

Predictive analysis of the influence of teachers' proactive classroom management strategies on students' disruptive behaviours

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Abstract: *In recent years, school disruption remains a clog in the wheel of school success. Different approaches are being adopted to manage it. This study aimed to examine the predictive role of teachers' proactive management measures by classroom management behaviour and consistency discipline on students' disruptive behaviours in secondary schools in Lagos, Nigeria. A quantitative research design was used, and 367 teachers responded to the questionnaires. Meanwhile, the self-designed questionnaire was validated and subjected to reliability with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.69. The statistical package for social sciences aided the analysis of the data collected. It was found that consistency discipline ($0.264 < 0.01$) while management behaviour did not. It was therefore suggested that training on the effective use of proactive classroom management strategies.*

Keywords: *disruptive behaviour; secondary school students; teachers; classroom management*

Introduction

Schools which are supposed to be safe places for all their stakeholders, especially their regular users (students and teachers), are facing a lot of challenges, among which are students' disruptive behaviours (Wang et al., 2020). Disruptive behaviours in schools are a growing concern globally, with significant implications for educational attainment and social development. In Nigeria, the issue of disruptive behaviour in secondary schools is particularly acute, affecting both academic performance and the general school climate. According to a report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), approximately 40% of Nigeria secondary students exhibit some form of disruptive behaviour, ranging from mild disruptions to severe acts of violence (UNESCO., 2021). Teachers' efforts to find an everlasting solution are pivotal in addressing these unpalatable behaviours. Among strategies that can be used is effective classroom management. Proactive classroom management involves strategies that prevent disruptive behaviour before it occurs rather than merely reacting to it. This includes setting clear expectations, consistent routines, and positive reinforcement, which have been shown to create a structured and supportive learning environment. Studies have demonstrated that when teachers employ proactive management techniques, there is a significant reduction in classroom disruptions and an improvement in students' academic and social outcomes (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003).

In Nigeria, the effectiveness of proactive classroom management is increasingly being recognized. A study conducted by Sunday et al. (2022) revealed that secondary schools where teachers frequently used proactive strategies experienced fewer incidents of disruptive behaviour than schools with a reactive approach. The study highlighted the importance of

teacher training programs emphasising proactive management techniques to enhance classroom discipline and student engagement. In Lagos State, Nigeria's most populous state, the challenges of managing large and diverse classrooms are particularly pronounced. Studies have indicated that teachers in Lagos face significant difficulties in maintaining discipline, often due to large class sizes and inadequate training in classroom management techniques (Atanda & Wambugu, 2022; Onasanya, 2020). Given these challenges, understanding the impact of proactive classroom management strategies on student behaviour in this context is critical.

Teachers play a pivotal role in managing students' disruptive behaviours, significantly impacting the learning environment and their academic performance. Effective classroom management is a critical skill for teachers, encompassing strategies that prevent, address, and mitigate disruptive behaviours (Franklin & Harrington, 2019). Research has shown that teachers who employ proactive classroom management techniques can create a more conducive learning atmosphere, leading to improved student engagement and reduced incidents of misbehaviour (Korpershoek et al., 2014; Marzano et al., 2003). Proactive strategies include establishing clear rules and routines, building positive relationships with students, and using positive reinforcement to encourage desirable behaviours.

A substantial body of literature highlights the effectiveness of specific classroom management strategies. For example, Australian Education Research Organisation (2023) emphasises the importance of consistency in enforcing classroom rules and procedures. Consistent application of rules helps students understand expectations and consequences, reducing the likelihood of disruptive behaviours. Additionally, teachers who demonstrate emotional support and maintain open communication with their students can foster a sense of belonging and respect within the classroom. This supportive environment not only mitigates disruptive behaviours but also promotes a positive classroom culture where students feel safe and valued (Elias, 2023). Moreover, the role of teacher training in classroom management cannot be overstated. Studies have shown that teachers who receive professional development in classroom management are better equipped to handle disruptive behaviours effectively (Franklin & Harrington, 2019; Sunday et al., 2022; Wilkinson et al., 2020). Training programmes focusing on evidence-based strategies, such as the Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework, have been particularly successful. PBIS emphasizes the proactive identification and reinforcement of positive behaviours, which can significantly decrease the occurrence of disruptions. Furthermore, teachers who feel confident in their classroom management skills are more likely to implement these strategies consistently and effectively, leading to a more harmonious and productive learning environment (Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Myers, & Sugai, 2008).

