



Teachers’ Classroom Control and Pupils’ Academic Performance in Lagos State Primary School, Nigeria

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Abstract		Original Research
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This study examined the relationship between teachers' classroom control and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary schools, Nigeria. Classroom control is an essential aspect of classroom management that influences pupils' behaviour, learning engagement, and academic performance. The study anchored on classroom control theory. The design of the study was correlational. The study population made up of 9,854 teachers and all primary six pupils in Lagos State primary schools, Nigeria. Taro Yamane was used to determine sample size of 385 teachers selected through simple random sampling techniques. Data were gathered using two research instrument titled: "Teachers’ Classroom Control Questionnaire" (TCCQ) and the "Record Observation Format" (ROF). Three research questions and null hypotheses were evaluated at a 0.05 level of significance. An expert evaluated the validity of the instruments, and Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability and consistency of the instruments, which came out to be 0.71 and 0.73. Using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26.0, hypotheses were analysed through the application of Pearson Product Moment correlation in inferential statistical analysis of the gathered data. The findings of hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 showed that: a significant relationship existed between teachers’ classroom rules and pupils academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria ($r = .634$; $N=385$; $p<0.05$); a significant relationship existed between teachers’ instructional control and pupils academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria ($r = .682$; $N=385$; $p<0.05$); and a significant relationship existed between teachers’ classroom control and pupils academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria ($r = .704$; $N=385$; $p<0.05$). Based on the findings, the study concluded that teachers who demonstrate effective classroom control create conducive learning environments that enhance pupils' academic success. It was recommended that school administrators should organize regular training programmes to improve teachers' classroom management and control skills.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Classroom control, Classroom management, and pupils, primary schools.

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Introduction

Today, education is widely recognized as a essential

instrument for national development and individual growth. At the primary school level, education serves



as the foundation upon which pupils build their future academic and life experiences. The effectiveness of teaching and learning in primary schools depends largely on the ability of teachers to create and maintain a classroom environment that supports learning. One of the critical factors that contribute to a productive learning environment is teachers' classroom control. Classroom control involves the strategies, techniques, and practices employed by teachers to regulate pupils' behaviour, maintain discipline, organize classroom activities, and ensure that teaching and learning take place effectively. Teachers' classroom control extends beyond enforcing discipline. It includes establishing classroom rules, instructional control, managing instructional activities, monitoring pupils' behaviour, maintaining effective communication, and creating a positive atmosphere where learners feel safe and motivated to learn. The classroom, with the aid of its facilities such as: the writing board, classroom seats and instructional materials, enhances teaching and learning. However, the teachers and the learners have a unique relationship and this relationship is highly determined by their backgrounds and experiences. Nowadays, the classroom remains the physical framework that symbolizes educational pedagogy. It is the main element on which school buildings are projected (Shittu, Ayoola & Onasanya, 2022).

Moreover, effective classroom control helps teachers maximize instructional time and reduce distractions that may interfere with the learning process. When pupils understand classroom expectations and comply with established rules and routines, learning becomes more organized and meaningful. Consequently, pupils are more likely to participate actively in classroom activities and achieve better academic results. The importance of classroom control is particularly evident in Lagos State, Nigeria, where rapid population growth has led to increasing enrolment in public primary schools. Many schools face challenges such as large class sizes, diverse learner backgrounds, and varying behavioural patterns among pupils. These challenges often make classroom management difficult for teachers. In such situations, teachers who possess effective classroom control skills are better equipped to manage learners, maintain order, and ensure that

instructional objectives are achieved. On the other hand, ineffective classroom control may result in frequent behavioural problems, reduced instructional effectiveness, and poor academic performance among pupils.

