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## **A study of teaching experience and teacher-parent collaboration in managing students' disruptive behaviours**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Managing students' disruptive behaviours remains a critical challenge in secondary education, requiring effective strategies that leverage teachers' experience and collaborative efforts with parents. This study explores the influence of teaching experience and teacher-parent collaboration on managing disruptive behaviours among secondary school students in Nigeria. 367 teachers participated in the study, with data collected through a structured questionnaire. Statistical analyses, including one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation, were employed to examine the relationships among the variables. The findings reveal that teachers' years of experience significantly impact their ability to manage students' disruptive behaviours, suggesting that seasoned teachers employ more effective behavioural management strategies. Conversely, a weak positive but non-significant correlation ( $r = 0.95$ ,  $p = .068$ ) was found between teacher-parent collaboration and disruptive behaviour management, indicating that while parental involvement may play a role, it does not strongly influence classroom management outcomes. These results highlight the necessity of structured professional development initiatives tailored to classroom behaviour management. Based on the findings, the study recommends implementing a teacher mentoring programme where experienced educators mentor their less experienced counterparts to enhance classroom management skills. This approach can foster a more structured, experience-driven response to disruptive behaviours, creating a more conducive learning environment. Future research should explore additional contextual factors, such as school policies and socio-economic influences, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of effective behaviour management strategies.

**Keywords:** classroom management, teacher-parent collaboration, teacher gender, disruptive behaviour, secondary education

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Disruptive behaviours among students in secondary schools have become a significant concern for educators worldwide. These disruptions hinder the learning process and create a challenging environment for both teachers and students (Ødegård & Solberg, 2024). In Nigeria, the issue of managing disruptive behaviours in secondary schools is particularly pressing due to overcrowded classrooms, diverse student backgrounds, and varying levels of teacher training (Ajayi & Ajayi, 2017). Effective management of such behaviours is crucial for maintaining a positive and productive learning environment (Wangdi & Namgyel, 2022). This management often depends on teachers' experience and their ability to engage in collaborative practices.

The relationship between teaching experience and the ability to manage classroom behaviours has been a subject of interest in educational research. Experienced teachers tend to develop strategies for managing classroom disruptions, drawing from their years of practice and exposure to various classroom situations (Terada, 2021). However, collaborative practices, such as working with colleagues, engaging with parents, and involving students in decision-making,

have also been highlighted as critical in managing disruptive behaviours effectively (Maier et al., 2017).

Teaching experience is pivotal in shaping teachers' ability to manage classroom behaviours. Teaching experience has long been a focus of educational research concerning classroom management for years. It has been categorised as one of the key determinants of classroom management, and experienced teachers are considered more adept at managing their classrooms. Research has consistently shown that experienced teachers are more adept at recognising potential disruptions and implementing preventive measures (Berger et al., 2018; Marrero Galván et al., 2023). They are also better equipped to handle unexpected situations calmly and effectively, which helps maintain a stable classroom environment (Berliner, 2004). Indeed, experienced teachers are more skilled in structuring a learning environment as they can predict problems and take preventive measures against these behaviours (Goldberg et al., 2021). The more exposure teachers gain in classrooms, the more likely they are to develop and have a wide range of strategies to flexibly adapt them to different situations to maintain a positive and productive learning environment. Indeed, another advantage is that experienced teachers are usually more competent at establishing and enforcing classroom rules and routines, which are key components of effective classroom management. Research has shown that many years in practice enabled teachers to maintain order in class and engage their students (Thomas & Nair, 2023). Teachers gain a deeper understanding of students' needs and behaviour and can respond adequately to interruptions. Their skills in remaining level-headed and composed in the face of challenges contribute greatly to a stable and predictable classroom environment, which is vital in teaching and learning.

