
Research

Teachers' Socio-Economic Status and Classroom Management in Public Secondary Schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract: The study examined teachers' socio-economic status and classroom management in public secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically the study was based on two specific objectives. Two research questions and null hypotheses guided the study. Survey research design was adopted. The population of the study was 1, 674 teachers in public secondary school in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 335 teachers representing 20 percent of the study population. An instrument titled " Teachers Socio-economic Status and Classroom Management Questionnaire (TSESCMQ) was used to collect data. The instrument was validated by two experts in Educational Management, and Measurement and Evaluation. Cronbach's Alpha was used to determined the reliability coefficient of the instrument. Data generated was analyzed with Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and independent t-test. Results revealed that : there is significant relationship between teachers' socio-economic status and classroom management effectiveness; and that there is significant difference in the mean score between high and low socio-economic teachers in classroom management. Thus, it was recommended that, teachers income level should be improved by government to boost their socio-economic status for effective classroom management. Secondly, teachers should see the need to improve their education level for effective classroom management.

Keywords: Teachers, Socio-economic Status, classroom management, income level, education level.

Introduction

Schools as formal organizations are made up of many elements. One of the most important elements in the school system is the classroom. Classroom is a space within the

school environment where all educational plans and programmes designed to educate individuals takes place. It is a place where teachers and learners meet for the purpose of teaching and learning. Classroom is very important in every school system, without which school cannot function to deliver educational services and programmes. Classroom management means the process of planning, organizing, directing and coordinating all the classroom resources and activities during lesson with a view to achieving the objectives of the lesson. Owan cited in Nwonkwoala (2021) defined classroom management as an orderly and professional arrangement and coordination of classroom activities in order to provide an environment conducive for teaching and learning. It is the responsibility of the teacher in ensuring that classroom is properly managed. Classroom management ensure quality teaching delivery and acquisition of knowledge among the students. It makes learners to comprehend lesson taught, thereby improving their academic performance. In line with this, Oliver (2007) opined that the ability of teachers to organize classrooms and manage the behavior of their students is critical to achieving positive educational outcomes. Classroom management involved exercising managerial control over activities within the classroom. It has to do with supervising, controlling, directing and coordinating of students and classroom activities in order to achieve educational objectives (Nwonkwoala, 2021). Bassey cited in Nwonkwoala (2021) stated that classroom management increase students engagement, reduce inappropriate and disruptive behavior, promote students responsibility for academic work and improve academic performance. Classroom management effectiveness refer to the ability of teachers to effectively coordinate students and classroom activities in a way that will ensure the achievement of the lesson.

However, one of the most challenging tasks of secondary schools is poor classroom management. Personal observation revealed that while some teachers can coordinate classroom activities effectively, many are ineffective in classroom management, thereby making it difficult to achieve lesson objectives. Many teachers especially in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria lack classroom management skills to maintain a conducive classroom environment where effective teaching and learning can take place. Poor classroom management has been identified as a major problem in secondary school system affecting both students academic performance and school goals achievement. Teachers classroom management has shown efficacy in reducing behavioral problems and improving social skills among children experiencing poverty (Gaspar & Judy, 2023).

There are many factors that can influence teachers classroom management. Among these factors include teachers' socio-economic status. Socio-economic status refers to the combined social and economic status such as education level, occupation and income level of individual or household. According to Wikipedia (2026), socio-economic is a combination of individual social and economic situation in relation to others which is consequently more changeable over time. Hart cited in Olujuwon, Jegede and Omilaye (2025), viewed socio-economic as individual degree of education, income and work obsession that affect education system. On their part, Ogunbamowo, Akeredolu, Ashon, Ligali and Ukpong (2022) referred socio-economic as social and economic variables such as income, education and employment status of an individual.

Teachers with high socio-economic status are capable to give enough time for formulation of materials and media that are needed in tomorrow teaching and learning process than teachers with low socio-economic status (Wey-Amaewhule, Barineka&Okere, 2022). According to the authors, teachers with low socio economic status are not only capable to fulfill their family basic needs but are not also able to give enough time and opportunity at home to improve their skills and knowledge which are needed to deal with daily teaching challenges.

Dimensions of teachers socio-economic status include, education level and income level. Teachers education level refer to the level of education a teacher have attained. It is the degree of educational attainment an individual acquire. It can also be referred as the level in which an individual stopped schooling. Kebbie (2022) referred educational status as the best qualification obtained by educators.Emangha and Udedeh (2018) report that educational qualifications influence administrative effectiveness. This means that teachers education level can influence their job performance. Teacher's requires advanced education and specialized training to function effectively in terms of teaching and classroom management. Teacher's high education qualification enhance pedagogical and classroom management skills which is crucial to students academic performance. Teachers with good education create more active learning time with fewer interruptions, actively observed students from afar and use more non verbal corrective feedbacks through the use of encouragement (Okenwa-ojo& Yusuf, 2023).

On the other hand, teachers income level refer to the sum total gross earnings of individual or household received from various sources such as wages, salaries, bonuses and profits from investment. Teacher's income level therefore refer to the sum total of all the

money accrued to the teacher at a point in time. High income teachers often have better preparation leading to higher job performance. An increase in teachers income lead to increase in job performance. In other words, the higher the income level of teachers, the higher the performance level. Teacher's whose income is high are likely to concentrate on their job and improve in their performance. Adanweli (2024) revealed that there is a clear connection between fair teachers wages and enhanced performance. According to the report, teachers who are fairly paid are more inspired, contented and dedicated to their duties.