Furthermore, Lagos state has a palpable security challenge of pupils kidnapping in primary and secondary school student which has become rampant and the high incidence of insecurity on student kidnapping have portends danger for the peace, progress and development in the state. Based on this premise, it is pertinent to note that economic depression, poverty, moral decadence, poor standard of living, high cost of living, inflation, graduate unemployment, poor parental upbringing, greed amongst the youth; get rich quick mentality, inadequate crime control and insecurity are the major problems that contribute to secondary school students kidnapping in Lagos metropolis. It is in the light of this that all stakeholders in education such as: Government, policy maker, Non-governmental Organization, community leader, parents, teachers and students must collaborate and work assiduously to motivate and commit Nigerian (Odumbo, Shittu, Akinyemi & Momoh, 2017). Academic performance remains one of the major indicators of educational effectiveness. It refers to the extent to which pupils achieve educational objectives as measured through examinations, tests, assignments, and classroom assessments. The academic performance of pupils is influenced by numerous factors, including teacher quality, learning resources, parental involvement, school environment, and classroom management practices (Akin-Little, Little, & Laniti, 2007). Among these factors, classroom control has received considerable attention because of its direct impact on pupils' behaviour and learning outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, concerns have been raised about the declining academic performance of pupils in many Nigerian primary schools. Educational stakeholders, including parents, teachers, school administrators, and government agencies, have continued to search for factors responsible for pupils' poor academic

outcomes. While issues such as inadequate learning facilities, overcrowded classrooms, and insufficient instructional materials have been identified as contributing factors, the role of teachers in managing classroom behaviour and maintaining order remains crucial as leader. Leadership is the process by which a superior person influences subordinate to work toward the actualization of organizational goals and objectives (Mohammed, Shittu & Lawal, 2019). A classroom characterized by noise, indiscipline, and frequent disruptions may negatively affect pupils' concentration, participation, and overall academic achievement. Therefore, this study attributed pupil's poor performance to several factors, including inadequate classroom control, instructional control, and ineffective classroom rules by teachers. Cases of indiscipline, inattentiveness, noise-making, and disruptive behaviour are increasingly reported in schools, thereby affecting the teaching-learning process. Consequently, this study seeks to examine the extent to which teachers' classroom control influences pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary schools.

Objective of the Study

The specific objective of this study was to:

1. examine the relationship between teachers' classroom rules and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria.
2. determine the relationship between teachers' instructional control and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria.
3. find out the relationship between teachers' classroom control and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

The following Null hypotheses were raised:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between teachers' classroom rules and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary school,

Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between teachers' instructional control and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between teachers' classroom management and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria.

Literature Review

The study anchored on classroom control theory developed by William Glasser in 1998. The theory is a psychological and educational framework that explains human behaviour as being internally motivated rather than externally controlled. It suggests that individuals make choices based on their intrinsic needs rather than being driven by external rewards or punishments. It presents a pupil-centered approach to classroom control that focuses on internal motivation, responsibility, and relationship-building rather than external control. Teachers' classroom control remains one of the most important factors influencing the effectiveness of teaching and learning in primary schools. Classroom control refers to the ability of teachers to maintain order, manage pupils' behaviour, enforce rules, and create a conducive environment for learning. In educational settings, particularly at the primary school level, pupils require consistent guidance and supervision to remain focused on academic activities. The success of instructional delivery often depends on how effectively teachers control classroom activities and manage learners' behaviour. According to Shittu, Agbola and Mohammed (2024), teaching is noble profession and teachers must operate within the established rules and regulations Teacher characteristics remains the single most determinant of student success.

However, concept of classroom control has evolved over time from a strict disciplinary approach to a more comprehensive process that emphasizes positive behaviour management, pupil engagement, and the establishment of a supportive learning

environment. Classroom control is closely linked to classroom management, although the two concepts are not entirely synonymous. While classroom management encompasses all activities undertaken to organize the learning environment, classroom control focuses specifically on maintaining discipline and regulating pupils' behaviour. Researchers have argued that classroom control is a prerequisite for effective instruction because learning cannot occur efficiently in an environment characterized by disorder and disruption. Teachers who successfully establish clear rules, routines, and expectations often experience fewer behavioural problems and greater academic engagement among pupils. Several studies have highlighted the significance of classroom control in promoting pupils' academic performance. Academic performance refers to the extent to which pupils achieve educational objectives as measured through examinations, tests, assignments, and other assessment methods. Educational researchers generally agree that a positive classroom environment contributes significantly to academic success. When pupils feel secure, respected, and guided within the classroom, they are more likely to concentrate on learning tasks and achieve better academic outcomes. The relationship between classroom control and academic performance can be explained through behavioural and cognitive learning theories. Behavioural theorists emphasize that positive reinforcement and consistent discipline encourage desirable behaviour that support learning. When teachers establish clear behavioural expectations and reward compliance, pupils develop habits that enhance academic engagement. Similarly, cognitive theorists argue that classroom control reduces distractions, allowing pupils to allocate more cognitive resources to learning activities. Therefore, effective classroom control not only influences behaviour but also enhances the cognitive processes necessary for academic achievement. In primary schools, classroom control assumes greater importance because children are at a developmental stage where self-regulation skills are still emerging. Young learners often require structured environments that guide their behaviour and support their academic growth. Teachers serve as authority

