
TEACHERS AS CLASSROOM MANAGERS: COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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***Abstract:** This paper aimed at portraying the roles of teachers in classroom environment, vis-à-vis the practical relevance of counselling in facilitating his/her work of teaching and management of both human and material resources provided for the purpose of promoting and ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching and learning. The paper addressed some fundamental questions such as who is a teacher? What is teaching?, interplay between teaching and teacher, what management is; teaching and management, classroom management and discipline, modes of classroom interaction and the need for effective counselling for teachers and the taught (learners). The teacher, the learners and classroom environments are fraught with many and varied problems, today hence the need for counselling approaches and skills. In the light of these practicable recommendations are preferred to address teacher-manager and teacher-counsellor issues, which include cooperation, capacity building and re-orientation among others.*

Keywords: - Teacher, Teaching, Classroom, Synergy, Managers, Counselling, Psychological.

Introduction

In any school unit, there is usually a person who is trained and educated, charged with the responsibility of consciously imparting knowledge and experiences to the learners and commonly known and called the "teacher", especially in the Nigerian context. The teacher is therefore regarded as the pivot around which all instructional procedures revolve all intended for the learners. The teacher could be a male or female, with varied academic qualifications and levels or years of experience. In the view of Ndem (1987), and buttressed by Vishala (2012) that the total experiences of the child in school hinge on a tripod, referred to as instruction, administration and guidance. In these domains, the teacher assumes quite significant position. In the school unit generally and in the classroom in particular, the level of interaction between the teacher and the taught is so critical that could be a pointer to the success or otherwise of the whole gamut of the efficacy of teaching and learning process. Hence, the quality of the network of interactions in a given classroom situation depends greatly on the teaching and managerial skills exhibited by the class teacher. He also pointed out that a good teacher must possess high qualities of leadership since he can only be successful by inspiring students to work successful. Leadership in classroom involves knowledge, experience and an understanding of students as well as human relationship. Classroom leadership refers to exercise of authority, control, guidance and direction of the activities of students

(Owodunni, 2010). Also stressed is that it is the responsibility of the teacher to build up desirable behaviour in students and help students establish a code of conduct for themselves. Despite rather low status accorded to a teacher by the society, he/she occupies an important position in the school system, the society and indeed national development. He/she interacts with students/pupils, their parents, colleagues, school head and others. The classroom environment provides him/her with opportunities which he/she could manipulate for the sake of the learners (students) entrusted to him/her. Teacher is at best a "human engineer" and a manager of both human and non-human resources to promote learning by the students.

In the classroom environment, the teacher is expected to be surrounded by students/pupils, who are the learners, the furniture, equipment, teaching aids and other teaching and learning paraphernalia, which if properly utilized could facilitate learning on the part of the learners. The teacher is not merely an instrument of teaching, and whose numerous responsibilities are to regurgitate facts to students. By extension, he/she is to be regarded as a classroom manager. The teacher procures, produces, provides and translates the designated materials to be learned. Having been surrounded by learners, facilities, furniture, equipment and many others, it is duty bound therefore to manage them optimally and appropriately for the realization of the general goals of the institutional unit he/she is actually responsible. In this vein, this paper seeks to address the crucial role of the classroom teacher, who is faced by problems and challenges in his positions as "teacher manager". The critical functions of the teacher are much akin organisational managers. He/she plans, organises, directs, reports, evaluates and budgets on issues for teaching and learning. Owuduni (2010) observed that the three ingredients in the teaching learning situation are the teacher, subject matter and the student (learner). He notes that though the onus of learning rests with the student whether he learns or not also depends on the teacher's effectiveness in giving instruction in a way that it augments and promotes learning on the part of the student. It is therefore paramount to good teaching for the teacher to possess a solid knowledge of the specific subject matter as well as its related fields. He notes that though the onus of learning rests with the students, whether he learns or not also depends on teachers effectiveness in giving instructions in a way that promote learning on the part of the students. It is therefore paramount to good teaching for teacher to possess a solid knowledge of the specific subject matter as well as its related field.

