

An Investigation into Challenging Behaviours in Secondary Schools Mathematics Classes in Lagos Metropolis of Lagos State Nigeria

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Abstract:- This paper investigates some challenging behaviours in senior secondary schools mathematics classes in Lagos metropolis of Lagos State of Nigeria. In making sure that children learn at appropriate age a class teacher needs to note that some behaviours are essential in establishing the conditions which promote engagement with the curriculum task set. Teaching-learning that involves challenging behaviours tends to negative activities and it affects the classroom environment as well as the educational experience for students enrolled in the lesson. Two local governments educational area were randomly selected from urban area of Lagos State for this study, which eight public senior secondary schools were selected from each, making total of sixteen senior secondary schools. Five mathematics teachers were selected from each school as subjects of the study. Teachers' questionnaire on mathematics challenging behaviours was used for the study. Three hypotheses guided the study; and data collected were analysis with t- test and Chi square statistics. The result shows that challenging behaviours in mathematics classes are more in first year class in senior secondary schools, and boys disrupt mathematics class more than girls. Recommendations were given for future improvement.

Keywords: Challenging behaviour, Mathematics classes, Educational experience, Classroom environments, Negative activities

I. INTRODUCTION

School's discipline is essential for learning, it is an essential feature of a successful school (Arum & Velez, 2012). Schools are often the second place a child learns societal norms apart from the home. In school, students come to know their roles and responsibilities in society as well as in civic orientations and engagement (Smith, 2003). It is also important to ensure the safety of the student in the school environment. Parents will not allow their children to visit any place that endangers their lives. Parents view good discipline as one of top distinguishing characteristics that makes good school.

Inappropriate behaviours of students are what teachers are almost bitter to discuss in public. Those behaviours are in different names such as: challenging, anti-social, disruptive, naughty, acting out, mala djusted ,un-biddable, problem, confrontational, off-task, and unwanted. Prefix is missing, such that we hardly recognize that what they are really referring times behaviour which are actions and reactions that interfere with teaching-learning activities in a classroom. The processo frec ognizin gorex plaining' misbehaviour' isa crucial one if a teacher wants to develop strategies to deal with them. Differentiating challenging classroom behaviour (the behavior that directly interferes with the ability of the teacher to teach or the ability of other learners to benefit from the classroom experience) from behaviour that is merely rude or uncivil is very important to note. While the uncivil behaviour may become challenging when it is repetitive or persistent, so the best is to address it in time by example and influence.

Challenging students' behaviour is harmful to the teaching-learning activities because this behaviour illegally obstructs the learning process for other students, harms the effective teaching ability of teachers, and diverts school energy and resources away from the educational development. Classroom environment and the educational experience for learners are always affected by challenging behaviour. This challenging behaviour are classified into three as learning misbehaviour (L), conduct misbehaviour (C); and emotional misbehaviour (E). Some of the examples of challenging behaviours are:

- Sassing to teacher (C)
- Coming late to class or leaving early (C)
- Inviting intruder/non-member to class (C)
- Asking question which is not in line with the teacher's presentation. (L)
- Disrespecting the rights of other students to discuss or answer question. (L)
- Talking anyhow when the teacher or others are speaking. (L)
- Taking control all classroom discussions (L)
- Inattentiveness in class (such as reading the paper or sleeping in class). (C)

- Making excessive noise. (C)
- Snacking/eating food in class (C)
- Making call by using cell phones in the classroom (C)
- Seeking for attention or demanding for time rudely. (L)
- Refusal to comply with school direction. (C)

Others naughty behaviour include:

- Speaking language which are profanity or pejorative in nature (E)
- Intoxication (E)
- Verbal abuse of teacher or other learners (such as badgering) (E)
- Threatening teacher or other learners (E)
- Harassing to harm others learners (E)
- Bullying others learners (E)

As a teacher, we need to help our students to learn fast in a comfortable and friendly situation; and this cannot take place in a chaotic environments. Afterward, some of our daily challenges are to always provide and maintain an effective and productive classroom atmosphere suitable for teaching and learning. On any lesson, this can be quite a dare. Student discipline cannot be taking away from good classroom management because it is one of the factors in classroom that determine how lesson will end. Both young and experienced teachers need to consistently practice good classroom management to reduce student behavioural problems.

Indiscipline is a basic element that does a negative function in school system, especially on the moral values of learners. Indiscipline at school is dangerous and it hinders the normal development of youths in any community especially students in tertiary institution. Indiscipline as it concerns achievement of educational goals has received a lot of attention. Emmer (2005) defines school indiscipline as working against school rules and regulations that had been set for the smooth and orderly functioning of the school system. He stresses further that indiscipline should be avoided through giving good orientation to students and imposition of necessary sanctions on any student that break the rules and regulations.

