CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO ENHANCING CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN KEBBI STATE

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Abstract

This study examines the challenges and strategic approaches to enhancing classroom management practices in tertiary institutions in Kebbi State. Effective classroom management is crucial for fostering student engagement, discipline, and academic success. However, tertiary institutions in Kebbi State face several challenges, including large class sizes, disruptive student behavior, inadequate teacher training, insufficient resources, and infrastructural deficits. Using a descriptive survey research design, data was collected from 269 academic staff across six tertiary institutions. The study found that poor classroom management is largely due to the lack of professional development for educators, ineffective communication, and limited technological integration. To address these issues, the study recommends providing regular teacher training, adopting technological tools, implementing clear classroom rules, promoting collaborative learning strategies, and improving student-teacher communication. These strategies aim to create a more structured, engaging, and effective learning environment, ultimately improving educational outcomes in tertiary institutions.

Keywords: Classroom Control, Classroom Management, Classroom Discipline, Tertiary Institutions.

Introduction

Classroom management practices encompass the strategies, techniques, and methods employed by educators to create a conducive learning environment, maintain discipline, and ensure effective teaching and learning processes. These practices include lesson planning, student engagement, communication strategies, discipline enforcement, time management, and the organization of classroom activities. Effective classroom management is essential in education as it significantly influences student learning outcomes, teacher effectiveness, and overall school performance. Well-managed classrooms promote academic success, foster mutual respect between teachers and students, and create an atmosphere where learning can thrive (Isuku, 2018).

Despite its importance, classroom management has not received adequate attention in tertiary institutions, particularly in Kebbi State. Unlike primary and secondary schools, where structured discipline and management frameworks are more common, tertiary institutions often lack clear policies and training programs focused on classroom control and student engagement. Many educators in these institutions face challenges such as large class sizes, student disengagement, inadequate resources, and infrastructural deficits, all of which hinder effective teaching and learning (Ritu, Santosh, & Deb (2023). The increasing complexities of tertiary education, coupled with diverse student populations and evolving teaching

methodologies, further necessitate a reevaluation of classroom management approaches in higher education.

Given these challenges, this paper seeks to assess classroom management practices in tertiary institutions in Kebbi State, with a focus on identifying the key difficulties faced by educators and proposing strategic solutions to enhance the learning environment. By addressing these objectives, this research will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on classroom management and provide practical recommendations for policymakers, educators, and institutional administrators to enhance teaching effectiveness and student success in tertiary institutions in Kebbi state and Nigeria at large.

Objectives of the Study

The research is aimed at achieving the following objectives

1. To identify challenges associated with classroom management practices in tertiary institutions in Kebbi State.
2. To identify strategic means of improving classroom management practices in tertiary institutions in Kebbi State.

Research Questions

The research is guided by the following research questions

1. What are the challenges associated with classroom management practices in tertiary institution in Kebbi State?
2. What are the strategic means of improving classroom management practices in tertiary institution in Kebbi State?

Literature Review

This section reviewed literature related to challenges and strategic approaches to enhancing classroom management practices in tertiary institutions.

Concept of Classroom Management Practices

Classroom management practices refer to the strategies, techniques, and approaches that educators use to create an organized, disciplined, and engaging learning environment. These practices involve setting clear expectations, maintaining effective communication, establishing rules and routines, managing student behavior, and fostering a positive teacher-student relationship. According to Isuku (2018), classroom management is not just about controlling disruptive behavior but also about ensuring that teaching and learning occur efficiently. Effective classroom management enhances student engagement, minimizes distractions, and promotes a culture of respect and cooperation within the classroom. It also helps educators optimize instructional time, improve academic performance, and create an inclusive atmosphere where all students can thrive. In tertiary institutions, however, classroom management is often overlooked, leading to challenges such as student disengagement, lack of participation, and difficulties in maintaining discipline. Therefore, implementing structured classroom management strategies is essential for improving the quality of education and ensuring better learning outcomes.

Challenges Associated with Classroom Management Practices

Classroom management remains a fundamental aspect of the educational process, ensuring a conducive environment for learning. However, tertiary institutions in Kebbi State face several challenges that hinder effective classroom management.

