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## TEACHERS' PROFESSION ETHICS IN CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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### ABSTRACT

The paper started with definition and importance of education to national development, also highlighted meaning, quality and commitment of teacher as critical in students' performance. Identified and articulated in the paper is Ethic and its pillars. Other concepts articulated is classroom management and teacher observed skills in classroom. The paper further pointed out clearly objectives of secondary school education and students' academic performance. Lastly the paper forwarded some recommendations to improve classroom management in Nigerian Secondary Schools.

**Keywords:** Teacher professional Ethics, classroom management and students' academic performance

### INTRODUCTION

Education remains the instrument for academic progress, social mobilization, political survival and effecting national development of any nation in the world. Education is the fundamental instrument for development of any nation. Fabunmi (2019) stated that education is a process of transmitting social values to citizen with a view to enhances their knowledge, productive capacity, income and contribution to national development. This means education paves way for total transformation of the mind and ideas for self-improvement and relative enhancement of standard of living of individual, society and country in general. The hopes of every country in the world says Alaka (2011) is to develop human capital for effective functioning of the society. Education in Nigeria according to Obadara (2013) is an invaluable instrument of political, social, economic, scientific and technological development. Secondary school education is one level of education designed for the

above objectives with qualified, committed and motivated teachers. Students all over the World view teachers as great adviser in making your choice to build a career. Teachers are the only persons who believe that you can achieve something in your life. Teachers are the only persons who enjoy the success of students with over joy and satisfaction and help you to turn your weakness into your strength.

There is need to clarify who is a teacher from the claims in some quarters that everybody is a teacher because at one time of the other, we teach ourselves, others co-worker and employees. We also teach our children, siblings, parents, friends and even enemies. This implies that throughout our lives, we are engaged in teaching. In a strictly professional sense, this explanation is too general as everybody in the world is a teacher. A teacher could be seen as a professionally prepare person who is charged with the responsibility of disseminating positive knowledge, attitudes and skills to learners in the school. Professional teachers are distinguished from quacks by the following qualities; punctuality at all school functions, cleanliness, honesty, patience, resourcefulness, discipline, good sense of humor, firmness, fair in decision making, motivate learners, a continuous learner by attending workshops, seminars, conferences, refresher and in-service courses.

### **TEACHERS' COMMITMENT TO PROFESSION**

The strength of any profession depends up on the degree of commitment of its members, teaching is no exception. This means that the strength of teaching profession depends upon the commitment of the teachers. A committed teacher is one whose behaviour is consistent with philosophy of education. The committed teacher according to Cagrl (2013) is the person who:

- Desire to be a good teacher: perhaps the most important characteristics of a committed teacher is that he/she wants to teach and do it well. The committed teacher, enjoys working with strong desire to help each student develop full potential.

- Fulfilling professional responsibility: the committed teacher recognizes professional responsibilities to students, colleagues, administrators, parents and the community, accepts, as the members of the teaching profession, the responsibility of advancing the course of education, improving the quality of teaching, promoting the welfare of other teachers, and elevating the status of the profession.
- The purveyor of facts: The committed teacher realizes that education is more than accumulating of factual information, the presentation of such information can perhaps be more effectively accomplished by the utilization of teaching machines, television, and other technological devices.
- Expected to stimulate students' spirit of understanding, inquiring, and the acquisition of knowledge and thoughtful formulation of worthy goals. Teachers most work towards providing opportunities for the practice of individual right for equal educational opportunity and success through individual effort.

A professional teacher is a prepared person, certificated by college or university to educate others in the school system. Thus, a teacher is expected to demonstrate high level acceptable to professional behaviors in relation to students and the general public. A teacher does not only show respects to ethical practices in the class but go beyond the school premises. A teacher according to Alaezi in Jumare (2015) is a person who is involved in the act of changing human behavior and transformation of society for better. To achieve this, a professional teacher;

- i. Must know subject area very well, to earn him respect from students.  
Should have acceptable behaviour, relate with the students and public with the best of manners.
- ii. Should be clean at all times, should dress cooperate especially with acceptable manners of the environment.

- iii. Should treat all students with equality, fairness and justices. This does not stop at relationships but goes to change student's behaviours.
- iv. Respects school management instructions and other laws of the land should be able to respect time, especially in lesson attendance and other school programmes. All these must be inlined with Ethics of teaching profession.

Ethics may be seen differently in environment by individual, but could mean the same in terms of meaning. Ethics as science of right and wrong, the science of moral principles, the science of moral judgment and conduct. Ethics not only analyses, classifies, describes and explains human actions as good or bad but also helps us know why and what bases our judgement of human action is justified. Thus, there is no place where ethics should exist better than education been a factory for character molding. Ethics in Educational Management according to Jumare (2015) has the following Pillars;

- i. Make the well-being of students the fundamental value of all decision-making and actions in education.
- ii. Fulfil professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity in education.
- iii. Support the principle of due process and protect the civil and human right of all individuals in education.
- iv. Obey Local, state and national laws in all education dealings.
- v. Implement the Ministry of Education's Policies and administrative rules and regulations.
- vi. Avoid using positions for personal gain in political, religion, social, economic or other influences.