Teaching and Teacher Defined

In an attempt to answer the question as "what is teaching?", Nzeribe (2002) opined that this question is varied and complex, because accordingly, teaching is described as polymorphous. This is because it takes on several forms and involves several activities that are correctly characterized as teaching. However, she notes that teaching remains a recurring concept central to education, despite the different schools of thought on what education should be, and the purpose of the educational system. Further to this, it was observed that even when teaching is viewed from the perspective of classroom

teaching/learning situation, activities involved are too many. Nzeribe (2002) cited Duncan (1970), who defined teaching as "...a unique professional, rational, human activity in which one creatively and imaginatively uses him/himself and knowledge to promote learning and welfare of others. Also cited was Akudolu's (1994) definition that teaching is "a systematic activity deliberately engaged in by somebody to facilitate the learning of the intended worthwhile knowledge, skills and values by another person and getting the necessary feedback. Onwuka (1981) earlier gave a rather sum of the meaning of teaching, when he mentioned that, "Teaching is a process of making it possible for someone to learn. He added that, it is an activity designed by a person more experienced, more knowledgeable and more mature with respect to learning experience to further the education of another. Teaching, he reiterated, is the provision for experiences and guidance activities designed to promote learning on the part of those engaging in the activities. A more modern conception of teaching is that it is as an attempt to help someone to acquire or change an attitude, knowledge, idea, skill or appreciation. Essentially, teaching consists of setting the stage so that someone can learn. The setting of the stage involves the teacher in influencing desirable changes in behaviour on the part of pupils (Onwuka, 1981).

Onwuka (1981), Oyekan (2000) and Nzeribe (2002) all agreed that teaching is the creating or providing opportunities from which learners can gain such experiences that will enable them acquire the knowledge, skill, attitude and appreciation that will serve as tools in life. An extension to the above, Onwuka (1981) opined that in the school situation, teaching involves the determination of worthwhile objectives, the selection and arrangement of learning experiences, guidance, motivation as well as testing and correcting with a view to ensuring and improving upon learning. These activities, according to Onwuka (1981), constitute the procedure of teaching. In responding also to the question of teaching, Choji, Agada and Milaham (2010), they remarked that teaching has no specific definition as many activities constitute teaching. Teaching, according to them, can however be said to be any process that helps to increase our knowledge through learning. Teaching therefore involves the imparting of knowledge, while learning is the acquisition of knowledge, while learning is the acquisition of knowledge. It is the teacher therefore, that organizes and performs most of what constitutes teaching activities. They also opined that teaching is as old as mankind. Oyekan (2000) was of also of the view that the school has a vital role to play in the training of children to earn gainful living for economic prosperity, social cohesion and political stability in a fast changing world. This, he observed, depends on the availability of effective and efficient teachers with powerful leadership vision in all human disciplines. To buttress the above, Oyekan (2000) posited that the teacher education programmes would be structured to equip good teacher with the appropriate professional knowledge, teaching skills, and methods, guidance-based evaluation techniques, and ethical orientations for effective performance of their duties within and out side the schools.

What is Management?

According to Hartzell (2011) management is the process of organizing, using, and controlling human activities and other resources toward specific ends; the group of persons responsible for running an organization or directing human activity toward specific ends. A manager, therefore, is anyone involved in the administration of an organization with the authority to use organizations resources, whether money, labour or equipment in furtherance of the organization's objectives.

Teaching and Management as Functions of Change

Having described the terms 'teaching' and management', it could be better stated that the duo are complementary and supplementary. Okon and Anderson (1982) pointed out that it is not enough to describe the teacher in terms of knowledge, skill, personality or other such attributes, for these all have to do with who the teacher is. They stressed that equally important in evaluation the teacher is what the teacher does, and especially the effect the teacher has on students. Teaching is not an isolated activity, for teaching occurs only if learning takes place. If the good teacher is one who produces or facilitates change on the part of students, it is of critical importance to determine the nature and direction of the change. If there are goals and objectives established for the unit of instruction, the teaching learning activity should help students reach those goals (Okon and Anderson, 1982). On the role of the teacher, he/she is described by Okon and Anderson, (1982) as technician, model, dispenser of knowledge, craftsman, cultivator, facilitator of learning. The teacher is required to epitomise excellent virtues in the classroom, the school and indeed the society where he lives or works.

Classroom Management and Discipline

The teacher as classroom manager should endeavour to ensure peace, security, stability and conducive environment and atmosphere. These are essential for effective teaching and learning. On classroom management and discipline, Choji, Agada and Milaham (2010) noted that it is an important function that teachers should not overlook. They pointed out that management applies to different organizations in different ways. School management, according to them, can be looked at in different perspective from industrial management. They cited Litterer (1979), who opined that management is a social function that gets things done; and that it takes us from some condition or state of affairs we do want, to the one that we do not want; management does this by facilitating goal setting and integrating human and material resources to achieve goals. Aspects of classroom management and discipline like keeping of various records, how to handle daily routines and disciplines, illumination and ventilation, and handling of instructional materials are teachers' task. Other aspects are the physical state of the classroom, sitting arrangement and how to manage classroom properly. The teacher as classroom manager should focus on academic and non-academic activities. He/she translates his/her professional skills and techniques to achieve greater success. Choji et al (2010) pointed out that the classroom teacher keeps various records in the process of teaching and learning. Records for the class are those basic information that are kept for the day to day