1. **Teacher-Student Ratio:** One of the major challenges identified in tertiary institutions is the disproportionate teacher-student ratio. According to Ritu et al. (2023), in many developing countries, the number of students per teacher far exceeds the recommended limits, making it difficult to provide individualized attention. A high student-to-teacher ratio leads to poor engagement, lack of control, and increased disruptive behavior.
2. **Student Disengagement and Behavioral Issues:** Student disengagement is another prevalent challenge. According to Okoro, Okoro & Okoro (2017) student disengagement and lack of resources as major challenges facing educators in Nigerian universities. Solemani & Razmjoo (2016) observed that many students display inattentiveness, lack of motivation, and reluctance to participate in classroom activities. Disruptive behaviors such as noise-making, sleeping in class, and failure to complete assignments further exacerbate classroom management difficulties.
3. **Time Constraints and Curriculum Coverage:** Effective classroom management is often hampered by time constraints. Ezemba et al. (2020) noted that lecturers are required to cover extensive syllabi within limited time frames, often compromising the depth of teaching. The rush to complete curricula results in poor interaction between students and lecturers, reducing overall learning effectiveness.
4. **Environmental and Infrastructure Issues:** The classroom environment, including poor ventilation, noise pollution, and overcrowding, contributes to ineffective classroom management. The location of institutions, particularly in urban areas, exposes classrooms to external disturbances such as traffic noise, making it challenging for students to concentrate (Freeman, 2014).
5. **Lack of Resources and Training:** Adequate training and resources for lecturers are essential for effective classroom management. Adeyemi & Afolabi (2019) found that many tertiary institutions in Nigeria lack structured training programs for educators in classroom management techniques. This results in ineffective instructional delivery and weak student engagement strategies.

Strategic Means of Improving Classroom Management Practices

Given these challenges, several strategies have been proposed to enhance classroom management in tertiary institutions.

1. **Professional Development and Training:** Providing professional development opportunities for lecturers is essential. According to Khan (2011), training in classroom management equips educators with the skills to handle diverse classroom situations effectively. This includes exposure to conflict resolution techniques, student engagement strategies, and technology integration.
2. **Adoption of Technological Tools:** The integration of technology into classroom management can significantly improve student engagement and lesson delivery. Akomolafe & Adedeji (2019) emphasized the importance of using digital tools such

as learning management systems, interactive whiteboards, and online assessments to enhance classroom interactivity.

3. **Establishing Clear Classroom Rules and Policies:** Implementing well-defined classroom rules and policies helps create an orderly learning environment. Demir (2009) suggested that when lecturers set clear expectations regarding attendance, participation, and behavior, students are more likely to adhere to these guidelines, reducing instances of disruptive behavior.
4. **Inclusive and Student-Centered Learning Approaches:** A positive classroom culture encourages active student participation. Isuku (2018) proposed that teachers should adopt inclusive teaching strategies that consider students' diverse backgrounds and learning styles. Collaborative learning techniques, such as group discussions and peer mentoring, foster a sense of community and engagement.
5. **Continuous Assessment and Feedback:** Regular assessment and timely feedback improve classroom management by keeping students motivated and engaged. Ezechukwu & Onyike (2022) found that formative assessments, including quizzes and interactive discussions, help maintain student focus and allow lecturers to adjust their teaching approaches accordingly.
6. **Enhancing Communication and Teacher-Student Relationships:** Effective communication between lecturers and students fosters a supportive learning environment. Studies by Oladele & Oyewumi (2020) indicate that establishing mutual respect and open communication channels helps in addressing classroom challenges and promoting discipline among students.

Methodology

The research adopted a descriptive survey research design, which allowed for the collection and statistical analysis of quantitative data to describe the characteristics of the study population. The population comprised 904 academic staff from six tertiary institutions in Kebbi State. A proportionate sampling technique was used, with a sample size of 269 academic staff, ensuring fair representation across institutions. The study employed a self-structured questionnaire titled "Classroom Management Questionnaire" (CMQ) as the primary instrument for data collection. The validity of the instrument was established through expert reviews, while reliability was confirmed via a pilot test using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.961, indicating high internal consistency. Data collection was facilitated by research assistants and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), employing descriptive statistical methods such as frequency counts and percentages to interpret the findings.

Data Presentation and Analysis

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

Demographic Data of Respondents

The demographic data of the respondents was analyzed to explain the variations in their gender, qualifications, teaching experience and institution. These were summarized and presented in table 1 below.

Table 1
Respondents Demographic Data

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1.	**Gender**		
	Male	168	64.1
	Female	94	35.9
	Total	**262**	**100**
2.	**Teaching Experience**		
	1-10 Years	32	12.2
	11-20 Years	24	9.2
	21-30 Years	110	42.0
	31& above	96	36.6
	Total	**262**	**100**
3.	**Qualification**		
	Ph.D.	36	13.7
	M.Ed/MSc	141	53.8
	B.Ed/BSc.	85	32.4
	Total	**262**	**100**
4	**Respondents School**		
	KSUSTA	97	37.0
	A.A.C.O. E	84	32.1
	KSPD	18	6.9
	KBCONS	18	6.9
	COBAS	20	7.6
	CHSTJ	25	9.5
	Total	**262**	**100**