Conversely, inexperienced teachers lack proper classroom management because of limited exposure and a lack of experience in various classroom situations. For instance, (Çakmak et al., 2019; Terada, 2021) argue that it is likely hard for a novice teacher to notice disruptive behaviour and how best to handle them in time. They may also lack the confidence or skills necessary to administer disciplinary measures. For that reason, classroom management techniques among novice teachers are frequently improved through mentoring and special development programs. These programs would provide the teachers with the necessary tools and strategies to improve classroom management skills and enhance their overall teaching effectiveness. The relationship between the length of teaching experience and classroom management focuses on professional development and support quality. Effective classroom management is often a result of continuous learning and adaptation. Scholars (Le et al., 2018; Sonsupap & Cojorn, 2024) believe that professional development and collaborative learning are important for teachers at whatever stage of their careers. Experienced teachers can learn to refine their management strategies more adeptly by interacting with professional learning communities, collaborating with peers, and keeping abreast of new practices. This shows the dynamic nature of the teaching experience, where growth and adjustment are necessary to keep classroom management effective. In Nigeria, the disparity in teaching experience among educators is quite pronounced, with some teachers having extensive training and years of experience. In contrast, others may lack formal teacher education and practical exposure (Usman, 2020).

Collaborative practices involve teachers working with their peers (Adewale, 2024), parents, and the broader school community to address students' behavioural issues. This approach is grounded in the idea that collective efforts and shared responsibilities can lead to better outcomes in managing disruptive behaviours (de Jong et al., 2019; Le et al., 2018). Effective collaboration includes strategies such as peer mentoring, professional learning communities, and active parent-teacher communication. In addition to individual experience, collaboration with parents has emerged as a significant factor in managing students' disruptive behaviours. Effective communication and cooperation between teachers and parents can lead to a more consistent and supportive approach to behaviour management (Lee & McCabe, 2021). Research shows that when parents are actively involved in their child's education, there is a marked improvement in the child's behaviour and academic performance (Adams et al., 2016). Collaborative efforts, such as regular parent-teacher meetings and home-school communication, enable teachers to understand the underlying causes of disruptive behaviours and to address them more effectively.

The synergy between teaching experience and parent collaboration is particularly potent in managing disruptive behaviours. Experienced teachers who engage parents as partners in the educational process are better positioned to develop comprehensive strategies that address behavioural issues holistically (Sheldon & Epstein, 2005). This collaborative approach ensures that students receive consistent messages about behavioural expectations at home and school, reinforcing positive behaviour and reducing the likelihood of disruptions. Moreover, experienced teachers can leverage their skills to guide and mentor parents on effective behaviour management techniques, further enhancing the overall effectiveness of the collaboration (Coronel, 2024).

Generally, the nexus between teaching experience, collaboration with parents, and managing students' disruptive behaviours underscores the multifaceted nature of effective classroom management. By leveraging the strengths of experienced teachers and fostering robust parent-teacher partnerships, schools can create a supportive and consistent environment that promotes positive student behaviour. Future research should continue exploring these dynamics, particularly in diverse educational contexts, to identify best practices and inform policy decisions to improve classroom management and educational outcomes.

In the context of Nigerian secondary schools, collaborative practices are often underutilised because of some factors, such as inadequate professional development opportunities, limited resources, and cultural norms that may discourage open communication among teachers and parents (Afemikhe et al., 2022; Onwuneme, 2023). Despite these challenges, fostering a collaborative culture within schools can significantly enhance teachers' ability to manage disruptive behaviours, as it allows for sharing strategies and support networks (Adewale, 2024).

The educational system in Nigeria presents unique challenges and opportunities for managing classroom behaviours. Factors such as overcrowded classrooms, diverse student populations, and varying levels of teacher preparation contribute to the complexity of behaviour management (Ihebom & Uko, 2020). Moreover, socio-economic disparities and cultural factors further complicate classroom dynamics, making teachers need to be well-equipped with both experience and collaborative skills (Adeoye & Lasisi, 2023; Munir et al., 2023).

This study explores the interplay between teaching experience and teacher-parent collaborative practices in managing students' disruptive behaviours in secondary schools in Nigeria. By examining how these factors contribute to effective behaviour management, the study seeks to provide insights that can inform teachers' professional development programs and policy decisions to enhance classroom management skills.