figures who shape pupils' attitudes toward learning and school participation. Effective classroom control ensures that instructional time is maximized and that pupils remain focused on educational activities. Conversely, ineffective control may lead to frequent disruptions, loss of instructional time, and reduced academic performance. Moreso, school leaders communicate with their external communities in an organised way to enhance their chances of getting better public support, minimising criticism, learning the values (Shittu, Idowu & Adedapo, 2022).

In the Nigerian educational context, classroom control remains a critical issue due to challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, inadequate teaching resources, and diverse learner needs. Many public primary schools in Lagos State accommodate large numbers of pupils, making classroom control more demanding for teachers. Overcrowding often increases noise levels, behavioural problems, and teacher stress, thereby affecting instructional effectiveness. As a result, teachers must employ appropriate classroom control strategies to ensure that learning objectives are achieved despite these challenges. Moreso, many schools lack basic protective structures such as security fencing, well-trained guards, surveillance systems, or emergency communication tools. In the absence of such facilities, school administrators can only trust in makeshift safety measures, which may prove to be inefficient in case of an attack. These challenges place enormous stress on teachers and school leaders who are expected to ensure academic quality while protecting lives (Shittu, Dairo, Mohammed & Kayode, 2026). Effective classroom control contributes to increased concentration, improved attendance, enhanced participation, and greater motivation to learn. These factors collectively influence academic performance by creating conditions that support meaningful learning experiences. This also helps in recognizing top performers as well as those performers who may be causing negative marginal productivity and therefore can be intervened on time (Govindaraju, *et al* in Giuseppe, Salman, Ahmed, Kiran, Haider, Temisanren, & Shittu, 2026). Research indicates that pupils respond more positively to supportive disciplinary approaches than to harsh punishment.

Teachers who employ positive discipline often build stronger relationships with pupils, resulting in greater cooperation and improved academic engagement. Effective classroom management and control are essential for creating productive learning environments that enhance pupils' academic outcomes (Olarewaju, Obafemi, Olasinde, & Nasamu, 2024). In addition, the reviewed literature demonstrates that teachers' classroom control is a fundamental factor influencing pupils' academic performance. Effective classroom control promotes discipline, reduces disruptions, enhances instructional efficiency, and creates an environment conducive to learning. Studies conducted both internationally and within Nigeria consistently indicate that pupils perform better academically when teachers maintain effective classroom control. Given the unique challenges facing primary schools in Lagos State, including large class sizes and diverse learner characteristics, effective classroom control remains essential for achieving educational objectives and improving pupils' academic outcomes. The literature therefore provides strong support for examining the relationship between teachers' classroom control and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary schools.

Methodology

The study adopted correlational design. population

of the study comprised of 9,854 public primary school teachers and all primary six pupils in Lagos State, Nigeria. Taro Yamane was used to determine sample size of 385 teachers selected through simple random sampling. Three research questions were raised and null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. Two research instruments titled: 'Teachers' Classroom Control Questionnaire' (TCCQ) and Record Observation Format' (ROF) were used for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A and B. Section A contained the personal information of the respondents and section B contained the 20 items structured around the research questions. Each statement is measured on a four-point modifier Likert-type-rating scale, namely: "Strongly Agree (SA)", "Agree (A)", "Strongly Disagree (SD)" and "Disagree (D)". The validity of the instruments was determined by test expert and Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability at 0.71 and 0.73. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient through Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 26.0.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between teachers' classroom rules and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria.

Table 1: Pearson's correlation analysis between teachers' classroom rules and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria.

