



INFLUENCE OF GENDER AND LOCATION OF SCHOOL ON CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS ADOPT

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Abstract:

The study examined the influence of gender and location (rural or urban) of school on classroom management strategies adopted by public Junior High School teachers in the Asante Akim North District, as not too many studies in this area have been considered. Those that ventured this area focused on other groups of teachers such as pre-service teachers. Specifically, descriptive survey design was used to provide a meaningful picture of events and explained teachers' opinions and behaviours on the basis of the data gathered. The sample included 46 male and 50 female teachers teaching the core subjects who were purposively selected from public Junior High Schools. The Behavioural and Instructional Management Scale (BIMS) was used to collect data from the respondents. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential (Independent Samples t-test) statistics. Results indicated that generally male and female teachers in the Asante Akim North District adopted the same classroom management strategies to manage their classes. In the same vain teachers adopted the same classroom management strategies irrespective of their location (Rural or Urban) of school. Based on these findings, it was recommended that teacher training institutions should emphasise the teaching of classroom management strategies to the student teachers so as to sharpen their practice on the field. Again, the Asante Akim North District Directorate of education should organise workshops, in-service training and seminars on regular basis for teachers to

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upgrade their skills and knowledge in managing the classrooms. This will help them to continually show equal level of professionalism in managing their classrooms irrespective of their location and gender.

Keywords: gender, location of school, classroom management strategies

1. Introduction

Globally, it appears that there is a general accord among educators and researchers about the key role that teachers play in the teaching and learning process. Both theoretical and empirical studies have considered the importance of teachers in ensuring effective and efficient teaching and learning (Nejati, Hassani, & Sahrapour, 2014). In view of this, one crucial reason that influences the progress of any educational system is by employing highly qualified teachers. These qualified teachers must possess some distinct qualities and have good classroom management strategies Morse (2012). The implication is that teachers with good classroom management skills should be employed to facilitate effective teaching and learning in the classrooms.

Classroom management is very significant in the teaching and learning process. Teachers may differ in the strategy to manage their classrooms. According to Stronge (2018), classroom management differs from one teacher to another because of the teacher's personality, teaching style, preparedness, and number of students in the classroom, thereby making the concept of classroom management very broad and varied. Supporting this assertion, Umoren (2010) indicated that the concept of classroom management is broader than the notion of student control and discipline. He asserted that it includes all the things teachers must do in the classroom to foster students' academic involvement and cooperation in classroom activities to create conducive learning environment. Morse (2012) posited that classroom management involves curtailing learner's disruptive behaviours such as fighting and noise making, close observation, arrangement of classroom learning materials, and response to students who suffer from poor sight (vision), poor hearing, poor reading, poor writing, poor spelling, shame, dullness, hyperactivity and poor study habit. When classroom management (CM) is viewed in a wider and holistic sense, incorporating every element of the classroom from lesson delivery to classroom environment becomes important (Earl, 2012).

Literature on classroom management as well as gender differences and location of school has sufficient motivation for conducting research to examine the gender difference in classroom management skills and strategies teachers adopt in the Asante Akim North District, where there is limited research regarding classroom management. Classroom management is the basic condition for creating an environment conducive for learning. It can be defined as *"the teacher's ability to cooperatively manage time, space, resources, and students' roles and behaviours to provide a climate that encourages learning"* (Malone and Tietjens 2000, p. 404). Yoakman and Simpson as cited by Ndiyo, (2011, p.34) maintained that classroom management means *"the art of organising the classroom"*. Thus everything a

teacher does has implications for classroom management, including creating the setting, decorating the room, arranging the chairs, speaking to children and handling their responses, putting routines in place (and then executing, modifying, and reinstating them), developing rules, and communicating those rules to the students, routines for home assignment, class rules, rewards, transitions, students grading, and discipline. All these are the various aspects of classroom management issues that teachers ought to deal with.