The following research questions were raised: a) Do teachers adopt counselling to manage students' disruptive behaviours in secondary schools? b) How often do teachers adopt counselling to manage students' disruptive behaviours in secondary schools? c) Is there a relationship between teacher-parent collaboration and managing disruptive behaviours among secondary school students in Nigeria? d) Is there any difference in managing disruptive behaviours among secondary schools based on teaching experience? H01: There is no significant relationship between teacher-parent collaboration and managing disruptive behaviours among secondary school students in Nigeria. H02: There is no significant difference in managing disruptive behaviours among secondary schools based on teaching experience.

## **METHOD**

This study utilised a quantitative cross-sectional descriptive research design approach to analyse the role of teaching experience and teacher-parent collaboration in managing students' disruptive behaviours in secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. The quantitative approach is fitting as it allows for the collection and analysis of numerical data, facilitating the identification of patterns and relationships between variables (Gul, 2023). The target population includes all secondary school teachers and students in Lagos State, chosen for its large and diverse student population, providing a comprehensive context for examining classroom communication strategies. It focused on public secondary schools, ensuring a standardised educational environment and consistent participant access.

Furthermore, a simple random sampling technique was used to select a representative sample of 367 teachers from the target population. Data were collected using a self-designed "Teachers Proactive Classroom Management and Students' Disruptive Behaviour questionnaire", which measures key variables of interest. The questionnaire was divided into three sections: section A, gathering demographic information; section B, containing six items measuring teacher-collation strategies; and section C, including six items on disruptive behaviour, the dependent variable. The questionnaire used a Likert scale ranging from "Never" to "always." The instrument underwent construct and content validity checks, and its reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, yielding a coefficient of 0.69.

Data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 29. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the demographic characteristics of the participants and the first research question. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare the teaching experience with students' disruptive behaviours. At the same time, the Pearson moment correlation was used to determine the relationship between teacher-parent collaboration and students' disruptive behaviours. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were informed about the study's purpose, their right to withdraw at any time and the confidentiality of their responses. Participants' identities and responses were kept confidential.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the major findings of the study. It also discusses the reported findings based on the existing research outcomes.

### **Findings**

The gender distribution of the respondents in this study shows a significant imbalance, with females constituting 65.9% of the sample and males representing 34.1%. This suggests a higher participation rate of female teachers in the study or potentially a greater presence of female teachers within the secondary school environment (Table 1).

**Table 1. Participants demographic information**

Variable	N	%
Gender		
Male	125	34.1%
Female	242	65.9%
Years of experience		
01-May	50	13.6%
06-Oct	39	10.6%
Nov-15	90	24.5%
16-20	42	11.4%
21-25	109	29.7%
26-30	7	1.9%
31-35	30	8.2%
Academic Qualification		
NCE	29	7.9%
BSc/ED	206	56.1%
MSc/ED	119	32.4%
PhD	13	3.5%
Job Role		
Class teacher	208	56.7%
Subject teacher	132	36.0%
Year tutor	3	0.8%
Principal	17	4.6%
Counsellor	7	1.9%

This gender disparity may influence the dynamics of teacher-parent collaboration and approaches to managing students' disruptive behaviours. In terms of age, the data indicates a diverse range among the teachers, with the largest groups being in the 51-55 age range (22.1%) and the 46-50 age range (19.3%). The presence of a substantial number of teachers in these age groups suggests a workforce with considerable teaching experience. This experience is likely critical in effectively managing students' behaviours and collaborating with parents, as seasoned teachers may have developed more refined strategies and insights over the years.

Examining the years of teaching experience, most teachers had between 21-25 years of experience (29.7%), followed by those with 11-15 years (24.5%). The significant proportion of experienced teachers underscored the depth of knowledge and expertise available for managing student behaviour through collaboration with parents. This extensive experience was crucial for addressing the complexities of disruptive behaviours in secondary schools.