Variables	Teachers' Classroom Rules	Pupils Academic Performance
Teachers' Classroom Rules	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.634**
	N	.001
		385
		385

	Pearson Correlation	.634**	1
Pupils Academic Performance	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	385	385

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 indicated that there was a positive significant relationship between classroom rules and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria ($r = .634$; $N=385$; $p<0.05$). Hence, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between teachers' classroom rules and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria was rejected. This implies that a significant relationship existed between classroom rules and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria. This finding is in line with Adetutu and Akinwumi (2021) investigated the influence of teachers' classroom management skills on the academic performance of primary school pupils in Oyo State, Nigeria. Using a descriptive survey design and

Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis, the researchers found a positive relationship between teachers' classroom management skills and pupils' academic performance. The study concluded that teachers who effectively establish and enforce classroom rules create conducive learning environments that improve pupils' academic outcomes.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between teachers' instructional control and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria.

Table 2: Pearson's correlation analysis between teachers' instructional control and pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria.

Variables	Teachers' Instructional Control	Pupils Academic Performance
	Pearson Correlation	1
Teachers' Instructional Control	Sig. (2-tailed)	.682**
	N	385
	Pearson Correlation	.682**
Pupils Academic Performance	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	385

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 indicated that there was a positive significant relationship between teachers’ instructional control and pupils’ academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria ($r = .682$; $N=385$; $p<0.05$). Hence, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between teachers’ instructional control and pupils’ academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria was rejected. This implies that a significant relationship existed teachers’ instructional control and pupils’ academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria. This finding is in line with Adedeji (2025) examined instructional supervision practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Zamfara State, Nigeria. Using

correlational and regression analyses, the study found that instructional supervision significantly contributed to teachers' effectiveness in classroom instruction. The study revealed that proper instructional control enables teachers to manage learning activities efficiently, improve instructional delivery, and positively influence learners' academic outcomes.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between teachers’ classroom control and pupils’ academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria.

Table 3: Pearson’s correlation analysis between teachers’ classroom control and pupils’ academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria.

Variables		Teachers’ Classroom Control	Pupils Academic Performance
Teachers’ Classroom Control	Pearson Correlation	1	.704**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	385	385
Pupils Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.704**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	385	385

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 indicated that there was a positive significant relationship between teachers’ classroom control and pupils’ academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria ($r = .704$; $N=385$; $p<0.05$). Hence, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between teachers’ classroom

control and pupils’ academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria was rejected. This implies that a significant relationship existed between teachers’ classroom control and pupils’ academic performance in Lagos State primary school, Nigeria. This finding is in line with

Olarewaju, Obafemi, Olasinde, and Nasamu (2024) investigated the influence of classroom management on pupils' academic performance in selected primary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and employed regression analysis. Findings revealed that effective management of classroom instruction significantly improved pupils' academic performance. The researchers observed that teachers who maintained control over instructional activities, ensured active pupil participation, and monitored learning progress created learning environments that enhanced academic.

Conclusion

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that teachers' classroom control is a critical factor in promoting pupils' academic achievement. Therefore, this study concluded that teachers' classroom control plays a significant role in influencing pupils' academic performance in Lagos State primary schools. The findings revealed that effective instructional control, proper enforcement of classroom rules, and overall classroom management contribute positively to pupils' learning outcomes. Teachers who maintain discipline, monitor instructional activities, and create orderly learning environments are more likely to enhance pupils' concentration, participation, and academic achievement. Conversely, poor classroom control may lead to disruptions that negatively affect learning. Therefore, effective classroom control remains an essential factor in promoting academic success and improving the quality of primary education in Lagos State.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made in light of the findings:

1. Educational authorities and school administrators should organize regular workshops, seminars, and training programmes on classroom management and instructional control techniques to equip

teachers with modern skills for maintaining effective classroom environments.

2. Teachers should develop clear, realistic, and age-appropriate classroom rules at the beginning of each academic session and ensure their consistent implementation to promote discipline and enhance learning among pupils.
3. School heads and supervisors should closely monitor classroom instructional activities and provide professional support to teachers in order to strengthen instructional control and improve teaching effectiveness.
4. Teachers should foster friendly, respectful, and supportive relationships with pupils. Positive interactions encourage cooperation, improve classroom behaviour, increase learner engagement, and ultimately enhance academic performance.

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