

INFLUENCE OF TEACHER QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE ON DISCIPLINARY MEASURES ADOPTED IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The study determined the extent to which teachers use various disciplinary measures in secondary schools in Abia state, with qualification and experience as moderating variables. Three research questions guided the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to sample 200 teachers from 20 public secondary schools. Data were collected using structured questionnaire constructed by the researchers and validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument is .86 obtained using Cronbach alpha method. Analysis of data done using mean, standard deviation and frequency revealed that teachers were involved in the discipline of secondary school students to a high extent with a grand mean of 2.708. Result also showed that the qualified teachers adopt counseling, verbal warning and discussion much more than the unqualified teachers who adopt flogging and manual labour as disciplinary measures more than the qualified teachers do. Similarly, the experienced teachers adopt counseling to a very high extent whereas the inexperienced teachers adopt flogging and manual labour to a very high extent. The study concludes that teacher qualification and experience influence disciplinary measures adopted and recommends enlightenment programs for teachers on management of disciplinary problems of students as well as establishment of counselling units in various schools.

Keywords: disciplinary problems, disciplinary measures, qualification, experience, secondary school

Introduction

Education is an essential tool in the survival of individuals and an aspect of human learning process to get things better. Its major aim is to create an intellectual generation, who will be able to combine knowledge and skills needed as the main basis for social life (Flores-Tena, 2020). Putri, (2020) noted that education has an important role in promoting the progress of a country, and improving the quality of human life. For success to be achieved in education, the learners must exhibit acceptable level of discipline.

Discipline is the systematic practice of self-control, consistency, and adherence to principles, values, or rules. It is the ability to regulate one's thoughts, emotions, and actions in order to achieve desired outcomes, maintain order, and foster personal growth (Motivation, 2023). Discipline is an integral part of education and as such secondary school students should be taught to always carry out their duties well by getting used to a disciplined life (Fefer & Gordon, 2020).

The increasing rate of acts of indiscipline observed in our secondary schools have raised serious concern among education managers, stakeholders and the society. Some of the acts of indiscipline include; Bullying, lateness to school, student violent behaviour against teachers and their fellow

students, inability to do homework, examination malpractice, absenteeism, truancy, stealing, rioting, cultism, use of hard drugs, vandalism, sexual abuse, indecent dressing and wrong use of cell phones (Ajayi & Kolawole, 2023).

Stakeholders in education, particularly teachers, have recommended and adopted several measures to correct students' misbehavior and hence instill discipline in secondary school students. Some of the measures adopted in instilling discipline in students includes; verbal warning, written warning, detention, suspension: expulsion: parental involvement, loss of privileges, restitution, manual Labor, flogging, kneeling down, referral to disciplinary committee, counselling or therapy and referral to law enforcement (Ajayi & Kolawole, 2023).

In today's society where various acts of indiscipline are on the increase, the role of a teacher is more important than ever before. Teachers are responsible for molding the minds of the future generation, and they play a critical role in shaping their students' academic and social development. Teachers adopt different methods in dealing with discipline problems of the students. The methods adopted by a teacher may depend on various teacher variables like gender, qualification and experience. Teacher qualification refers to the educational and professional credentials that a teacher possesses, including degrees, certifications, and licenses, as well as any relevant training and experience. According to Byrd and Alexander, (2023), fostering the disciplinary character of students in schools cannot be separated from the role of a qualified teacher. A qualified teacher is expected to be able to coach student discipline, especially self-discipline.

Furthermore, the mode of administering discipline and effectiveness of instilling discipline among secondary school students may be influenced by teacher's level of experience (Ndayambaje & Boudreaux, 2020). Experience is a term that refers to the accumulation of knowledge and skills gained through direct observation, participation, or involvement in activities, events, or situations. Experienced teachers are more likely to be in control of their classrooms than beginning teachers while interacting with students when making decisions. Hence, teacher qualification and experience are crucial factors that can influence a teacher's ability to maintain discipline in the classroom. A teacher's qualification and experience can influence their teaching style, classroom management techniques, and their ability to handle behavioral issues among students (Byrd & Alexander, 2023). The disciplinary measures adopted by a teacher may depend on his or her level of teaching qualification and experience. Hence, the problem of this study is to determine the extent to which teachers adopt disciplinary measures on secondary school students and to assess the influence of teacher qualification and experience on disciplinary measures adopted on secondary school students in Aba education zone of Abia State of Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are to;

1. determine the extent of the teachers' involvement on disciplining secondary school students in Aba education zone of Abia State of Nigeria.
2. determine the extent to which teachers' qualification influences disciplinary measures adopted in secondary schools in Aba education zone of Abia State of Nigeria in Aba education zone of Abia State of Nigeria.
3. determine the extent to which teachers' experience influence disciplinary measures adopted in secondary schools in Aba education zone of Abia State of Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the extent of the teachers’ involvement on students’ discipline in Secondary Schools in Aba education zone of Abia State of Nigeria?
2. To what extent does teachers’ qualification influence disciplinary measures adopted in secondary schools in Aba education zone of Abia State of Nigeria?
3. To what extent does teachers’ experience influence disciplinary measures adopted in secondary schools in Aba education zone of Abia State of Nigeria?