It is a general agreement that the quality of classroom management is a crucial factor of teacher's effectiveness. Therefore, experts and researchers in the field of teaching and learning have recommended better classroom management for effective teaching. According to Little and Akin-Little (2013, p. 405), "*teachers must be proactive, facilitative and imaginative classroom managers in order to be effective.*" (Stichter, Lewis, Whittaker, Richter, Johnson, and Trussell 2009, p.89) added that "*what makes a teacher good is the organisation of a classroom and the techniques involved rely heavily on the teaching 'style'. He looked at what should happen in an ideal classroom by attempting to identify "good" and "bad" teaching style*". Also, (Burden, 2000; Evertson & Weinstein, 2006; Brophy, 2006) reported that the time that a teacher took to correct misbehaviour caused by poor classroom management skills, resulted in a lower rate of academic engagement in the classroom.

Classroom management has consistently been identified as a salient concern for teachers (Willower, Eidell & Hoy, 2017). According to Umoren (2010), the concept of classroom management is broader than the notion of student control and discipline and it includes all the things teachers must do in the classroom to foster students' academic involvement and cooperation in classroom activities to create conducive learning environment. According to Bassey (2012), the wider view of classroom management showed increased engagement, reduction in inappropriate and disruptive behaviours, promotion of student responsibility for academic work, and improved academic performance of students. These tendencies reflect the teacher's discipline, communication, and instructional strategies. All of these aspects manifest in the teacher's preferences and efforts to attain desirable educational goals. Still, there is no general consensus regarding the specific facets of the construct. Teachers' beliefs and attitudes regarding the nature of student behaviours and how to manage classrooms vary and can play an important role in the determination of their behaviour (Smart, 2009; Willower et al., 2017). As teachers form opinions about how classrooms should be managed, they attempt to operationalise their beliefs by institutionalising a code for classroom interactions and behaviours (Smart, 2009; Urich & Tobin, 2009). Observation of classroom teachers is one excellent way to gain information regarding classroom management beliefs and practices.

A study by Kifayat, Tehsin, Umbreen and Asad (2017) indicated that for $p < 0.05$ and $t > 1.96$ the calculated mean scores of male and female teachers for Classroom Management Strategies (CMS) are (43.32) and (39.40) respectively. As $p < 0.05$, so the disparity among male and female teachers is significant statistically. They concluded that majority of the teachers who participated in the study used classroom management

strategies efficiently; however, the finding showed the supremacy of male teachers over the female teachers in CMS adopted. This study result contradicted the result of the study of Ekanem (2015) which stated that female teachers showed supremacy over the male teachers in the classroom management strategies they adopted.

Akiri and Ugborugbo (2008) conducted a study to compare male and female teachers on beliefs regarding classroom management strategies and found that male teachers scored significantly higher than female teachers on instructional management and behaviour management while no significant difference was found on factors of student management. Similarly, male teachers scored significantly higher than female teachers on factor of dominance. The findings of a study by Martin, Yin and Mayall (2006) related to gender difference in classroom management strategies teachers adopted indicated a mean scores for male teachers in content management (52.84), conduct management (42.71), covenant management (47.83), time management (43.32), and total classroom management (186.72) were greater than the mean scores for female teachers (48.20, 40.59, 44.93, 39.40 and 173.13 respectively) for these aspects of classroom management strategies with $p < 0.05$. This therefore showed that, there was a significant gender difference between male and female teachers in classroom management strategies they adopted showing the supremacy of male over the female teachers for the given sample. Moreover, the findings indicated that urban male teachers had significantly greater mean scores than female teachers from urban area in the focused classroom management strategies ($p < 0.05$). Similarly, rural male teachers had significantly greater mean score than rural female teachers ($p < 0.05$) on overall classroom management strategies.

Considering location of teachers (rural and urban) areas and the classroom management strategies they adopted, Kifayat, Tehsin, Umbreen and Asad (2017) indicated that $p < 0.05$, and $t > 1.96$, the calculated mean scores of urban and rural teachers for CMS adopted were (44.38) and (38.34) respectively. The difference between mean scores was significant statistically. Further, the mean scores of urban school teachers were higher than rural teachers. Thus, urban teachers were found superior to rural teachers over CMS adopted. They concluded that majority of the teachers who participated in the study in practice used classroom management strategies efficiently; however, urban teachers were found superior to rural school teachers in CMS. The supremacy of urban over rural school teachers in CMS was tied to many factors including: the urban teachers may avail more opportunities of trainings and development as compared to rural school teachers; the proficient teachers do not wish to perform in the rural areas due to the nonexistence of the requisite facilities.