Any profession derives its raw materials from the society and utilizes the raw materials to achieve set and desired objectives. Teachers in Nigeria Secondary Schools derive students from the community as raw materials to develop them to achieve national development as stated in the objectives of secondary school according to National Policy of Education (NPE, 2013): The importance of secondary education in the Nigerian Educational System cannot be under rated.

Apart from serving as the link between primary and tertiary Education, it provides opportunity for a child to acquire additional knowledge and skills, beyond the primary level. A major factor that necessitates the importance of secondary education in Nigeria is that the education being provided at the primary level is proving to be insufficient for a child to acquire permanent literacy, communicative, and numeracy skills expected of the learner at the end of the training (Cynia, 2011; Ige, 2011 and Yusuf, 2012).

Secondary education started some decades after the development of primary education, particularly when the need for outputs of primary schools to further their education in secondary schools became necessary. In Nigeria, secondary education according to Yusuf (2012) started in 1859. The aims and objectives of secondary schools' education as stated in the National Policy on Education (N.P.E, 2013) is preparing an individual for: 1. useful living within the society, and 2. higher education. Specifically, it aims at:

- Providing all primary school leavers with the opportunity for Education at higher level irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background;
- Offering diversified curriculum to cater for differences in talents, opportunities, and future roles;
- Providing trained manpower in applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades;
- Developing and promoting Nigerian languages, arts and culture in the context of the world's cultural heritage;
- Inspiring students with a desire for self-improvement and achievements of excellence;
- Fostering national unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity;

Raising a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, Respect the dignity of labour, appreciate those values specified under our broad national goals, and live as good citizens; and, providing technical knowledge and

vocational skills, necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial, and economic development. This could only be realistic if classroom is well managed professionally by teachers.

## CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

To parents and society at large, the school is being held liable for every aspect of students' performance. So, classroom management plays a very significant role in students' academic performance. Effective classroom management put the teachers in firm control of the classroom and provide orderliness and safety needed for instruction and learning. Classroom Management is one of the neglected areas in our secondary schools, despite the fact that the success or failure of any teaching and learning process depends on the way classroom are managed. Failure to effectively manage the classroom can have an overall negative influence on the entire school, especially in terms of sound academic performance of the school.

The academic performance of students of a particular classroom can be attributed to the teacher's ability to manage and control the classroom during instruction. Educational objectives cannot be fully achieved without the use of conducive classroom environment. Classroom management entails planning, supervising, controlling and coordinating the activities of students in teaching-learning process. Classroom management has been highlighted as a major variable that affects students' academic performance (Agnes, 2013). The most obvious reason for this assertion is that, effective classroom management sets the stage for teaching and learning. It sets a tone in the classroom that captures students' attention – as a necessity for effective teaching and learning. This statement is obvious since a classroom which is chaotic and disorganized as a result of poor classroom management is highly unlikely to enhance expansive learning and students' academic performance and might, indeed, inhibit it. To be successful in classroom management, teachers must pay attention to two qualities namely: authority and efficiency. Without authority any management is bound to collapse. If everyone



does what pleases the person, chaos will result and work is impossible, as a teacher, there are things you must do if you are to command respect from your students;

- a. Maintain your dignity: do not lower your dignity by getting involved in unseeingly argument or physical struggle with your students. Be a good example of what you will like your students to admire. Avoid trying to be too popular with the students, it is the mark of a weak character.
- b. Be consistent: do not be strict with discipline, one day strict and slack another. Do not show favouritism to any student. In dealing with misbehaviour, be just and fair and do not allow your emotions to control your actions. Never take action over a student if you have lost your temper; wait until you have regained it. Respect the students and their rights. Remember that even the dirty, unlovable student has a much right to kindness as any other. A sympathetic and understanding attitude to students is not a sign of weakness but of strength.
- c. Be firm: Your authority will quickly be lost if you appear to be uncertain in your decisions. Do not tell students what you want them to do apologetically, but speak to them in decisive tones showing that you expect obedience. When teaching a class for the first time it is better to be too firm than too easy. It is easier to slacken the degree of strictness than to increase it once authority has been lost. If an offence or disorder occurs, act at once. Delay may be interpreted by the students as weakness. That is not to say that you must deal with the offender at once. It may be sufficient to say to student that you will see later. If you say so, be sure that you do. An unkept promise is a lost point. Never make a threat without carrying it out.
- d. Use punishment and rewards wisely: Punishments should aim at stopping and correcting a practice which has begun and is bad. Rewards should be used to acknowledge success and effort. They can also be used as incentives. Punishments should never be so light that they become ridiculous and rewards should never be so easy to get that they lose their worth. Children, trained well,

should outgrow the need for punishments or rewards. Never allow punishments to become a form of revenge. Their object must always be to correct and reform. Students can become hardened to punishment if too frequently or undeservingly given, so always make your punishments appropriate not only to the offence but to the offender. Do not use big punishments for little offences. 'You do not need to shoot a mosquito to kill it.