From the background of the study, it appears that teachers socio-economic status has role to play in classroom management. Hence, the study examined teachers' socio-economic status and classroom management in public secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

Academic achievement of students depends to a large extent on the classroom environment where teaching and learning takes place. However, one of the problems that besieged secondary education in Cross River State and in Ikom Education Zone in particular is poor classroom management among teachers. It has been observed over the years that many teachers operate in a crowded, noisy and poorly arranged classroom. In many occasions, students were seen moving in and out of the class, sleeping and distracting others while instruction is going on. Students are left to behave as they like during classroom teaching without supervision and discipline from the teachers. This situation adversely affects academic performance and achievement of students, and contribute to unattainment of education goals.

In an attempt to savage this situation, government and school managers have been making efforts to improve teachers classroom management skills. Among these efforts include, training and development of teachers, imposition of disciplinary measures, supervision of instructional activities among others. Unfortunately, despite these efforts, poor management of classroom remain unabated in public secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State. A critical observation revealed that teachers with high socio-economic status appears to be more effective in classroom management than those with low socio economic status. It is against this backdrop that this study examined teachers' socio-economic status and classroom management in public secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

- i) To investigate the relationship between teachers socio-economic status and classroom management.
- ii) To find out the difference in the mean score between high and low socio-economic teachers in classroom management.

Research questions

- i) What is the relationship between teachers' socio-economic status and classroom management?
- ii) What is the difference in the mean score between high and low socio-economic teachers in classroom management?

Statement of hypotheses

- i) There is no significant relationship between teachers' socio-economic status and classroom management.
- ii) There is no significant difference in the mean score between high and low socio-economic teachers in classroom management.

Method

Survey research design was adopted in the study. This research design was used to enable the researchers sample a proportion of teachers population in the study area for the investigation, and generalized the result of the study. The study was carried out in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. The zone is located in the central part of Cross River State, and comprised of six Local Government Areas including, Abi, Boki, Etung, Ikom, Obubra and Yakurr. The population of the study comprised 1,674 teachers in public secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 334 teachers as sample and respondents of the study.

An instrument titled "Teachers Socio-Economic Status and Classroom Management Questionnaire (TSESCMQ)" was used to collect data. The instrument has three parts, A, B and C. Part A contain demographic data of the respondents. Part B comprised 12 items to measure teachers' socio-economic status including, education level and income level. While part C also comprised 12 items to measure classroom management in terms of classroom arrangement and supervision. The instrument was validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation, and Educational Management. Cronbach's Alpha was used in testing the reliability of the instrument. Its coefficients ranged 0.68-0.82, indicating that the instrument was reliable. Data for

the analysis was obtained by the researchers. The analysis was done using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and independent t-test for hypothesis one and two respectively.

Results

Table 1
Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis between Teachers socio-economic status and Classroom Management (N=335)

Variables	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r-value
	ΣY	ΣY^2		
Teachers socio-economic status	4061	84743	85203	0.7386
Classroom Mgt	4117	86821		

Significant at 0.05, r-critical= 0.194, df=333

The r-value of 0.819 indicates a positive correlation between Teachers socio-economic status and Classroom Management. This means that as Teachers socio-economic status increase, Classroom Management also increases. In addition, the significance of this correlation is determined by the r-critical value, which is 0.194 at a significance level of 0.05 and degrees of freedom (df) of 182. Therefore, since the calculated r-value (0.7386) is greater than the r-critical value (0.194), the correlation is statistically significant. Thus, the null hypothesis, which states that Teachers socio-economic status does not have any significant relationship with Classroom Management is rejected. Thus, it is alternately accepted that Teachers socio-economic status has a significant relationship with Classroom Management.

Table 2
The Summary of t-test Analysis of the Significant Difference in the Mean Ratings of high and low socio-economic status of teachers in classroom management (n =335)

Group	N	Mean	Std.dev.	Std Error	Mean Diff	t-value	P-value
Low	3.309	17.2036	4.63166	.35841	1.65002	3.309	.001
High	3.309	15.5536	4.49319	.34666	1.65002	3.309	.001

As shown in table 2 the p-value of 0.001 is less than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a Significant Difference in the Mean Ratings of high and low socio-economic status of teachers in classroom management.

Discussion

Hypothesis one:

Result of hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant relationship between teachers socio-economic status and classroom management. This result implies that teachers socio-economic status in terms of education and income level is an important factor that determines teachers classroom management effectiveness. This result is in line with the finding of Adanweli (2024) who revealed that there is a clear connection between fair teachers wages and enhanced performance.

Hypothesis two:

Result of hypothesis two revealed that there was a significant difference in the mean score between high and low socio-economic teachers in classroom management. This result indicated that teachers with high socio-economic status are at variance with those in low socio-economic status in terms of classroom management. The result also indicated that high socio-economic teachers are more effective in classroom management than low socio-economic teachers. This result agreed with Wey-Amaewhule et'al (2022) who report that teachers with high socio-economic status are capable to give enough time for formulation of materials and media that are needed in tomorrow teaching and learning process than teachers with low socio-economic status

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that teachers socio-economic status determined their classroom management ; and that teachers with high socio-economic status are more effective in classroom management than those with low socio-economic status.

Recommendations

- i) Government and school Principals should improve teachers income level to boost their socio-economic status for effective classroom management.
- ii) Teachers should improve their educational level by having additional qualifications to boost their socio-economic status for effective classroom management.

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