Methodology

The study adopted survey research design with a sample size of 200 teachers drawn from 20 public secondary schools in Aba education zone of Abia state using stratified random sampling technique. The researchers used self-constructed questionnaire captioned teacher involvement on disciplinary measures of secondary school students (TIDMSSS). The questionnaire contains 13 item statements that were arranged under Very High Extent (VHE)-4, High Extent (HE)-3, Low Extent (LE)-2 and Very Low Extent (VLE)-1.

Three experts (two from Educational Psychology and Counselling and one from Educational Measurement and Evaluation) validated the instrument. The reliability co-efficient of the instrument is 0.83 obtained using Cronbach alpha method. Data generated from the questionnaire were analyzed using mean and standard Deviation (as well as frequency) to answer the research questions. Real limit of numbers was used to take decision using the following defined range: 3.50 – 4.00, Very High Extent (VHE). 2.50 – 3.49 High Extent (HE), 1.50 – 2.49 Low Extent (LE) and 1.00 – 1.49, Very Low Extent (VLE).

Data Analyses and Results

Research Question 1: What is the extent of the teachers’ involvement in students’ discipline in secondary schools in Aba education zone of Abia State of Nigeria?

Table 1: Extent of teachers’ involvement in discipline of secondary school students

SAN Metrics	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
Verbal warning	3.90	.296	Very High Risk
Written warning	2.29	.331	Low Risk
Referral to law enforcement	1.38	.578	Very Low Risk
Suspension	2.19	.495	Low Risk
Expulsion	1.77	.815	Low Risk
Loss of privileges	2.34	.589	Low Risk
Restitution	2.09	.754	Low Risk
Manual labor	3.57	.433	Very High Risk
Counseling/therapy	3.42	.909	High Risk
Reporting	3.15	.925	High Risk

SAN Metrics	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
Discussion	2.82	.587	High Risk
Kneeling down	3.29	.331	High Risk
Reporting to the parents	3.00	.932	High Risk
Grand mean	2.7083	-	High Risk

Result in table 1 show that: To a very high extent, the teachers are involved in the use of verbal warning (3.90) and manual labour (3.57) as disciplinary measures; To a high extent, the teachers are involved in the use of counseling/ therapy (3.42), flogging (3.15), discussion (2.82), kneeling down (3.29) and reporting to parents 3.00). To a low extent, teachers are involved in the use of written warning (2.29), suspension 2.19), expulsion (1.77), loss of privileges (2.34) and restitution (2.09). Finally, to a very low extent, teachers refer their students to law enforcement agents (1.38). The grand mean of 2.708 indicate that the teachers are involved in the discipline of secondary school students to a high extent.

Research Question Two: To what extent does teachers’ qualification influence disciplinary measures adopted in secondary schools in Aba education zone of Abia State of Niger

Table 2: Influence of teacher qualification on disciplinary measures adopted in secondary schools

S/N	Measures	Mean For Unqualified Teachers	Remarks	Mean For Qualified Teachers	Remarks
1	Verbal warning	3.088	HE	3.703	VHE
2	Written warning	1.807	LE	1.298	VLE
3	Referral to law enforcement agents	1.298	VLE	1.099	VLE
4	Suspension	2.912	HE	2.199	LE
5	Expulsion	1.684	LE	1.199	VLE
6	Loss of privileges	3.298	HE	2.801	HE
7	Restitution	3.000	HE	2.801	HE
8	Manual labour	3.474	HE	3.000	HE
9	Counseling/therapy	2.211	LE	3.602	VHE
10	Flogging	3.807	VHE	2.596	HE
11	Discussion	1.491	VLE	2.801	HE
12	Kneeling down	3.614	VHE	3.503	VHE
13	Reporting to parents	2.088	LE	2.602	HE

Table two shows that to a very high extent, qualified teachers use verbal warning (3.703), counseling/therapy (3.602) and kneeling down (3.503) as disciplinary measures whereas the unqualified teachers use flogging (3.807) and kneeling down (3.614). Furthermore, to a high extent both the qualified and unqualified teachers adopt loss of privileges (2.801, 3.298), restitution (2.801, 3.00,) and manual-labour (3.00 3.474,). In addition, the qualified teachers use reporting to parents (2.602), discussion (2.801), flogging (2.596), to a high extent whereas the unqualified teachers use verbal warning (3.088) and suspension (2.912) to a high extent. The table also shows that qualified teachers use suspension to a low extent (2.199) and written warning (1.298), expulsion (1.199) and referral to law enforcement agent to a very low extent (1.099). Similarly, the unqualified teachers use written warning (1.807), expulsion (1.684), counseling/therapy (2.211) and reporting to parents (2.088) to a low extent; discussion (1.491) and reference to law enforcement agents to a very low extent (1.298). It will be observed, among others, that the qualified teachers adopt counseling much more than the unqualified teachers, whereas the unqualified teachers adopt flogging more than the qualified teachers do as disciplinary measures. Hence, teacher qualification influences disciplinary measures adopted.