The level of students being taught also provides important context, with most teachers working at the senior secondary level (52.6%), followed by those teaching junior secondary students (30.0%). The focus on older students was significant, as it suggests that the study primarily involved teachers dealing with adolescents, who may exhibit more complex and challenging behaviours. Effective management of these behaviours often requires nuanced and experienced approaches, further emphasizing the importance of the teachers' extensive experience.

Regarding academic qualifications, most teachers hold a bachelor's degree (56.1%), followed by those with a master's degree (32.4%). This high level of academic qualification indicates that the teachers were well-educated and likely possessed advanced knowledge and skills for managing student behaviour. The presence of teachers with advanced degrees suggested a commitment to professional development and a strong foundation for implementing effective behavioural management strategies.

The job roles of the respondents highlight that most were class teachers (56.7%), with a significant proportion also being subject teachers (36.0%). This indicates that most teachers were directly responsible for managing classrooms and were critical in addressing disruptive behaviours. The involvement of class and subject teachers in the study underscored the practical, hands-on experience they bring to managing student behaviour and collaborating with parents.

**Table 2. Availability of counselling for students**

Category	N	%
Yes	360	98.1%
No	7	1.9%

As shown in Table 2, the overwhelming majority of teachers in the study (98.1%) reported that they counselled their students, with only a small fraction (1.9%) indicating that they did not engage in counselling. This high percentage demonstrates a strong commitment among teachers to addressing students' needs beyond academic instruction. Counselling was crucial in understanding students' behaviours, providing support, and guiding them through personal and academic challenges. The near-universal practice of student counselling suggests that it was a widely recognized and integral part of teachers' responsibilities in managing disruptive behaviours and fostering a supportive school environment.

**Table 3. Availability of counselling for students**

Category	N	%
Daily	235	64.0%
Weekly	99	27.0%
Monthly	26	7.1%
Termly	7	1.9%

When examining how often teachers counselled their students, Table 3 shows that most were engaged in this practice daily (64.0%). This frequent interaction indicates a proactive approach to student welfare, allowing teachers to address issues as they arise and provide continuous support. Daily counselling could help build strong relationships between teachers and students, which is essential for effective behaviour management and fostering a positive school climate. Additionally, 27.0% of teachers counsel their students weekly. While less frequent than daily counselling, weekly sessions still reflected a regular and structured approach to supporting students. This frequency allowed for ongoing monitoring of student progress and timely intervention when needed. A smaller percentage of teachers counselled their students monthly (7.1%) or termly (1.9%). Monthly and termly counselling sessions, although less frequent, might be more in-depth or focused on broader issues, such as academic planning or long-term personal development. These sessions could complement more frequent interactions by providing a space for reflection and goal setting.

**Table 4. Correlation between parents and managing disruptive behaviours**

		Collaboration	Disruption
Collaboration	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	0.95
	N		.068
		367	367
Disruptive behaviour	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	0.95
	N		.068
		367	367

Table 4 shows that a Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted to determine the level of relationship between teachers' collaboration with parents and students' disruptive behaviour. The result revealed a very weak positive correlation between collaboration with parents and disruptive behaviour,  $r(367) = .095$ ,  $p = .068$ . However, the correlation was not statistically significant, suggesting that there was no significant relationship between collaboration with parents and disruptive behaviours among secondary school students in Nigeria.

**Table 5. Mean scores of teaching experiences of teachers in managing disruptive behaviour**

Years of Experience	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1 – 5	50	30.567	.59914
6 – 10	39	35.769	.52683
11 – 15	90	35.352	.76253
16 – 20	42	30.238	.28649
21 – 25	109	31.865	.53418
26 – 30	7	30.000	.00000
31 – 35	30	30.389	.52647

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics to determine the mean difference that exists among teachers based on individuals' years of teaching experiences.