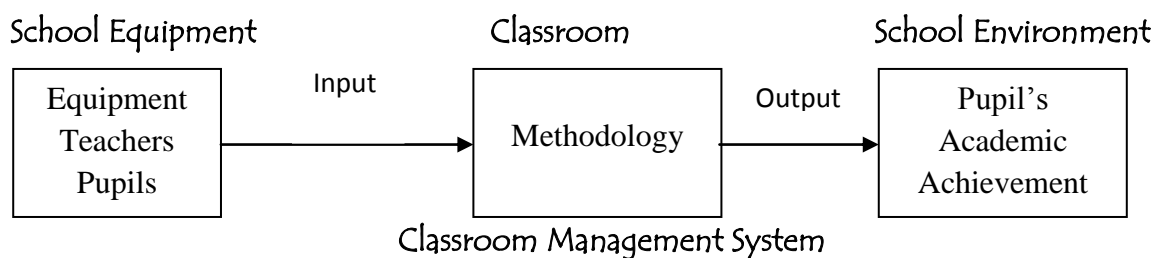
smooth administration of the class by the class teacher. They further pointed out that the physical conditions of the classroom as well as sitting arrangement need to be effectively managed by the teacher. Disciplinary problems in the classroom ought to be managed by the teacher to ensure good teaching and learning. Discipline could be seen as the ability of an individual or group to behave in conformity with the norms, values, rules and regulations of a society, community, organization or institution. Choji et al (2010) cited Ali (1997), who pointed out that once behaviour is in the contrary, the individual or group is said to be indisciplined. In this regard, the classroom teacher has very important role to play in his/her management strategy to ensure high level of discipline, as this is necessary for optimal success in the teaching and learning process. Dang (2008) also pointed out that the teacher should manage material resources such as buildings and classrooms, grounds, equipment, supplies and purchases and above all, fiscal management. This position is further supported by Nwachukwu (2009) and Lewa (2012).

Classroom Interaction and Management

In the opinion of Ojedokun and Okewole (2009), the teaching/learning process is a social system. It involves a network of interrelationship of which the classroom forms a vital link; and that the success of the entire process is a function of the effective interaction among the individuals that operate within the four walls of the classroom. They defined classroom as a room in which teaching and learning activities can take place. Classroom, they noted, provides a safe place where uninterrupted and undistracted learning can take place; and can be found in educational institutions of all kinds, including public and private schools..... "The teacher and students are therefore very important in the use of classroom for the purpose of teaching and learning. The management function of the teacher becomes more discernible in his/her dealings and interactions with learners (students) in the classroom". Adesina (1990) saw management as the organization and mobilization of all human and material resources in a particular system for the achievement of identified objectives in the system. The classroom teacher should understand the basic functions of management and apply these accordingly and appropriately in carrying out his work with the students entrusted under his/her care. These include: planning, organizing, staffing, evaluation and directing. Teacher could also manage time, energies, human and material resources. In the management function, he needs to master the basic skills, methods and techniques in order to achieve success.

Classroom Management and Operation

For the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching, learning and discipline, the teacher is critical. According to DuBey, DuBey and Ndagi (1985), classroom management is the process by which a teacher gets his/her pupils to co-operate in directing actions towards achieving the proper atmosphere in the classroom for learning. They noted that in establishing the proper atmosphere for learning, there is need to make efficient use of the resources that are put into a classroom in order to produce pupils with academic achievements that are as high as desirable and so attain the overall objective of the school. The model below shows a flow chart of the classroom management system:



Source: DuBey, D.L., Dubey, O.E.C. and Ndagi, J.O. (1985) *Teachings in the Primary School- A Course for Active Learning*. p. 157.

The Inputs

- Equipment appropriate to the level of learning activities of the pupils such as textbooks, audio-visual aids, and laboratory equipment.
- Teachers who have been trained and, where possible, have the experience to teach the pupils in that class.
- Pupils who have the academic achievement of the next lower class. In rural areas, the pupils' social background; but in urban schools the pupils going into a class might vary in age, sex, religion, family background, race, or geographic origin and the teacher must adjust his management role and behaviour according to the characteristics of the class.

Methodology according to DuBey et al (1985) is the process by which we try to achieve good class management in order to establish a proper learning atmosphere. To be able to achieve good class management, a teacher needs to pay attention to two qualities, namely, efficiency and effectiveness.