School discipline according to Awurika (2016) is made of two principal objectives. Safety of staff and students in the school is the first objective while the second objective is to make an environment conducive for learning. Idu & Ojedapo (2011) found that violent and criminal behaviour are acts that are common among secret cult members of tertiary institution and these acts defeat the goals of education. Idu & Ojedapo (2011) stresses that if acts of indiscipline in our schools is allowed to incubate under current conditions then education providers and consumers would hatch a monster that will be difficult to exterminate. Presently in Nigeria, many people believe that the current economic woes in nation arising from corruption, robbery, assassination, kidnapping, smuggling and pipeline vandalization are offspring of school indiscipline.

When students are frequently off task in mathematics lesson, it has effect on the learning of some others because some learners may have challenges working in groups and in establishing relationships. Onasanya & Oyedemi (2018) found that some students in mathematics cooperative learning group usually show aggression towards others and refuse to work together with their group due to their violent behaviours. To develop mathematical skills we need effective mathematics teaching, and effective mathematics teaching requires effective mathematics teachers. The first task of such effective mathematics teachers is to establish a positive learning environment in a way of having a good classroom behaviour (Leder et al., 2002),

In a Lagos State legislation passed in the year 2011 during the administration of Governor Babatunde Fashola (Senior Advocate of Nigeria) corporal punishment such as flogging, beating or physical torture of any public or private school students, and of workplace apprentices, has been outlawed entirely, and declared both illegal and criminally culpable throughout the state (DGIPLUS, 2011). This implies that corporal punishment in Lagos State primary and secondary schools, and workplaces is illegal since 2011. But this is against many teachers expectation because the most popular means of discipline students in Nigeria and Africa at large is by applying corporal punishment (Oksheveky, 2017). Since the official abolition of corporal punishment in Lagos State schools many studies have found that challenging behaviours are increasing in Lagos State schools (Oteri & Oteri, 2018, Awurika, 2016, and Oksheky, 2017).

➤ *Research Hypotheses*

The null hypotheses formulated for this study are:

1. There is no significant difference in challenging behaviour between the first year and final year students in senior secondary schools mathematics class.
2. There is no significant difference in challenging behaviour between the students of different gender in senior secondary schools mathematics class.
3. There is no significant effect of abolition of corporal punishment on challenging behaviours in mathematics class of senior secondary schools.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

➤ *Design and Participation:*

This study is a survey design. Two urban local governments educational area were randomly selected from existing local government educational area of Lagos State. From each selected local government educational area, eight public senior secondary schools were sampled; making total of sixteen senior secondary schools. Five mathematics teachers were selected randomly from each school as subjects of the study this gives total of 80 subjects. Teachers' questionnaire on mathematics challenging behaviours was used for the study. The questionnaire is of 3 sections (A, B and C): section A is on informed concept, section B is on background information of the respondent while section C is of 17 items measure, consisting of three subscales: entry and final behaviours of students (6 items),

gender based challenging behaviours (6 items), and corporal punishment on challenging behaviours (5 items). The questionnaire answered on 4 point Liker scale with items on a scale from Exactly True, Moderately True, Hardly True, to Not at all be True.

➤ *Procedure:*

The principals and academics vice principals of all sampled schools were approached and got their permission before conducting the survey among the selected mathematics teachers. On the section A of the questionnaire, a confidentiality and anonymity were provided such that informed concept was obtained, and the subjects indicated their interest in participating in the study and not to reveal their identities in anyway. The questionnaire was administered personally by the researchers to the subjects on a face-to-face basis, such that error of non-selected teachers or staff filling the questionnaire is avoided. The instrument was validated by some experts in educational management

and mathematics curriculum departments. Also to ensure reliability, a pilot study was conducted with 20 mathematics teachers selected from some senior secondary schools which were not among the sampled schools in the sampled local governments educational areas, a test-retest correlation coefficient of 0.831 was obtained, which shows that the instrument is reliable. A total of eighty questionnaires distributed were filled and returned. Hence, the analysis was based on the data obtained from the returned questionnaires.

III. RESULTS:

For the first hypothesis, 3 items in the questionnaire were on the groups of challenging behaviours how they were common among the first year students, and 3 items also were on the same groups of challenging behaviours for the final year students. The responses were scored as: Not at all be True 0, Hardly True 1, Moderately True 2, Exactly True 3. The analysis is on table 1 below:

Students	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Crit. T	Cal. T	df.	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
First Year	80	6.0875	1.56863	1.96	15.688	158	0.00	Reject 1 st null hypothesis
Final Year	80	2.7375	0.93786					

Table 1: A t –test Analysis on the challenging behaviours between the first and final year’s students in senior secondary schools mathematics

The table 1 shows that $P < 0.05$ and the calculated t is greater than table t which implies that there is significance difference. The first hypothesis is rejected hence, there is significance difference in the challenging behaviours between the first year and final year students in senior secondary schools mathematics class. Since the mean score of first year students is greater than the final year students, then the first year students have higher challenging behaviours more than final year students.