Educational research has widely examined the relationship between teachers' consistency in discipline and students' disruptive behaviours. Consistent discipline refers to the fair and predictable application of rules and consequences to manage student behaviour. According to Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering (2003), consistent discipline is crucial for establishing a structured classroom environment where students understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. When teachers apply disciplinary measures consistently, students

are less likely to engage in disruptive behaviours because they recognise that misbehaviour will reliably result in consequences. This predictability helps to reduce uncertainty and anxiety among students, which can contribute to a more focused and orderly classroom setting. Studies have shown that inconsistency in discipline can lead to increased disruptive behaviours. For example, it has been reiterated that students are more likely to test limits and engage in misbehaviour when they perceive that rules are enforced arbitrarily or unevenly (Martínez-Fernández et al., 2020). This lack of consistency undermines the teacher's authority and can create a classroom environment characterized by chaos and a lack of respect for rules. In contrast, teachers who maintain consistent discipline practices are more effective in curbing disruptive behaviours and fostering a positive classroom climate. Consistency helps reinforce the idea that rules are important and that everyone is held accountable to the same standards, which can enhance students' sense of fairness and justice within the classroom.

Moreover, the impact of consistent discipline on student behaviour is supported by findings from research on classroom management. According to Simonsen et al. (2008), effective classroom management strategies, including consistent discipline, are associated with reduced instances of disruptive behaviour and increased student engagement. These researchers highlight that consistency in implementing rules and consequences helps to establish a clear structure and expectations, which are essential for maintaining classroom order. Additionally, consistent discipline practices contribute to the development of positive teacher-student relationships, as students are more likely to respect and trust teachers who are fair and predictable in their disciplinary actions (An, 2022). This trust further enhances students' willingness to comply with classroom norms and reduces the likelihood of disruptive behaviours.

The theoretical framework for understanding this study on the predictive analysis of the influence of teachers' proactive classroom management strategies on students' disruptive behaviours is anchored on three educational and psychological theories. These include the Classroom Management Theory, the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), and the Ecological Systems Theory. Together, these theories provide a comprehensive understanding of how proactive classroom management can mitigate disruptive behaviours and promote a conducive learning environment. Classroom Management Theory, particularly the work of Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering (2003), serves as the primary foundation for this study. Marzano et al. (2003) emphasise that effective classroom management involves establishing clear rules and procedures, maintaining positive teacher-student relationships, and employing effective disciplinary interventions. Their model suggests that when teachers proactively manage their classrooms by setting clear expectations and consistently applying rules, students are less likely to engage in disruptive behaviours. This theory underlines the importance of preventive measures and structured environments in promoting positive student behaviour.

Furthermore, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan (Deci et al., 1989; Ten Cate et al., 2011) further complements this framework by highlighting the role of intrinsic motivation in student behaviour. According to SDT, students are more likely to exhibit positive

