criterion for promotion of teachers in secondary schools.*

**Keywords:** Teacher, teachers' competence, and classroom management.

## **Introduction**

A teacher is a person who helps students to acquire knowledge, competence, and virtue. Fareo (2013) defined a professional teacher as one certified to engage in interactions with learners for the purpose of effecting a change in their behaviours. Fareo further stressed that a teacher assumes different capacities such as educator, instructor, tutor, lecturer, and professor. Irrespective of difference in names, teachers at all levels of educational system impart knowledge and learning experiences at their disposal to stimulate, guide, direct and facilitate students who are their learners to acquire adequate mastery of the skills being imparted. Odehji and Oghiagbephan (2018) viewed

the teacher as the one who determines the achievement of the students and stated educational objectives. From these definitions, it can be said that the teacher is the major facilitator and stimulator of students in the teaching and learning process which majorly takes place in the classroom. The teachers' status, professional skills, competence, and efficiency at coordinating and managing the activities in the class seem critical to the performance of the students and achievement of the educational goal in general.

Classroom management by the teacher is one of the major elements of teaching and learning process which is geared towards attainment of good performance of students (Oyarekhua, 2019). This suggests that good performance can only be achieved if the teacher tries to put in place appropriate methods, strategies and good classroom managerial skills. Singh and Malik (2016) defined classroom management as the utilization of available resources in the accomplishment of stated objectives while Nwaekette, Onyema and Akiti (2015) viewed classroom management as establishment of law and order and the maintenance of discipline among students to bring about readiness to learn. This indicates that where effective classroom management is lacking, there is bound to be indiscipline in the class and teaching and learning would be disrupted or affected adversely. Ultimately, when the classroom is well-managed by the teacher, the students are ready to learn, and their performance will improve.

Management in its broad sense involves the act of planning, organizing, coordinating, and controlling group activities and using all resources at hand to achieve a set objective. Based on this, Iloh (2016) opined that classroom management by the teacher is the ability of the teacher to plan, organize, direct, and control the teaching and learning process in class, utilizing the various instructional materials and teaching methods and evaluation methods to make the learners sound. In view of these, classroom management by the teacher is the ability of the teacher to coordinate the human and material resources available for use in the class in such a way that the class

environment will be conducive for the students to learn and perform excellently. To do this, the teacher needs to be competent.

Ogogor, Ikona and Egbuchiwe viewed competence as a set of demonstrable characteristics and skills that enable and improve the efficiency and performance of a job. It is a combination of practical and theoretical knowledge, cognitive skills, behaviour and values which improve performance. Arzesh competency model in Pooley (2020) views competency as a series of knowledge, abilities, skills, experiences and behaviours which lead to effective performance of individual activities. Competence therefore can be viewed as technical abilities and skills needed in the development of a particular area of specialization. In management, competency includes emotional intelligence, skills, knowledge, motivation, social characteristics and roles in accordance with the demands of the organization. The teacher needs to harness these competencies to ensure good performance in class management.

The teacher needs competence in the basic skills needed for good classroom management because the teacher manages the class through lesson presentation, rapport with students, class organization and lesson evaluation. Hence, Iloh (2016) stated that classroom management does not occur in a vacuum. Iloh identified the universal three basic classroom management skills needed by the teacher as:

**Technical Skills:** These refer to teachers' ability to use the tools, terminologies, methodologies, processes, procedures and techniques unique to his specialized field to drive his lesson home to the learners during the lesson.

**Human Relationship Skills:** These refer to teachers' ability to effectively communicate and create inter-personal rapport between himself and his co-teachers, students and their parents in order to bring about conducive teaching-learning atmosphere.

Conceptual skills: These have to do with teachers' knowledge, mental prowess and competence in coordinating and integrating the entire interest and activities of all in the class and teachers' ability to quickly react correctly to issues which can lead to effective and efficient teaching and learning.

For an effective classroom management, teachers must be competent in these skills. It is based on this that the researchers intend to find out principals' perception of teachers' competence in classroom management in secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, Delta State.