Source: Field work (2024)

Table 1 Shows that 168 (64.1%) of the respondents were male while 94 (35.9%) were female. Majority of the respondents 110 (42.0%) had a working experience of between 21 and 30 years, 96 (36.6%) 31 and above years, 32 (12.2%) 0-10 years and 24 (9.2%) 11-20 years of service. The table also shows that 36(13.7%) respondents acquired Ph.D., 141(53.8%) had M.Ed/MSc, 85(32.4%) had B.Ed/BSc. Moreso, the table shows that 97(37.0%) were from KSUSTA, 84(32.1%) A.A.C.O.E., 18(6.9%) were from KSPD, 18(6.9) from KBCONS, 20(7.6) were from COBAS and 25(9.5) were from CHSTJ.

Research Question One: What are the challenges associated with classroom management practices in tertiary institution in Kebbi State?

In order to answer this research question, responses on items 1-10 under section D of the instrument titled challenges associated with classroom management practices were analyzed and the results are presented in table 2 below.

Table 2

Challenges Associated with Classroom Management

S/N	Items	Response							
		SA	**%**	**A**	**%**	**D**	**%**	**SD**	**%**
1.	The size of the class does not in any way hinder effective classroom management in tertiary institutions	21	8.0	22	8.4	200	76.3	19	7.3
2.	Dealing with disruptive behaviour from students is a major challenge in classroom management.	224	85.5	18	6.9	13	5.0	7	2.7
3.	Managing time effectively and covering all the necessary course content is a significant challenge in classroom management.	156	59.5	54	20.6	41	15.6	11	4.2
4.	Incorporating technology and digital tools into classroom activities presents challenges for effective management.	148	56.5	10	3.8	86	32.8	18	6.9
5.	Inadequate teacher training in classroom management techniques affects student engagement and discipline.	200	76.3	46	17.6	10	3.8	6	2.3
6.	Providing individualized attention and support to students within a large class setting is challenging in classroom management.	198	75.6	42	16.0	12	4.6	10	3.8
7.	Addressing diverse learning needs and individual differences among students is challenging in classroom management.	190	72.5	41	15.6	17	6.5	14	5.3
8.	Lack of student engagement and participation poses a significant challenge in classroom management.	152	58.0	32	12.2	67	25.6	11	4.2
9.	Lack of feedback and communication between teachers and students hampers effective classroom management.	210	80.2	33	12.6	12	4.6	7	2.7
10.	Insufficient resources and facilities impact the effectiveness of classroom management.	149	56.9	50	19.1	45	17.2	18	6.9

Source: Field work (2023)

Table 2 above shows the responses of respondents on the challenges associated with classroom management practices in Kebbi State tertiary institution. Majority of the responses about 50% indicated the following as the challenges faced in maintaining effective classroom management in tertiary institutions; Large size classrooms, students disruptive behaviours, poor time management skills, inadequate teacher training, providing individualized attention and support to students within a large class setting, lack of student engagement and participation in the classroom, lack of feedback and communication between teachers and students, insufficient teaching resources and facilities, and addressing diverse learning needs and individual differences among students.

Research Question Two: What are the strategic means of improving classroom management practices in tertiary institution in Kebbi State?

In order to answer this research question, responses on items 1-10 under section E of the instrument titled strategic means of improving classroom management practices were analyzed and the results are presented in table 3 below.

Table 3

Strategic Means of Improving Classroom Management

		Response							
S/N	**Items**	**SA**	**%**	**A**	**%**	**D**	**%**	**SD**	**%**
1.	Providing regular professional development opportunities for educators can improve classroom management in tertiary institutions.	206	78.6	32	12.2	18	6.9	6	2.3
2.	The use of technology in classroom management can effectively address the challenges in tertiary institutions.	199	76.0	49	18.7	7	2.7	7	2.7
3.	Implementing clear and consistent rules/policies can help establish an orderly classroom environment.	200	76.3	42	16.0	9	3.4	11	4.2
4.	Creating a positive and inclusive classroom culture can contribute to better classroom management.	200	76.3	27	10.3	21	8.0	14	5.3
5.	Collaborative learning strategies can foster engagement and improve overall classroom management.	159	60.7	39	14.9	40	15.3	24	9.2
6.	Utilizing behaviour management techniques can effectively address disruptive behaviour in classrooms.	200	76.3	18	6.9	16	6.1	28	10.7