behaviours when their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are met. Proactive classroom management strategies that promote student engagement, provide opportunities for student choice, and foster supportive teacher-student relationships can enhance intrinsic motivation and reduce disruptive behaviours. For instance, when students feel respected and valued in a well-managed classroom, their sense of belonging and motivation to participate constructively increases.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) provides a broader context for understanding how various environmental factors influence students behaviour (Crawford, 2020). This theory posits that student behaviour is affected by multiple interconnected systems, including the immediate classroom environment (microsystem), the school culture (mesosystem), and broader societal influences (macrosystem) (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017). By adopting proactive classroom management strategies, teachers can create a positive microsystem that supports students' emotional and academic needs, thereby reducing the likelihood of disruptive behaviours. Additionally, a well-managed classroom can positively interact with other systems, such as parental involvement and school policies, creating a supportive network that fosters student well-being and positive behaviour. In summary, the theoretical framework for this study integrates Classroom Management Theory, Self-Determination Theory, and Ecological Systems Theory to provide a comprehensive understanding of the influence of proactive classroom management strategies on students' disruptive behaviours. This integrated approach underscores the importance of creating structured, supportive, and motivating classroom environments to promote positive student behaviours and enhance overall academic outcomes.

A study by (Marzano et al., 2003; Ningsih et al., 2023) found that teachers who received training in proactive classroom management reported a decrease in the frequency and severity of disruptive behaviours in their classrooms. This suggests that targeted interventions and professional development can equip teachers with the necessary skills to manage their classrooms effectively. Additionally, the study highlighted the role of teacher-student relationships in mitigating disruptive behaviour, emphasising the need for teachers to build trust and rapport with their students.

Despite the evidence supporting proactive classroom management, there remains a gap in the literature regarding its predictive influence on students' disruptive behaviours in the context of Lagos State secondary schools. This study seeks to fill this gap by employing predictive analysis techniques to determine the extent to which proactive classroom management strategies can predict and reduce disruptive behaviours among secondary school students in Lagos.

The findings from this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on classroom management in Nigeria and provide practical insights for educators and policymakers. By identifying effective strategies and their impact, the study aims to inform the development of training programs and policies that enhance classroom management practices, ultimately improving the educational experience for both teachers and students. Specifically, this study aimed to determine the extent of the application of disciplinary measure to tame students' disruptive behaviours in secondary schools I Lagos state, Nigeria.

Method

This study adopts a quantitative research design of cross-sectional descriptive type (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) to analyse the predictive influence of teachers' proactive classroom management strategies on students' disruptive behaviours in secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. The quantitative approach is appropriate for this study as it allows for the collection and analysis of numerical data, facilitating the identification of patterns and relationships between variables. The target population for this study includes all secondary school teachers and students in Lagos State, Nigeria. Lagos State is selected due to its large and diverse student population, which provides a comprehensive context for examining the impact of classroom management strategies. The study focuses on public secondary schools to ensure a standardized educational environment and consistent access to participants.

A simple random sampling technique was employed to select a representative sample of 367 teachers from the target population. Stratified Sampling: The secondary schools in Lagos State. Data were collected using a self-designed questionnaires designed titled "Teachers Proactive classroom management and students' disruptive behaviour "to measure the key variables of interest.

This study adopted a self-designed questionnaire to elicit information from the participants. The questionnaire is divided into four sections, A, B, C and D. section A sought the demographic information of the participants, section B contains six items that measure behaviour management, section C has six item that measure consistency discipline while section D has six items on the disruptive behaviour which is the dependent variable. The questionnaire used a Likert scale format, ranging from "Never" to "Always". The instrument was also subjected to construct and content validity. Similarly, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to assess its reliability. It yielded 0.69 coefficient.

The analysis of the data collected was done using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software version 29. While the demographic characteristics of the participants and research question one was analysed descriptively, multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictive influence of teachers' proactive classroom management strategies on students' disruptive behaviours. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, their right to withdraw at any time, and the confidentiality of their responses. Participants' identities and responses will be kept confidential.

Results and Discussion

The demographic profile of the participants who voluntarily participated in this study is presented in Table 1. The information enables readers and research finding users to have a comprehensive understanding of the nature of those that involve in the study.