### **Theoretical framework**

The study was guided by William Glasser's Choice theory (1998) also known as the Control theory. The theory is based on five basic principles of human needs which Glasser identified as survival, freedom, power, belonging and fun. These needs according to Glasser are the driving force behind desirable or undesirable behaviour in the classroom. The basic idea of this theory is that teachers cannot control the behaviour of their students just by telling them what to do but can play a critical role in helping them make a choice, leading to positive behavioural change. Choice theory argues that it is the responsibility of the teacher to make sure that the five basic principles of human needs are met in the students. The way to achieve this is to allow students feel accepted, share their knowledge and have a feeling of independence. The main principle of this theory is that problems or misbehavior in classroom occurs because the needs of the students are not met. This theory will help to improve teachers' competence in class management when teachers identify the survival needs of the students and make effort to meet them. Taking care of these needs will make class management easier for the teacher.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Observation shows that there is high rate of indiscipline in the classroom. Many students exhibit attitudinal problems in classroom that force one to wonder if they have any guardian around. In

most public schools, classes are rowdy, students leave the class and wonder aimlessly in the school compound. Sometimes, even with a teacher in the class, the class will still be noisy. Most times, fighting break out while the teacher is right before the class teaching. Exam malpractice goes on right before some teachers who are supposed to be invigilating. There are even a few cases of teachers exchanging words with students in the class. Academically, some students exhibit boredom and lack of interest during some classes resulting in poor performance. Despite all these, teachers generally believe in their competence and ability to control and manage their classes and rarely accept responsibility of problems emanating from their classes but are quick to shift the blame to the students. This study therefore set out to ascertain principals' perception of the extent of teachers' competence in classroom management in secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, Delta State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate principals' perception of the extent of teachers' competence in classroom management in secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, Delta State. The study seeks specifically to:

1. Find out principals' perception of the extent of technical competence of teachers in classroom management in secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, Delta State.
2. Ascertain principals' perception of the extent of human relationship competence of teachers in classroom management in secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, Delta State.
3. Examine principals' perception of the extent of conceptual competence of teachers in classroom management in secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, Delta State.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. What are principals' perceptions of the extent of teachers' technical competence in classroom management in Secondary Schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State?
2. What are principals' perceptions of the extent of teachers' human relationship competence in classroom management in secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State?
3. What are principals' perceptions of the extent of teachers' conceptual competence in classroom management in secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State?

## **Research Method**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The area covered by the study included all private and public secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government area of Delta State. The population for the study consisted of all the 81 principals and vice principals' cadres serving in the nineteen (19) private and public secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area of the State. Based on the fact that the population was manageable, the researcher decided to use the whole population of the study. The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled: Principals' Perception of Teachers' Classroom Management(PPTCM). The questionnaire had 22 items to be answered by the principals. It had responses in four point Likert format ranging from Very High Extent (VHE)=4 points, High Extent (HE)=3 points, Low Extent (LE)=2 points to Very Low Extent (VLE)=1 point. The face and content validation of instrument was done by three experts in measurement and evaluation from School of Education, Federal College of Education, Technical, Asaba. A pilot study was done using five(5) principals from

secondary schools in Oshimili North Local government, Delta State. Cronbach. Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and the result yielded a co-efficient of 0.82 indicating that it is reliable for use. Eighty one(81) copies of the instrument were administered but seventy eighty(78) was returned. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The decision rule was based on the midpoint of the scale which is 2.50. The criterion mean of 2.50 and above was taken as accepted while below 2.50 was taken as rejected.

## Results

### Research Question1

What are principals' perceptions of the extent of teachers' technical competence in classroom management in Secondary Schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, Delta State?

**Table 1:** Weighted mean score of principals' perceptions of the extent of teachers' technical competence in classroom management in secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, Delta State. (n=78).

| S/N | Items   | Mean | SD   | Decision rule |
|-----|---|------|------|---------------|
| 1   | Teachers use instructional materials often in the class.        | 2.36 | 0.85 | LE            |
| 2   | Teachers diversify methods of teaching                          | 2.32 | 0.67 | LE            |
| 3   | Teachers use the right terminologies to drive the lessons home. | 2.29 | 0.95 | LE            |
| 4   | Teachers' lesson presentation is from known to unknown.         | 2.35 | 0.96 | LE            |
| 5   | Teachers evaluate the students only at the end of the lesson.   | 2.54 | 0.81 | HE            |
| 6   | Teachers come into the class with lesson plan                   | 2.39 | 0.89 | LE            |
| 7   | Students are given fair and                                     | 2.62 | 0.75 | HE            |

|                     |   |             |      |    |
|---------------------|---|-------------|------|----|
|                     | equal treatment in the class<br>by the teacher  |             |      |    |
| 8                   | Teachers angrily walk away<br>from noisy class.   | 2.66        | 0.71 | HE |
| 9                   | Teachers take note of<br>the arrangement of the<br>students in class when<br>they come to teach | 2.03        | 0.77 | LE |
| <b>Average Mean</b> |   | <b>2.39</b> |      |    |