Research Question 3: To what extent does teachers' experience influence disciplinary measures adopted in secondary schools in Aba education zone of Abia State of Nigeria?

Table 3: Influence of teacher experience on disciplinary measures adopted in junior secondary schools

S/N	Measures	Mean for Experienced Teachers	Remarks	Mean for Inexperienced Teachers	Remarks
1	Verbal warning	3.310	HE	2.976	HE
2	Written warning	1.503	LE	1.602	LE
3	Referral to law enforcement	1.097	VLE	1.590	LE
4	Suspension	2.614	HE	2.434	LE
5	Expulsion	1.097	VLE	1.711	LE
6	Loss of privileges	3.097	HE	3.108	HE
7	Restitution	3.097	HE	2.819	HE
8	Manual labour	3.207	HE	3.614	VHE
9	Counseling/therapy	3.510	VHE	1.699	LE
10	Flogging	2.393	LE	3.699	VHE
11	Discussion	3.207	HE	1.795	LE
12	Kneeling down	3.097	HE	3.120	HE

13	Reporting to the parents	3.027	HE	2.181	LE
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From the result shown in table 3 the disciplinary measures adopted by experienced teachers to a very high extent is counseling/therapy(3.510); high extent includes verbal warning(3.310), suspension (2.614), loss of privileges (3.097), restitution (3.097), manual labour (3.207), discussion (3.207, kneeling down (3.097) and reporting to parents (3.027); low extent includes written warning(1.503) and flogging (2.393); very low extent include expulsion (1.097) and referral to law enforcement agents (1.097).

For the inexperienced teachers the disciplinary measures adopted to a very high extent include manual labour (3.614) and flogging (3.699); high extent include verbal warning (2.976), loss of privileges (3.108), restitution (2.819) and kneeling down (3.120); low extent include: written warning (1.602), referral to law enforcement(1.590); suspension (2.434), expulsion (1.711), counseling/therapy (1.699), discussion (1.795) and reporting to parents (2.181). It could be noted that whereas the experienced teachers utilize counseling to a very high extent, the inexperienced teachers utilize flogging and manual labour to a very high extent. Hence teacher experience influences disciplinary measures adopted in secondary schools.

Discussion of Findings

The finding that teacher qualifications influence the choice of disciplinary measures aligns with expectations, as qualified teachers possess specialized training in child psychology and counseling, which equips them to implement more effective and developmentally appropriate discipline strategies.

Similarly, the finding that experienced teachers also utilize counseling more than other measures is also expected. Having been exposed to the behaviour and reaction of children to corporal punishments, they may have discovered that children correct their misbehavior more when their consciences are appealed to through counseling. On the other hand, the unqualified and inexperienced teachers may have the feeling that since secondary school students are still young, flogging and manual labour could be used to instill fear in them and coerce the children into obedience.

The finding that teachers utilize counseling more than other disciplinary measures aligns with research showing its effectiveness over corporal punishment. As Asare et al. (2015) note, teachers who transitioned from punitive approaches to verbal appreciation saw improved student motivation and behavior. Similarly, Amin et al. (2021) found that strong teacher-student communication positively influences student discipline, supporting the idea that counseling fosters better behavior than physical punishment. Conversely, unqualified and inexperienced teachers may still favor traditional methods like corporal punishment, due to a lack of exposure to alternative, more effective strategies. In contrast, the findings also suggest that unqualified and inexperienced teachers may rely more heavily on physical discipline, such as corporal punishment or manual labor. This is consistent with research by Ndayambaje and Boudreaux (2020), which found that less experienced teachers are often more inclined to resort to traditional forms of discipline, such as corporal punishment, due to a lack of training in alternative, more constructive methods of behavior management. This reliance on punitive methods might stem from a lack of exposure to educational psychology or counseling techniques that can help address behavioral issues in more effective ways.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends enlightenment programs for teachers on management of disciplinary problems of students; establishment of counselling units in various schools and establishment of mentor-mentee collaborations between experienced and inexperienced teachers as well as between qualified and unqualified teachers in handling disciplinary issues in schools.

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