To analysis the second hypothesis, 3 items in the questionnaire were on the groups of challenging behaviours how they were common among the male students, and 3 items also were on the same groups of challenging behaviours for the female students. The responses were scored as: Not at all be True 0, Hardly True 1, Moderately True 2, Exactly True 3. The analysis is on table 2 below:

Students	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Crit. t	Cal. T	df.	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Male	80	4.8125	1.56863	1.96	17.977	158	0.00	Reject 2 nd null hypothesis
Female	80	2.9375	0.93786					

Table 2:- A t –test Analysis on the challenging behaviours between the male and female students in senior secondary schools mathematics

The table 2 above shows that the calculated t is greater than table t which implies that there is significance difference. The second hypothesis is rejected hence, there is significance difference in the challenging behaviours between the students of different gender in senior secondary schools mathematics class. Since the mean score of male

students is greater than the female students, then the male students have higher challenging behaviours more than female students.

Chi square analysis was used to test the third hypothesis. The data is presented in table 3 below.

Items	Exactly True	Moderately True	Hardly True	Not at All True	Total
13	19 (20)	20 (19.8)	21 (19.2)	20 (21)	80
14	24 (20)	22 (19.8)	16 (19.2)	18 (21)	80
15	19 (20)	17 (19.8)	21 (19.2)	23 (21)	80
16	21 (20)	21 (19.8)	16 (19.2)	22 (21)	80
17	17 (20)	19 (19.8)	22 (19.2)	22 (21)	80
Total	100	99	96	105	400

Table 3:- A 5 x 4 contingency table on observed influenced of corporal punishment on challenging behaviours in senior secondary schools mathematics classes.

*The respective expected frequencies are in bracket.

$\chi^2 = 4.7218$ d.f. = 12, Crit. Value = 21.026,
Remark: Not Significant at 2-tailed

From the table 3 above, the calculated chi square 4.7218 is less than table value 21.026, hence this shows that there is no significance effect of abolition of corporal punishment on challenging behaviours in mathematics class of senior secondary schools. So, the third hypothesis is accepted.

IV. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

1. The first year students have higher challenging behaviours more than final year students in senior secondary schools mathematics classes.
2. The male students have higher challenging behaviours more than female students in senior secondary schools mathematics classes.
3. There is no significance effect of abolition of corporal punishment on challenging behaviours in mathematics class of senior secondary schools.

V. DISCUSSION ON FINDINGS:

The result of the finding shows that first year have higher challenging behaviours in mathematics class more than the final year in senior secondary schools this can be caused by many factors such as unhealthy behaviours from junior secondary schools, indiscipline in junior secondary schools mathematics classes, immaturity, no career aspiration, and some personal and psychological factors of first year students. This disagreed with Ali, Dada, Isiaka & Salmon (2014) and Idu & Ojedapo (2011) which found that indiscipline cut across all levels of education with equal proportion.

The gender has effect on challenging behaviours, boys have more challenging behaviours more than girls. This is in support of Wango (2003) and Onasanya & Oyedemi (2018) that violence and others misbehaviours are common with male students in secondary schools.

The finding also shows that abolition of corporal punishment has no significant effect on challenging behaviours in mathematics class. This is against Lutwa (2014) which found that using corporal punishment by school management reduces indiscipline in schools, but in support of Ali, Dada, Isiaka & Salmon (2014) and

Oksheveky (2017) that corporal punishment and other types of punishments do not have effect on controlling students' misbehaviours.

VI. CONCLUSION

Challenging behaviour in mathematics classes in senior schools is found to be existing; teachers, school management and educational policy needs to work hard on how to curb this indiscipline act and handle the situation such that mathematics may be taught effectively with good classroom management such that students' cooperative learning and teachers' effort may bring good result.

RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended as follows:

1. New students into senior secondary schools needs to be counseled by school counsellor and head of mathematics unit in every secondary in the first two week of resumption on how to be of good behaviour in the classroom, school environment and community, and to explain in detail to them that understanding mathematics is must for every educated person in this present computer age.
2. Mathematics teacher should try to be more disciplined and handle the class properly without favourism.
3. Showing love and caring is necessary from teacher to students in mathematics class.
4. School management should try not to let teacher- student ratio to be too high in mathematics class (average of 1: 30, maximum of 1: 50).
5. School management to make time table such that mathematics is not taught in afternoon when weather is hot and students are tired.

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