Table 1 with the mean scores of 2.36, 2.32, 2.29, 2.35, 2.39 and 2.03 for items 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 9 respectively showed that the respondents agreed to these items on teachers' technical competence in classroom management to a low extent while in items 5, 7 and 8 with mean scores of 2.54, 2.62 and 2.66 respectively the respondents agreed to a high extent to the stated items. The average mean score of 2.39 showed that teachers' technical competence in the stated items was to a low extent from the perception of principals in Secondary Schools in Delta State.

## Research Question 2

What are principals' perception of the extent of teachers' human relationship competence in classroom management in Secondary Schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, Delta State?

**Table 2:** Weighted mean score of principals' perceptions of the extent of teachers' human relationship competence in classroom management in secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, Delta State. (n=78).

| S/N | Items  | Mean | SD   | Decision rule |
|-----|--|------|------|---------------|
| 10  | Teachers usually have<br>Interactive and participatory<br>class with their students. | 2.15 | 0.95 | LE            |

|                     |   |             |      |    |
|---------------------|---|-------------|------|----|
| 11                  | Teachers allow students to ask questions only at the end of the lesson. | 2.69        | 0.72 | HE |
| 12                  | Teachers use sense of humour to make their class lively                 | 2.21        | 0.73 | LE |
| 13                  | Teachers call the the students by their names in class.                 | 2.23        | 0.87 | LE |
| 14                  | Teachers place rules and regulations that guide learners in class       | 2.54        | 0.81 | HE |
| 15                  | Teachers avoid calling students derogatory names in class.              | 2.40        | 0.88 | LE |
| 16                  | Teachers praise students in class to motivate them                      | 2.08        | 0.79 | LE |
| <b>Average Mean</b> |   | <b>2.32</b> |      |    |

Table 2 indicated that items 10, 12, 13, 15 and 16 have the mean scores of 2.15, 2.21, 2.23, 2.40 and 2.08 respectively. This shows a low extent acceptance of the items on teachers' human relationship competence. On the other hand, the mean score of 2.69 and 2.54 in items 11 and 14 indicated that respondents' agreement to the two items was to a high extent. The average mean score of 2.32 is an indication that teachers' human relationship competence in classroom management is to a low extent in secondary school in Delta State.

### Research Question 3

What are principals' perception of the extent of teachers' conceptual competence in classroom management in Secondary Schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, Delta State?

**Table 3:** Weighted mean score of principals' perception of the extent of teachers' conceptual competence in classroom management in secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, Delta State. (n=78).

| S/N | Items | Mean | SD | Decision rule |
|-----|-------|------|----|---------------|
|-----|-------|------|----|---------------|

|                     |   |             |      |    |
|---------------------|---|-------------|------|----|
| 17                  | Teachers are limited in knowledge in their subject areas.                     | 2.65        | 0.76 | HE |
| 18                  | Teachers cover their scheme of work before examination                        | 2.67        | 0.47 | LE |
| 19                  | Teachers intimidate intelligent students so that they will not ask questions. | 2.43        | 0.93 | LE |
| 20                  | Teachers ask students to read up difficult subjects and make their own notes. | 2.40        | 0.88 | LE |
| 21                  | Teachers read from textbooks instead of teaching.                             | 2.98        | 0.79 | HE |
| 22                  | Teachers pass wrong information to students                                   | 2.17        | 0.87 | LE |
| <b>Average Mean</b> |   | <b>2.55</b> |      |    |

In table 3, items 17, 18 and 21 showed mean scores of 2.65, 2.67 and 2.98 respectively indicating agreement of the respondents to the items to a high level while the mean scores of 2.43, 2.40 and 2.17 showed the agreement of the respondents to the various items to a low level. The average mean of 2.55 is an indication that the principals agreed to the stated items to a high extent on the conceptual competence of teachers in classroom management in secondary schools in Delta State.