Vast arrays of conflicting research findings on gender and location of school that exist in the literature have been reviewed. From the review, it was clear that the findings on the influence of gender and location of school on classroom management strategies adopted by teachers were fuzzy. This current study sought to address the issue within the Ghanaian context, which is a new and different setting. Specifically, the thrust of this study was to examine the influence of gender and location of school on classroom

management strategies adopted by public Junior High School teachers in the Asante Akim North District in Ghana. Again, previous studies tended to focus on countries other than Ghana where, not too many studies in this area have been considered. The available local study conducted by researchers such as Sarfo, Amankwah, Sam and Konin (2015) focused on other group of teachers such as pre-service teachers. The current study attempts to fill this research gap.

2. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the influence of gender and location of school on classroom management strategies adopted by public junior high school teachers in the Asante Akim North District. Specifically, the study examined:

- 1) whether the gender of public Junior High School teachers in the Asante Akim North District influenced the classroom management strategies they adopted.
- 2) whether the classroom management strategies adopted by public Junior High School teachers in the Asante Akim North District differed on account of location.

2.1 Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by teachers in urban and rural public Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District.

H_A: There is statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by teachers in urban and rural public Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District.

H₀₂: There is no statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by male and female teachers in public Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District.

H_A: There is a statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by male and female teachers in public Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District.

2.2 Significance of the Study

The findings of the study would provide information to teachers to be able to adopt and implement effective classroom management strategies in their classrooms thereby making learning more profitable to students.

The study would again provide information to guide the Ghana Education Service on the effective strategies to adopt in the management of the classrooms so as to update teachers' knowledge through in-service training.

Finally, the findings would provide researchers with information on what needs to be done by way of further research in the area. And also, it would contribute significantly to literature especially in the Asante Akim District where little or no research has been done in this area.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The researcher sought to describe and explain the particular classroom management strategy male and female teachers in rural and urban areas adopted. As an addendum, since a descriptive research is concerned with conditions, practices, structures, differences or relationships that exist, opinions held, processes that are ongoing or trends that are evident (Creswell, 2015), a better approach couldn't have been selected for this purpose. This design again was adopted because it was very useful in collecting data from a large number of individuals in a relatively short period of time and at a better cost. And also because of the self-reporting nature of what already existed as male and female, rural and urban teachers' classroom management strategies adopted.

3.2 Population of the Study

The target population was all form two teachers in public Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District of the Ashanti Region totalling 426 (GES, Asante Akim North District, 2018). The accessible population was all public Junior High School form two teachers teaching the core subjects in the Asante Akim North District. The total number of teachers teaching the core subjects (English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Integrated Science) was 206 (GES, Asante Akim North District, 2018). Teachers teaching English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Integrated Science were used for the study because they taught the core subjects studied by all students in all basic school in Ghana and hence there was the need to identify the classroom management strategies they adopted.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The sample consisted of 96 teachers, thus 22.5% of the public Junior High School teachers in the Asante Akim North District were selected for the study. This was in line with the suggestion of Asamoah-Gyimah and Duodo (2005) that for quantitative studies, a sample size of 10% to 30% of the population size is sufficient for generalisation purpose. The rationale behind the choice of this sample was that, they formed part of the target population.

The multistage sampling technique was used to select the participants for the study. First, all public Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District totalling 48 are grouped into eight circuits. Six circuits out of eight were purposively selected for the study. These circuits were selected because they had both rural and urban areas for comparison purposes. Four (4) schools each from the six circuits; two (2) from rural areas and the other two (2) from urban centres were randomly selected. This was so because the schools found in rural areas had similar characteristics so as those in urban centres. In all 24 schools; 12 from rural areas and 12 from urban centres were used for the study. Teachers teaching English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Integrated Science were used for the study. The total number of teachers who participated was 96.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

The instruments used to collect data for the study was the Behavioural and Instructional Management Scale (BIMS) by Martin and Sass (2010). The standardised scale which originally had 24 items with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.83 was adapted for the study (Sass, Lopes, Oliveira & Martin 2016). The scale was used to assess classroom management strategies teachers adopted. This scale is a psychometrically reliable instrument that measures a teacher's insight into their style of classroom management. The scale was arranged into two subscales with 24 items of the recommended classroom management concepts: Behavioural Management (12 items) and Instructional Management (12 items). A five-point answer scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" was employed for scoring. This scale was adapted for the study. The scale had two sections. Section A had 5 items and focused on the demographic data of teachers. Section B contained 24 items on classroom management strategies teachers employed.

