

TEACHERS' CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT VARIABLES AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN FRENCH IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study was an attempt to predict students' academic achievement in French Language from a number of teachers' classroom managerial variables. The alternate hypothesis was that academic achievement could be predicted from seven classroom managerial variables. The sample consisted of 748 Junior Secondary Three (JS3) students and their teachers in Cross River State. Instrument for data collection were the 'Teacher Managerial Variable Questionnaire' (TMVQ) and an achievement test. Data was analysed using multiple regression analysis. The finding revealed that all the variables under study were significant joint predictors of students' academic achievement in French. Based on this finding, recommendations were made.

KEYWORDS: French, Classroom, Managerial, JS3, Regression

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The teaching-learning exercise is a very interesting and a challenging one. Its outcome draws the attention of a host of people and institutions because teaching is considered effective when learning takes place. However, there are a number of factors that militate against learning outcome (Arends, 1991). One of such, the author says is the teachers' inefficiency in using proper sets of plans and actions that could result in effective academic achievement of students.

This is not a healthy development, rather, it is evidence of the shortfall in attainment of the goals and objectives of the Nigerian education as enshrined in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004). However, this problem has been recognised and debated by the authorities concerned with the educational system.

Taking cognisance of the bilingual orientation facing the nation with regard to the enormous diversity and variability of students, the teaching and learning of French language is expected to help reduce anxieties and promote the extent of students' success in learning a foreign language, which has become a second official language in the country. This achievement of a maximum fit in the language is assumed to be faced by many interlocking variables, as managed by the teachers (Yalden, 1983).

These constraints of teaching and learning French language are almost becoming embarrassing and pervasive. They now appear to be acceptable norms to see most candidates with weak passes and outright failure in French accept such weaknesses in acquiescence. Teachers, on the one hand, appear desperate, rapidly losing confidence in themselves as they conclude that nothing positive could be done because apparently most students had already made up their minds not to perform well in examination (Ntia, 2002). This therefore was the basis for this research; particularly to investigate what factors are associated with the anomaly.

For many years, teachers have known that what they do has an influence on their students' outcome. This is why teaching is seen as an attempt to influence learning in students. Majasan (1995) defined the classroom as the teacher's theatre of operation; a place, which makes or mars his career, a place where he is most happy to be if he teaches with confidence. According to the author, no matter how effective a teacher is, the way and manner he manages his classroom, go a long way in determining how the objectives of his lesson would be realised.

A number of authors have studied various variables pertaining to management and their effects on learners. Examining the corpus of research on teachers' classroom management, particularly those of Emmer, Evertson and Anderson (1980), Adeboyeje (1987), (1989), Hall, (1977), and Iheanacho and Ikpeme (1997), one is led to conclude that classroom management is a variable determined by complex factors. As such, the specific purpose of this research was to determine whether teachers' managerial variables as measured by teachers' competence, use of instructional objectives, resources utilisation, awareness of students' capabilities, use of time and space, teachers' quality and qualification, could jointly predict students' academic achievement in French.

Theoretical Perspectives and Hypothesis

The basis of this study was founded on the systems theory of management. This theory concerns itself with procedures designed to achieve predetermined purposes. It sees a system as an assemblage of parts to form a complex whole.

Percival and Ellington (1984), and Romiszowski (1984) worked exhaustively on systems principle as they affect instructional behaviour. They confirmed through their various experiments and writings that the whole is greater than the mere summation of its constituent parts. This means that only when the systems parts are put together in their ordered positions and adequately coordinated that the system can function effectively to achieve its pre-specified objectives'.

Based on this theory, the null hypothesis advanced was that teachers' competence, use of instructional objectives, resources utilisation, awareness of students' capabilities, use of time and space, teachers' quality and qualification are not significant joint predictors of students' academic achievement in French.

Design and Methodology

The ex-post facto design was adopted for the study while 50 percent of the Junior Secondary Three (JS3) students

Table 1: Sample Distribution by Sex and School Type

n = 748

School Type	Male	Female	Total
Girls	0	198	198
Boys	198	0	198
Co- educational	176	176	352
Total	374	374	748

studying French Language and all their French teachers in Cross River State were the subjects, stratified random sampling procedure was used in order to effectively represent

gender of the subjects. Table 1 shows a breakdown of the figure on students' sample.