### **Discussion of findings**

The findings of this study are discussed under the following subheadings:

#### **Perception of Technical Competence of Teachers in the Classroom**

It was revealed from the study that the teachers' competence in the use of instructional materials in classroom was to a low extent, same as their diversity of teaching methods. This can be interpreted that most teachers who claimed competency do not often go to class with instructional

materials and also do not diversify their teaching methods. This negate competency as observed by Zeiger (2018) that competent teachers should be able to vary teaching strategies with multiple learning styles to make students stay engaged. Unachukwu and Okorji (2014) also noted that the effectiveness of a teacher in classroom depends on the teacher's use of instructional material to hold the interest of the students. The study also revealed that teachers' competence in lesson presentation, use of the right terminologies and evaluation of students needs more to be desired. According to Iloh (2011), an organized lesson presentation by the teacher, with the use of correct terminologies is the feature of a well-managed classroom. Iloh added that evaluation of a lesson should be formative and summative not just at the end of the lesson as revealed in the study. The study showed that to a high extent, teachers do not look at the arrangement of the class when they come to teach and they walk away in anger when the class is rowdy. Okwori and Ede (2012) disagreed with this attitude pointing out that teachers should make undisciplined learners to sit in front where they can be checkmated. They should be separated from their clique. This will make for a good classroom arrangement and reduce rowdiness in class instead of walking out on the students. Iloh opined that the ability of the teacher to control his class is the hallmark of a competent teacher.

### **Perception of Human Relationship Competence of Teachers in the Classroom**

The responses of principals sampled on this study showed that teachers' interaction with students in the class, teachers' use of sense of humour in the class, teachers' use of the students' names to address them in class, teachers' avoidance of derogatory names for students and teachers' use of praise to motivate students are all to a low extent. While, allowing students to ask questions only at the end of class is to a high extent. These pre-supposes that the human relationship of teachers with students in the class is not as cordial as it ought to be. This underscores teachers' competency as viewed by Makewa (2019) who explained that human relationship strategies of teachers earns students' cooperation with teachers. Makewa further added that teachers should learn to

communicate effectively by calling their students by their names, which make them feel loved and can also instill discipline in them. Cracking jokes in the class can also help to ease tension and arouse the students' interest. Teachers must not use derogatory names on students as this will create psychological problem for the student and verbal motivation by the teacher is not costly so teachers should be liberal with it to encourage the students. In agreement with these, Selvi (2012) opined that teachers' relationship with students is a yardstick for measuring teachers' competence, hence a teacher who cannot relate well with students in the afore mentioned findings cannot be said to be a competent teacher.

### **Perception of Conceptual Competence of Teachers in the Classroom**

The responses from the study that negate conceptual competence of teachers' is that to a high extent, teachers have limited knowledge of their subject area, they read from the textbooks instead of teaching. While to a low extent, they cover their scheme of work. These do not portray competence because for the teacher to be conceptually competent the teacher should use all available strategies to ensure that teaching and learning is efficient and effective including mastery of area of discipline and managing the time frame available to cover the scheme. Nwaham (2011) in disagreement to teachers reading from the textbook instead of teaching maintained that the management of classroom requires pre-classroom preparation by the teacher, which he has to put in their proper places before presenting himself to the class. This is expected to make him competent enough to face and manage his class adequately.

### **Conclusion**

This study examined principals' perception of teachers' competency in classroom management in secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State. Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that teachers need improvement in their technical, human relationship and conceptual skills which the study discovered various areas of porosity in

principals' perception of teachers' competence in classroom management in secondary schools in oshimili south local government area, delta state.

## **Recommendation**

Based on the above findings, this paper therefore recommends as follows:

1. The Federal and State government should ensure proper funding of all Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PDE) departments in tertiary institutions to enable them accommodate and train those from other discipline who find themselves in the teaching profession but lack professional competence.
2. Assessment forms should be made available for students by the principal to assess teachers' management competence. This will motivate teachers to improve their competency.
3. Secondary school teachers should be encouraged to attend seminars and workshops organized by professional association by making it a prerequisite for their promotion just like in tertiary institutions.
4. Principals should occasionally supervise teachers while they are in class and discuss with them privately on any error discovered during the supervision.
5. Every teacher should be made to possess the teachers' professional handbook and schools should be made to discuss it at the first staff meeting of every term. This will create awareness and make teachers conscious of their class management.

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