3.5 Validation of Research Instrument

A pilot study was conducted to determine if the Behavioural and Instructional Management Scale (BIMS) measures of internal consistency were satisfactory. The reliability test of the questionnaire reflected 0.90 value of Cronbach's Alpha, which indicated a high reliability of the instrument.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Permission was sought from the District Directorate of Education to visit the schools. After the initial visit, a rapport was established to afford the researchers the opportunity to carry out the research. Permission was also sought from the head teachers to meet the teachers. The researchers personally administered the instruments. At each of the Junior High Schools selected for the study, all the selected teachers gathered, and the purpose of the study was explained to them after which the research instruments were distributed to them.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedures

All the two Hypotheses were tested using the independent samples t-test. This test was chosen to examine the differences between the groups (male/female, rural/urban) teachers with regard to the classroom management strategies (CMS) they employed.

4. Results

4.1 Teachers' Demographic Data

This part of the analysis looked at the bio data of the teachers. The first variable considered here was gender of the respondents. Table 1 presents the response.

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Teachers

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	46	47.9
Female	50	52.1
Total	96	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2018).

Table 1 presents the gender of teachers who took part in the study. Results show that females dominated the study with a frequency of 50 respondents, representing 52.1% whereas males were 46 respondents, representing 47.9%. The next demographic data considered by the study was the age of teachers who took part in the study. Table 2 presents the results.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Teachers

Age	Frequency	Percent
18-24	10	10.4
25-30	60	62.5
31-35	16	16.7
36-40	8	8.3
41-45	2	2.1
Above 45	0	0
Total	96	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2018).

As shown in Table 2, most of the teachers were within the age group 25-30 with a frequency of 60 respondents, representing 62.5%, followed by the 31-35 year group whose frequency was 16 respondents, representing 16.7%, then 18-24 year group with a frequency of 10, representing 10.4%, those within the age group 36-40 years followed with a number of 8 respondents, representing 8.3% and only 2 respondent for 41-45 years representing 2.1%. No respondent was above 45 years. The academic qualification of the teachers was also determined by the researchers. This is indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Academic Qualification of Teachers

Academic Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Diploma	32	66.7
First Degree	16	33.3
Masters	0	0
Total	48	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2018).

From Table 3, two basic qualifications were attained by the respondents with Diploma dominating with the frequency of 32 respondents (66.7%) whereas first degree holders were only 16 representing 33.3% of the respondents. No respondent, however, had Masters qualification. The researcher again considered the location of the teachers. The results are presented in table 4.

Table 4: Location of Teachers

Location	Frequency	Percent
Rural	48	50
Urban	48	50
Total	96	100

Source: Field Survey (2018).

The results from Table 4 show that 48 teachers representing 50% were selected from rural areas. Equally 48 teachers representing 50% were also chosen from urban centres in the district. This means that there was an equal distribution of teachers from both rural and urban areas.

4.2 Analysis of Main Data

Hypothesis 1

Ho: There is no statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by teachers in urban and rural public Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District.

Ha: There is statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by teachers in urban and rural public Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District.

The focus of this hypothesis was to test whether a significant difference existed between the classroom management strategies of teachers in urban and rural public Junior High Schools in Asante Akim North District. The independent samples t-test was conducted and the result is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Independent Samples t-test of Urban and Rural Teachers and Classroom Management Strategies they adopted

Location	N	M	SD	t-value	df	p-value
Urban	48	3.72	.677	.356	94	.263
Rural	48	3.78	.430			

Source: Field Survey (2018).