7.	Regular assessment and feedback on student performance contribute to effective classroom management.	188	71.8	55	21.0	10	3.8	9	3.4
8.	Providing individualized support for students with different learning needs can enhance classroom management.	139	53.1	13	5.0	87	33.2	23	8.8
9.	Effective communication between students and educators is essential for successful classroom management.	200	76.3	38	14.5	9	3.4	15	5.7
10.	Providing a supportive and respectful learning environment promotes better classroom management in tertiary institutions.	179	68.3	43	16.4	24	9.2	16	6.1

Source: Field work (2023)

Results of data analyzed in table 3 above shows the opinion of respondents on the means of improving challenges faced in managing classrooms effectively. items 1,2,3,4,6,7, and 9 had above 70% which shows a strong agreement to the fact that providing regular professional development opportunities for lecturers, the use of technology in classroom management, implementing clear and consistent rules in the classroom, collaborative learning strategies, utilizing behaviour management techniques, Regular assessment and feedback on student performance, Providing individualized support for students with different learning needs, Effective communication between students and lecturers provides a supportive and respectful learning environment.

Discussions of Findings

The findings from research question one highlights the various challenges that tertiary institution lecturers in Kebbi State face in managing their classrooms effectively. One of the primary challenges is the large size of classrooms, which can lead to disruptions and make it difficult for teachers to provide individualized attention and support to students. Additionally, students' disruptive behaviours and poor time management skills can further exacerbate the issue, creating a chaotic learning environment.

The lack of adequate teacher development training and insufficient teaching resources and facilities also hinders effective classroom management. Teachers may struggle to engage students and encourage participation, leading to a lack of feedback and communication between teachers and students. This can result in a disconnect between the teacher's instructional methods and the students' learning needs, ultimately affecting academic performance. The findings also reveal the challenge of addressing diverse learning needs and individual differences among students, which can be particularly difficult in large class settings. These challenges are supported by the studies of Adeyemi & Afolabi (2020) found that large class sizes and inadequate teacher training are significant

barriers to effective classroom management in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Similarly, Okoro, Okoro & Okoro (2017) identified student disengagement and lack of resources as major challenges facing educators in Nigerian universities.

Furthermore, these challenges underscore the need for educators and administrators in Kebbi State tertiary institutions to develop and implement effective classroom management strategies that address these issues. This may involve providing teachers with professional development opportunities, investing in additional resources and facilities, and implementing innovative instructional methods that cater to diverse learning needs. By doing so, educators can create a more conducive learning environment that promotes student engagement, participation, and academic success.

The findings from research question two highlights strategic means of improving classroom management practices in Kebbi State tertiary institutions. Providing regular professional development opportunities for lecturers is crucial in equipping them with effective classroom management skills. The use of technology in classroom management, implementing clear and consistent rules, and collaborative learning strategies can also enhance the learning environment. Additionally, utilizing behaviour management techniques, regular assessment and feedback on student performance, and providing individualized support for students with different learning needs can help address the diverse needs of students.

Effective communication between students and lecturers is also vital in creating a supportive and respectful learning environment. This can be achieved through regular feedback, active listening, and encouraging student participation. By implementing these strategies, educators can create a conducive learning environment that promotes student engagement, participation, and academic success. The studies of Ezechukwu & Onyike (2022) support these findings, they found that technology integration and collaborative learning strategies significantly improved classroom management in Nigerian universities. Similarly, Akomolafe & Adedeji (2019) identified regular assessment and feedback as crucial in enhancing student performance and classroom management.

The findings underscore the need for educators and administrators in Kebbi State tertiary institutions to prioritize these strategic means of improving classroom management practices. By doing so, they can create a supportive and respectful learning environment that caters for the diverse needs of students. This can lead to improved academic performance, increased student engagement, and better overall educational outcomes.

Recommendations

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

1. Tertiary institutions in Kebbi State should invest in infrastructure development, including the provision of adequate teaching resources and facilities, to support effective classroom management practices. Additionally, measures should be taken to reduce class sizes and promote a conducive learning environment.
2. The Kebbi State Ministry of Education should develop and implement a comprehensive classroom management policy that outlines clear guidelines and

expectations for educators, students, and parents. The policy should emphasize the importance of positive reinforcement, technology integration, and collaborative learning strategies in promoting a productive and respectful learning environment.

Conclusion

The study highlights the critical challenges affecting classroom management in tertiary institutions in Kebbi State, emphasizing issues such as large student populations, student disengagement, inadequate training for lecturers, and insufficient resources. To mitigate these challenges, the study proposes targeted interventions, including professional development programs, technological integration, the establishment of clear policies, and fostering effective communication between students and educators. By adopting these strategies, institutions can create a more conducive learning environment that enhances student engagement, participation, and overall academic performance. These findings underscore the need for policymakers and educational stakeholders to prioritize classroom management reforms to improve tertiary education standards in Kebbi State.

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