- e. Be self-critical: by trying to see yourself as the students see you, you will be spared embarrassment in many situations. To carry authority, you must be aware of both your strong and your weak points. Personal mannerisms and undesirable character traits are what you must be careful about. Mannerisms may make you an object of ridicule to the students and bad character will undermine any respect you have. You should also use your common sense. Sometime as a joke or to escape punishment, students will try to fool you. Do not allow yourself to be fooled. Use your judgment. 'There's no fool like an old fool'.

The teachers are to be educated in various aspects related to classroom management:

- Organizing meaningful learning process,
- Creating a platform for the students to come out with their potentialities,
- Knowing the students,
- Motivating the students,
- Appraising every student's accomplishments,
- Creating a stimulus environment conducive for learning.

Teachers as facilitator assumes wide range of roles to support school and students access. Here the organizing role of a teacher is important to establish within a classroom.

- Facilitating the achievement of classroom mission within the constraints imposed by school and classroom settings.
- Implementing the practices and plans formulated by the school



- Realizing specific objectives of school programs through planned and effective courses of action.
- Carrying out agreed-upon tasks within the classroom in an efficient manner as possible.
- Fostering positive classroom climate through a sense of achievement resulting from success in the implementation of plan of actions.
- Achieving efficiency and optimal students learning through sound management of time, and material resources.
- Ensuring all students understanding their roles and accept tasks properly assigned to them.
- Coordinating individual and group efforts within the classroom in an appropriate way.

The success of a classroom processes depends on the inputs that are given to the students in a period of time, the time management is one of the important aspects of classroom management. The program of work and time-table provides a path for the time management and smooth going of the classroom processes. It is the time table that supplies the frame work within the work of the school processes. It is the mirror that reflects the school program. Classroom management involves how the teacher works, how the class works, how the teacher and students work together and how teaching and learning takes place. Classroom management is a skill that can be acquired like any other profession. It is a skill that must be practiced to achieve proficiency. Classroom management thus requires specific skills such as planning, organizing, as well as an aptitude for team work. It requires a great deal of commitment, initiatives, teachers' willingness to adjust, creative thinking and actions (Akinduoa, 2014). Poorly managed classrooms are usually characterized by disruptive behaviors such as sleeping, late coming, noise making, miscopying of notes, eating, calling of nicknames, verbal or physical threat to fellow students or the teachers'. These disruptive behaviors disorganize learning processes and hamper academic performance of students.

Jumare (2015), suggests that teachers can deal with these disruptive behaviors in the classroom and reduce them to the minimum through effective classroom management so that effective learning can take place. Once teachers are able to effectively reduce disruptive behaviors in the classroom, there would be increased academic attentiveness and engagement which would pave way for better academic performance by students.

Academic performance refers to the process where students' performances are measured by examination within the content of a curriculum. James (2014) viewed academic performance as the ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate knowledge verbally or on paper. In other words, academic performances refer to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers. Academic performances generally refer to how well students accomplished their tasks. Therefore, academic performances can be seen generally as a pedagogical terminology used while determining learners in formal education and is measured through reports, examinations, researches, and relating with numerous facts or variables exerting influence. The National Policy on Education (2013), has identified school academic performances content according to subjects classified as core or elective subjects. Academic performance is therefore a cardinal concept in education. The centrality of this concept is derived from the goal of instruction which is to bring about desired changes in knowledge, skills and aptitudes of students.

Parents send their wards to school in order to acquire skills and aptitude and the extent to which they do that provides an indication of the degree of efficiency of machinery of education in the formal school system. James (2014) stated that students' academic performances can be assessed at three main points which give rise to the three types of performances which are; diagnostic, formative and summative assessment. Diagnostic assessment takes place when the

course commences, formative are conditions where teachers give periodic tests, for example continuous assessment exercise, while summative tests are used by classroom teachers and external examination bodies and grades are awarded. The grades of A.B.C and F are awarded to students according to their performance by teachers or examiners. All variables associated with students' poor academic performances tend to focus on poor study habit while the effects on the nation's educational development, particularly secondary education are yet to be fully assessed (Adetuji and Olatunde, 2007). The point here is that the issues of poor academic performances of senior secondary school students in Nigeria have been of much concern to the governments, parents, teachers and even the students, hence something must be done about it and classroom management by professional teachers be part of the solutions.

#### RECOMMANDATONS;

- Government should make sure that only professional teachers are employed and those who are in the service but are not qualified should be asked to qualify within shortest possible time or leave teaching immediately.
- Free education should be given to children of teachers at all level of education in and outside Nigeria to motivate them for effective classroom management in Nigerian secondary schools.
- Free houses should be given to teachers from primary to university as obtain in Japan where teachers are given houses as national gifts from day one of employment.
- Attending workshops, seminars and conferences on classroom management should be made compulsory for all categories teachers twice a year to update their knowledge.
- Government should make salary and allowances of teachers the highest in the country so that it will attract youth with innovating brain to teaching profession hence better classroom management and students' academic performance in secondary schools.

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