Table 1. Demographic information of participants

Variable	N	%
Gender		
Male	125	34,1%
Female	242	65,9%
Years of experience		
1-5	50	13,6%
6-10	39	10,6%
11-15	90	24,5%
16-20	42	11,4%
21-25	109	29,7%
26-30	7	1,9%
31-35	30	8,2%
Academic Qualification		
NCE	29	7,9%
BSc/ED	206	56,1%
Msc/ED	119	32,4%
PhD	13	3,5%

The demographic characteristics of the participants in this study are summarized in Table 1. The sample consisted of 367 participants, with a higher proportion of females (n = 242, 65.9%) compared to males (n = 125, 34.1%). The participants varied widely in their years of teaching experience. A small portion of the sample had 1-5 years of experience (n = 50, 13.6%) and 6-10 years of experience (n = 39, 10.6%). Those with 11-15 years of experience constituted 24.5% of the sample (n = 90), and 11.4% had 16-20 years of experience (n = 42). The largest group of participants had 21-25 years of experience, making up 29.7% of the sample (n = 109). Only 1.9% had 26-30 years of experience (n = 7), and 8.2% had 31-35 years of experience (n = 30). In terms of academic qualifications, a small proportion of the participants held a Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) (n = 29, 7.9%). The majority of the teachers had a Bachelor's degree (BSc/ED) (n = 206, 56.1%). Those with a Master's degree (MSc/ED) represented 32.4% of the sample (n = 119), and a few participants had a Doctorate degree (PhD) (n = 13, 3.5%).

Research Question 1: To what extent do teachers consistently discipline their students?

The analysis of the collected data provides an insight into the extent to which teachers maintain consistency in disciplining students for disruptive behaviours. The results indicate that a small proportion of teachers never (n = 23, 6.3%) or rarely (n = 14, 3.8%) discipline students consistently for disruptive behaviours. This suggests that approximately 10.1% of the teachers exhibit low consistency in disciplinary actions, which could potentially undermine classroom management efforts and contribute to an unpredictable learning environment.

A significant portion of the teachers reported varying levels of consistency in their disciplinary practices. Specifically, 41.1% of the teachers indicated that they sometimes maintain consistent discipline (n = 151), while 13.9% often do so (n = 51). Importantly, a substantial number of teachers (n = 128, 34.9%) stated that they always maintain consistency

in disciplining students for disruptive behaviours. These findings highlight that while a majority of teachers (89.9%) demonstrate some degree of consistency in their disciplinary approaches, there is room for improvement to ensure more teachers adopt consistently reliable disciplinary practices, which are crucial for effective classroom management and minimizing disruptive behaviours.

Table 2. Multiple regression analysis disruptive behaviours of students

Variable	SE	Standardized coefficient Beta	t	p	95.0% confidence interval for B	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	.247		9.099	<.001	1.764	2.737
Behaviour management	.068	-.041	-.599	.549	-.175	.093
Consistency discipline	.073	.264	3.820	<.001	.136	.423

Dependent variable: Disruptive behaviour
Note: $R^2=.057$, $F(2,367) = 10.902$, $P<.001$

Multiple regression was conducted to determine the best linear combination for proactive classroom management (PCM) and consistency discipline for predicting disruptive behaviour among primary and secondary students. This combination of variables significantly predicted disruptive behaviours, $F(2,367) = 10.902$, $p<.001$, with only one variable (consistency discipline) significantly predicted disruptive behaviour. The beta weights presented in Table 2, suggests that consistency discipline contributes most to predicting disruptive behaviour and that classroom management behaviour negative and insignificantly contribute to this prediction. The R squared value was .057. this indicates that about 6% of the variance in disruptive behaviour was explained by the model.