The outputs on the other hand, refer to the outputs from the classroom which includes: classroom management functions. In classroom management, a teacher performs the following major functions: planning decision-making, communicating, controlling and evaluation. The teacher should be adequately prepared for his tasks. The changing roles as a result of new developments, coupled with large class size, inadequate or lack of facilities, lack of motivation and job satisfaction to mention but a few, put most teachers in precarious position, that hardly their gotten theories are hardly practicalized for the benefit of their students and the goals of the education at the levels they operate. This is buttressed by Edem (2007) when he discussed staff, pupil and maintenance and operation of school facilities in which he has stake.

Teacher-Manager in Classroom: Counselling Psychological Perspective.

The teacher, whether practicing at primary school or secondary school level is required to possess professional and personal qualities. These are to be translated in his/her work as an instructor and manager of the situation in the classroom. The students look up to him to share in his/her wealth of experience. The vastness of his/her experience as well as managerial skills should be harnessed, focused and directed toward maximum success. Teaching, management, guidance are subsumed and should together translate into effectiveness and efficiency. From the perspective of counselling psychology, the teacher

as a professional is a human person with intelligence, aptitude, attitude, values, personality, knowledge, experience, interest and academic achievement/attainment. With practical interest and commitment to his/her call, the educational goals and objectives should be addressed and optimally realized. As a human person, despite his/her shortcomings, a lot more could be achieved. Teacher needs elements of guidance and so also his students/pupils. DuBey et al (1985) pointed out that counselling is a process by which one person tries to help another person in a person-to-person or face-to-face situation. In school, they opined, it is a discussion between a pupil with a problem and a teacher who can help the pupil to find a solution to the problem. Guidance, on the other hand, is a process of personal development in which a pupil is helped to understand, accept and to use his abilities, aptitudes and interest in order to achieve his aspirations. Guidance, in school, is a way of offering each pupil an opportunity to understand himself so that he can stand on his own feet without support (DuBey et al, 1985).

It is also pointed out that guidance comprises three components: educational guidance, vocational guidance and personal-social counselling. Counselling is regarded as the heart of guidance, and as a service, it is concerned mainly with the emotional aspect of development. The teacher as counsellor brings to the task of solving a pupil's problem his patience, understanding, sympathy and interest. DuBey et al (1985) and Olalyinka (1993) tend to agree that there is a difference between a teacher as an instructor and a teacher as a counsellor. The teacher as an instructor cares about his pupils when they fail to do well in their academic work. On the other hand, the teacher as a counsellor cares about his pupils when they are not behaving properly. In the views of DuBey et al (1985) especially, the teacher as counsellor wants to find out how they feel in order to understand why they are behaving in a particular way. The most important thing in counselling is the child's feelings and it is the task of the teacher to find out why the child feels the way he feels. In counselling, the teacher does not use his authority, but works with his pupils in a spirit of co-operation and mutual trust in order to help the pupil make the right decisions. Guidance as a broad term, with counselling as its inseparable partner are so much related to instruction/teaching, learning and management. With the diverse approaches, methods and skills/techniques, the goals of the institutional unit (school) could be promoted and realized. As trained counsellors are still scarce in the school system in Nigeria, teacher-counsellors/ Para-counsellors could be provided with the rudiments of guidance and counselling in the interest of the learners and the school system and its identifiable goals envisioned to be realized.

Recommendations

In the light of the foregoing discussions, the following recommendations are given:

1. As guidance and instructional procedures are interwoven, school –based guidance counsellors should be utilized for students' problems-solving. Guidance, being a co-operative enterprise, some basic elements should be made available to practicing teachers and prospective teachers.

2. School-based guidance personnel and teachers need to imbibe appropriately the skills to enable them improve their capacities; improve teaching and school/classroom management. Re-orientation should be given to keep abreast of new research outcomes and understanding of newer developments in pedagogy and management as relates to schools and classroom activities. Synergy is to be built and worked out because no effective teacher is an island to him/herself.
3. Students/pupils need re-orientation for attitudinal and behavioural change. They can avail themselves of opportunities for academic, vocational and personal-social guidance and counselling. Some students ignorantly shows apathy and fail to understand the practical significant of guidance and counselling as well as the essence of their schooling particularly as relates to academic attainment and positive behaviour building. With this teacher will work for their success with ease and satisfaction.

Conclusion

The teacher, apart from the pupil, is a very critical factor in the school system. His major responsibility of imparting knowledge, skills, attitudes and values is very important. He/she is not only limited in the scope of his/her functions as facilitator of learning, but seemingly a manager at best. The teacher manages human beings—their learning and behaviours, the non-human resources such as facilities, equipment and other teaching and learning aids. He ensures conducive environment within and outside the classroom in order to facilitate peace, security, stability health, conducive classroom environment and time which are necessary factors for effective and efficient teaching and learning. Counselling, as a helping profession, is found to be relevant to the teachers, learners and school authority. These roles, though changing with time, and the challenges that company these, could be better addressed through effective counselling.

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