The results in Table 5 showed that teachers from rural schools ($M=3.78$, $SD=.430$) and teachers from urban schools ($M=3.72$, $SD=.677$) did not differ in terms of classroom management strategies they adopted. Further, the results established a t-value of 0.356 and a p-value of 0.263. The analysis, therefore, showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by teachers in urban and rural Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District. The null hypothesis which states that there is no statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by teachers in urban and rural public Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District was retained.

Hypothesis 2

H₀: There is no statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by male and female teachers in public Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District.

H_a: There is a statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by male and female teachers in public Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District.

Hypothesis two sought to find out whether there was a difference in the classroom management strategies of male and female teachers in the Asante Akim North District. The independent samples t-test was conducted, and the result is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Independent Samples t-test of Gender and Classroom Management Strategies adopted by teachers

Gender	N	M	SD	t-value	df	p-value
Male	46	3.81	.654	.722	94	0.669
Female	50	3.69	.467			

Source: Field Survey (2018).

It was found that male teachers ($M=3.81$, $SD=.654$) and female teachers ($M=3.69$, $SD=.467$) did not differ in the classroom management strategies they used. Also, the results showed a t-value of 0.722 and a p-value of 0.669. The analysis, therefore, showed no statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by male and female teachers. The null hypothesis which states that there is no statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by male and female teachers in public Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District was retained.

5. Discussion

The study did not find a statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies employed by rural and urban teachers to manage their classes. The implication is that teachers in the urban and rural Junior High Schools adopted similar classroom management strategies. This means that location of the teachers (rural school or urban school) did not have any influence on the classroom management strategies they adopted in the Asante Akim North District. What could have accounted for this is the fact that teachers teaching in urban and rural schools all qualified as teachers after being trained in colleges of education as professionals. During their training, the teachers were exposed to a host of school, class and student management strategies. This training did not discriminate against who was to teach in which school. It was a universal exposure to all prospective teachers. In addition to this, the Ghana Education Service, from time to time organises refresher courses for teachers in all schools to expose them to new trends and methods in teaching and classroom management strategies. These in-service training courses were not discriminatory in their course contents. This result

affirmed the findings of Demirdag's (2015) research on teaching which stated that classroom management and discipline were primary concerns to teachers regardless of where they found themselves. On their part, Pianta, Hamre and Allen (2012) revealed that teacher education programmes nowadays were making a determined attempt at developing effective methods for maintaining discipline and to prepare teachers to making effective classroom management decisions. All these teachers were exposed to the same knowledge that helped them discharge their duties effectively without recourse to where they taught.

The study also did not find any statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by male and female teachers in public Junior High Schools. This study result is in line with the findings of a study by Sarfo, Amankwah, Sam and Konin (2015). Their study found that male and female teachers did not differ in terms of classroom management strategies they adopted in public Junior High Schools in Ghana. This may be because the teachers were all exposed to the same curriculum and were trained on the use of the same classroom management strategies in their schools. As indicated by Leu and Price-Rom (2006), teachers and the quality of their teaching were widely recognised as the most critical of many important factors that combined to create overall quality of education. In the case of quality of delivery, the teacher's concern was how to impart knowledge to the student, regardless of his or her gender. In line with Leu, Forzani and Kennedy (2013) teacher's gender was not a determinant of his or her ability to effectively manage the classroom for a successful learning outcome. This statement was a direct revelation of the insignificant nature of gender difference in classroom management strategies adopted by teachers.

6. Conclusions

The study did not show any statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by teachers in urban and rural Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District. Similarly, the study did not establish any statistically significant difference between the classroom management strategies adopted by male and female teachers in public Junior High Schools in the Asante Akim North District. This shows that male and female teachers in the Asante Akim North District did not differ in the classroom management strategies they adopted. In the same vain teachers adopted the same classroom management strategies irrespective of their location (rural or urban) of school. This means that when teachers are given the same training either in college or during workshops and in-service training, they show equal level of professionalism in managing their classrooms.

6.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that the Asante Akim North District Directorate of education should organise workshops, in-service training and seminars on regular basis for teachers to upgrade their skills and knowledge in managing

the classrooms. This will help them to continually show equal level of professionalism in managing their classrooms irrespective of their location or gender. Also, teacher training institutions should emphasise the teaching of classroom management strategies to the student teachers so as to sharpen their practise on the field.

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