The use of behavioural management by teachers in secondary school was not found to predict either increase or decrease in students' disruptive behaviour in this study. This research outcome disagrees with the earlier study that found the effectiveness of behavioural management among students in Indonesia (Ningsih et al., 2023). It is noted that teachers who use behavioural management strategies like reward can be stimulus to the response give and as such they will remain obedient, follow instructions and calm. A practical example of behavioural management is the use of reward systems. Teachers who implement rewards as part of their management strategy often aim to encourage positive behaviour by providing incentives. For instance, a teacher might give praise, stickers, or extra recess time to students who follow instructions and remain calm. The idea is that positive reinforcement will increase the likelihood of desirable behaviours being repeated. However, the current study suggests that these strategies did not have the expected impact on reducing disruptive behaviour, indicating that the effectiveness of rewards may be limited or influenced by other factors in the school environment. In the same vein, (Herman et al., 2020) found a contrary result on classroom management and self-regulating skills. Students tend to behave well classroom management strategies are put to use by their teachers. Ultimately, the discrepancies

between these studies highlight the importance of considering contextual and implementation factors when evaluating the effectiveness of behavioural management strategies. While reward systems and structured classroom management have been shown to be effective in some settings, they may not produce the same results universally. Factors such as cultural norms, teacher training, student demographics, and the overall school environment can all influence the impact of these strategies.

This study found that teacher's consistent discipline has influence on students' disruptive behaviour. This implies that the higher the maintenance of disciplinary tone in the classroom the more likely students will reduce their disruptive behaviours. This study found that teacher's consistent discipline has influence on students' disruptive behaviour. This implies that the higher the maintenance of disciplinary tone in the classroom the more likely students will reduce their disruptive behaviours. This finding disagrees with (Way, 2011) who found that when there are strict rules and discipline increased the disruptive behaviour among students. In other words, students who receive severe punishments are likely to display more defiance behaviour in schools.

Nevertheless, the finding by Caldarella et al. (2021) that teachers' reprimands did not influence students' disruptive behaviours disagrees with this finding. This disagrees with the finding by Caldarella et al. (2021) that teachers reprimands did not influence students disruptive behaviours. For example, a student who faces challenging situations at home may exhibit disruptive behaviours regardless of the teacher's disciplinary efforts, indicating that a more holistic approach, including counselling and support services, might be necessary (Adewale, 2023; Adewale et al., 2023).

Despite these differing conclusions, the current study underscores the potential effectiveness of consistent discipline in reducing disruptive behaviours in the classroom. Practical examples include the use of positive behaviour reinforcement strategies, such as awarding points or privileges for good behaviour, and clear, consistently applied consequences for rule violations. By creating an environment where students understand the expectations and repercussions, teachers can foster a more conducive learning atmosphere, ultimately enhancing educational outcomes. This consistency not only helps in managing behaviours but also contributes to building trust and respect between teachers and students.

Conclusion

This study examined the predictive roles of teachers' proactive classroom management on disruptive behaviours of secondary school students in Lagos, Nigeria. It has been established that only the consistency discipline as a proactive strategy predicted the disruptive behaviour of the students while classroom management behaviour did not it is therefore important for teachers to upskill in the use of different proactive classroom management strategies with a special emphasis on consistency behaviours.

The findings of this study suggest that while classroom management behaviour did not have a direct significant effect on reducing students' disruptive behaviours, the consistency in discipline is a critical factor. This supports the theoretical perspective that

consistent application of rules and disciplinary measures creates a stable and predictable classroom environment, which can reduce students' disruptive behaviours. The results underscore the importance of consistency in discipline as a core component of effective classroom management theories. For school counsellors and educators, these findings highlight the importance of emphasizing consistency in discipline strategies when working with teachers to manage classroom behaviours. Training programs for teachers should focus on developing and maintaining consistent disciplinary practices. Counsellors should also work with teachers to identify and implement discipline strategies that are fair, transparent, and consistently applied to all students, as these practices are likely to create a more structured and conducive learning environment.

Furthermore, while classroom management behaviour did not show a significant direct impact in this study, it remains an essential aspect of general classroom management. Counsellors should continue to advocate for proactive strategies that include setting clear expectations, building positive teacher-student relationships, and creating engaging and supportive classroom environments. These elements can work synergistically with consistent discipline to minimise disruptive behaviours and enhance the general educational experience for students.

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