Two instruments used for data collection were the Teacher Managerial Variable Questionnaire (TMVQ) and an achievement test. The TMVQ was a rating scale adapted from Fraenkel and Wallen (2000), designed to obtain information from the students on how they evaluated their French teachers' managerial ability. The latter was a 40-item achievement test which measured students' academic achievement in French language.

Data Analysis and Interpretation of Results

Data collected were subjected to a multiple regression analysis to test the hypothesis as presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2: Inter-Correlation among Teachers' Classroom Managerial Variables and Students' Academic Achievement in French

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Teachers' competence (1)	1.00	.527*	.313*	.536*	.61*	.108*	.544*	.249*
Students' awareness of instructional objectives (2)		1.00	.254*	.445*	.505*	.101*	.495*	.119*
Teachers' Resources utilization (3)			1.00	.405*	.369*	.020	.269*	.131*
Teachers' awareness of students' capabilities (4)				1.00	.622*	.045	.504*	.085*
Time and space factors (5)					1.00	.083*	.655*	.057
Teachers' quality (6)						1.00	.079*	.166*
Teachers' academic qualification (7)							1.00	.088*
Students' academic achievement (8)								1.00

Significant at 0.05 level of significance. $R = .325^$; $R^2 = .105$

As can be seen in Table 2 almost all the bivariate Pearson's correlation coefficients are significant at 0.05 level of significance with 747 degrees of freedom. The multiple correlation among the eight variables ($R=0.325$) is also

significant at that level. The percentage of variance in the predicted variable accounted for by the predictors (R^2) is 0.105, which is reasonably high. The regression analysis result is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis of the Prediction of Students' Academic Achievement in French using Teachers' Classroom Managerial Variables

Source of Variation	Sum of Square	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig. of F
Regression	10831.503	7	1547.358	12.448	.000
Residual	91983.476	740	124.308		
Total	102814.98	747			

Variable	Regression wt (β)	Standard Error of Beta	t	Sig. of t
Constant	40.962	3.311	12.372	.000
Teachers' competence (X_1)	.317	.159	6.602	.000
Students' awareness of instructional objectives (X_2)	.013	.174	.299	.765
Teachers' resources utilization (X_3)	.102	.194	2.632	0.009
Teachers' awareness of students' capabilities (X_4)	-.03	.15	-.622	.534
Time and space factors (X_5)	-.174	.174	-3.198	.001
Teachers' quality (X_6)	-.001	.213	-.107	.986
Teachers' academic qualification (X_7)	.144	.327	4.12	.000

Prediction Equation: Students' academic achievement = $40.962 + .317x_1 + .013x_2 + .102x_3 - .03x_4 - .174x_5 - .001x_6 + .144x_7$.

The result of the multiple regression analysis shows the regression weight for the independent variables (predictors) and the t-values that tested the significance of the regression weights. It shows that t-values for four out of the seven regression weights, and that of the constant are significant at 0.05 level of significance. These are the t-values for the regression weight of teachers' competence, teachers' resources utilisation, use of time and space, and academic qualification of teachers in combination of a constant.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The result provided sufficient indicators for decision making. In particular, it confirmed the theoretical implication that there exists a set of interacting components functioning together to facilitate learning. For instance, the results in Table 2 and 3 indicate that students academic achievement in French can be predicted if teachers' competence, use of instructional objectives, resources utilisation, awareness of students' capabilities, use of time and space, teachers' quality and academic qualification are obtained. This means that all the variables in the model are significant joint predictors of students' academic achievement in French.

The result is in agreement with the views of Emeh (1997) and Asagwara (1997) who see classroom management as a very important variable which must be carefully manipulated to produce significant learning outputs. Finally, this result supports the following recommendations:

1. Since many variables have been discovered to jointly predict students' academic achievement in French, researchers should lean towards designing researches that could incorporate more than two variables for a greater achievement prediction.
2. The classroom is an important unit of the educational system, it must be managed properly to achieve the goal of education. Classroom management problems should, therefore, not be considered in isolation, but rather from the system analytical framework.

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