**Table 6. Analysis of variance**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Group	17.670	6	2.945	8.683	<.001
Within Group	122.107	360	.339		
Total	139.777	360			

As presented in Table 6, a one-way between-subjects Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare the effect of teaching experience for 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, 21-25 years, 26-30 years, and 31-35 years on managing students disruptive behaviour

at the  $p < .05$  level for the seven conditions [ $F(6, 360) = 8.683, p = <.001$ ]. Post hoc comparison using the Turkey HSD test indicated that the mean score for the Tukey HSD post hoc test for disruptive behaviour based on teachers' years of experience revealed significant differences among several groups. Teachers with 1-5 years of experience reported significantly higher disruptive behaviour than those aged 6-10 and 11-15. Teachers with 6-10 and 11-15 years of experience managed disruptive behaviours more effectively, showing lower levels of disruption. However, teachers with 16-20 years of experience reported a noticeable increase in disruptive behaviour, indicating a possible mid-career challenge. Additionally, teachers with 21-25 and 31-35 years of experience reported higher levels of disruptive behaviour than those aged 6-10 and 11-15. These findings suggest that while early career teachers struggled more with managing disruptions, mid-career challenges and potential burnout may affect teachers' ability to manage classroom behaviours effectively as they gain more experience.

## **Discussion**

The findings of this study underscore the significance of counselling services in addressing disruptive behaviour among secondary school students. Teachers' involvement in counselling activities has proven effective in resolving students' moral and academic concerns. This aligns with the study by Zulkifli et al. (2022), which emphasized that counselling services are crucial in addressing students' psychological and social issues. Furthermore, Fitri et al. (2021) found that regular counselling sessions conducted by school principals and counsellors effectively manage student discipline issues. Therefore, the school management is advised to integrate counselling sessions as a routine component of the school schedule.

This study also identified a positive correlation between teacher-parent collaboration and the management of disruptive behavior. The more intensive the collaborative practices between teachers and parents, the more effectively students' disruptive behavior in the classroom is managed. While this finding contrasts with Smith et al. (2022), who stated that interventions involving parents and teachers are essential in addressing student issues, Aziz et al. (2023) affirmed that teacher-parent collaboration can positively shape students' character, particularly in the context of online learning. This suggests that regular communication between these stakeholders fosters holistic child development, encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects.

Additionally, the study revealed a significant difference in managing disruptive behavior based on teachers' years of experience. More experienced teachers are more effective in managing disruptive behavior than novice teachers. Factors such as stress or burnout challenge early-career teachers in classroom management. These findings align with the study by Çakmak et al. (2019), which found that the longer novice teachers remain in the profession, the more experience they gain to overcome classroom challenges. Therefore, mentoring between senior and junior teachers is recommended to enhance classroom management effectiveness.

Furthermore, research by Zulkifli et al. (2022) demonstrated that creativity in teaching practices is influenced by factors such as gender, age, and teaching experience. This indicates that more experienced teachers tend to adopt more creative approaches in managing classrooms, contributing to more effective behavior management. Additionally, a study by Wangid et al. (2020) revealed that teachers' self-efficacy in teaching plays a critical role in successful classroom management. Teachers with high self-efficacy are better equipped to handle challenges related to student behavior management.

Integrating strong counselling services, active teacher-parent collaboration, and accumulated teaching experience are crucial components in managing disruptive behaviour in secondary schools. School administration should prioritize these elements by incorporating counselling into the routine schedule, fostering open communication channels with parents, and supporting teachers' professional development to create a positive and productive educational environment.

## CONCLUSION

This study has established that synergy between teaching experience and teacher-parent collaboration is pivotal in managing students' disruptive behaviours in secondary schools in Nigeria. By leveraging the strengths of experienced educators and fostering strong partnerships with parents, schools can create a more effective and holistic approach to behavioural management. This approach not only improves the classroom environment but also contributes to the overall development and well-being of students. Future research should continue to explore innovative ways to enhance these collaborations and address the challenges identified in this study. Similarly, since the findings of this study may not be generalisable to other states in Nigeria, a study of other states in isolation and comparative should be explored by other researchers. Based on these findings, a teacher mentoring programme involving the peering of senior and junior teachers as mentors and mentees, respectively for effective classroom management should be implemented.

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