GENDER AND BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT AS CORRELATES OF READING AND WRITING IN PUPILS IN ORU EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, IMO STATE

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between teachers' gender, classroom behaviour management, pupils' reading and writing abilities in Oru East Local Government Area, Imo State. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted the correlation survey research design. The sample for the study involved 377 respondents comprising 47 teachers and 330 pupils in 20 primary schools in the area. The instruments for data collection were two: Classroom Management Practices Survey (CMPS) and Pupils' Reading and Writing Achievement Schedule (PRWAS). The CMPS and PRWAS were subjected to face validity by three validates. The reliability of the instruments was determined using the Cronbach Alpha. Coefficients for .73 and .82 for PRWAS. The method for data collection was the direct delivery approach. Linear Regression was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The correlation matrix that teachers' gender has moderate relationship with reading and writing among primary schools' pupils, and a moderate relationship between teachers' behaviour management and pupils' performance in reading and writing skills. The null hypothesis is rejected and implies that teachers' gender has a significant relationship with pupils' performance in reading and writing in primary schools. Similarly, behaviour management has a significant relationship with pupils; performance in reading and writing in primary schools. Based on these results, the researcher recommends targeted professional development for teachers in behaviour management, promotion of gender-sensitive teaching practices, and the implementation of data-driven educational strategies to improve pupils' performance. These measures aim to create a more supportive and equitable learning environment, thereby improving literacy skills among pupils.

Keywords: *Gender, Behaviour Management, Teachers, Pupil, Performance, Reading Skill, Writing Skill*

Introduction

Emphasis is usually laid on teaching reading and writing than on other skills by teachers, right from the primary education level. Reading is the extraction of meaning from graphic symbols. It is a complex activity that involves sight, intelligence, knowledge of the writer's language and knowledge of the word. For beginners, reading is the ability to recognize printed symbols, represent speech and to respond to the sounds and meanings of words. According to Roshi, Razali, Zamil, Noor and Baharuddim (2018), reading is seen as an attempt to comprehend the writer's message for personal growth and success in the relevant fields. Writing on the other hand, is the ability to document ideas or information on print. It is the process of using symbols, letters of the alphabet, punctuation and spaces to communicate thoughts and ideas in a readable form (Harmer, 2020). Writing involves the ability to put down the graphic symbols that represent a language and is a way of recording information by means of visible symbols. Writing involves the creation of textual content by using symbols, characters, or systems to express ideas, thoughts, information for communication and preservation (Graham and Perin, 2017).

Writing skills are an appreciable skill, which is meant to be imbibed in pupils in the learning environment. Pupils are expected to gain appreciable skills in the arts of reading and writing in order to lay a solid foundation for future academic career and effective participation in the society. Unfortunately, it has been observed that most pupils lack the ability to read and write effectively (Onyeme, 2023). The inability to read and write consequently affects pupils' academic achievement in primary schools, hence the concerns of various stakeholders in primary education

on the need to improve reading and writing skill among pupils. Several factors have been attributed to the inability of pupils to read and write as expected. One of the factors identified is the inability of teachers to manage the behaviours of their pupils properly during reading activities (Olowo and Fashiku, 2019).

Behaviour management is an important component of classroom management that ensures that disruptive behaviours do not impact negatively on pupils in the teaching and learning process. Behaviour management in the classroom involves strategies and practices used by teachers to establish and maintain a positive and orderly learning environment (Marzano and Marzano, 2013). By maintaining a positive and orderly learning environment, pupils may be better disposed to learn reading and writing. Through effective behaviour management strategies, teachers can cultivate an environment conducive to literacy development, enabling pupils to engage actively in reading and writing tasks and have consistent opportunities to practice and improve their skills. Operationally, behaviour management is a process whereby teachers are able to coordinate pupils' behaviour towards learning. Moreover, effective behaviour management strategies increase pupils' engagement in literacy activities, leading to enhanced reading comprehension and writing proficiency (Jones, Bailey and Brush, 2021). Previous related studies seem to support the influence of behaviour management on learners' academic achievement. Agu (2021) in a related studies found that classroom discipline influenced students' achievement. Similarly, Farooq and Ahmed (2021) found that behaviour management is a predictor of students' achievement. In another study however, Abiodun and Olaniyi (2021) found that classroom discipline is not a predictor of achievement.

On gender as another variable in this study, Rafiq, Khan and Rizvi (2018) found that male teachers were more efficacious in controlling behavior problems and enhancement of student's

efficacy. Gender is a dynamic system of stratification that shapes social roles, interactions, and access to resources (Fausto-Sterling, 2020). It is assumed that men and women have different perceptions, ability, attitude and skills (Onyeme, 2023). These differences may influence teachers' behaviour management abilities in primary schools which may relate to reading and writing in pupils.

Despite the possible link between behaviour management, reading and writing among primary pupils, little has been done to explore this possible link in Oru East Local Government Area. Yet, it is observed that many primary pupils even at sixth grade in Oru East Local Education Authority, Imo State barely read or write well despite their exposure to various learning experiences (Nwosu, 2020). In order to improve reading and writing among primary pupils generally, and those in Oru East Local Education Authority, particularly, there is need to explore whether there is relationship between teachers' behaviour management and reading and writing. This study therefore is poised to establish the relationship between teachers' gender and behaviour management as correlates of pupil's performance in reading and writing skill in Oru East LGEA.

Statement of the Problem

The quality of teachers' behaviour management practices may significantly influence pupils' proficiency in reading and writing. However, despite the importance of behaviour management, its relationship to pupils' performance in reading and writing skills remains inadequately explored and understood. Although there is an established consensus on the pivotal role of classroom management in creating conducive learning environments, the specific behaviour management through which these practices directly influence literacy outcomes require deeper investigation. Furthermore, there is a dearth of standardized frameworks or guidelines that

explicitly link targeted classroom behaviour management strategies and enhancements in pupils' reading and writing proficiency. Addressing this issue requires a focused inquiry into the specific classroom behaviour management practices and their relationship with pupils' reading and writing proficiency. Teachers' gender has also been examined as a factor affecting the performance of pupils in reading and writing. The problem of the study therefore is whether behaviour management correlates with reading and writing of pupils.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate teachers' gender and classroom behaviour management as correlates of pupils performance in reading and writing skills among primary school pupils in Oru East Local Government Area, Imo State. Specifically, the study sought to establish relationship between:

1. teachers' gender and performance in reading and writing skill among pupils in Oru East Local Government Area, Imo State.
2. teachers' behaviour management practices and performance in reading and writing skills among pupils in Oru East Local Government Area, Imo State.

Research Questions

This research question was posed for the study:

1. What is the relationship between teachers' gender and performance in reading and writing skill among pupils in Oru East Local Government Area, Imo State?

2. What is the relationship between teachers' behaviour management practices and performance in reading and writing skills among pupils in Oru East Local Government Area, Imo State?

Hypotheses

The formulated hypothesis guided the study and was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between teachers' gender and performance in reading and writing skills among pupils in Oru East Local Government Area, Imo State.
2. There is no significant relationship between teachers' behaviour management practices and performance in reading and writing skills among pupils in Oru East Local Government Area, Imo State.

Method

The study adopted a correlation design. The area of the study is Oru East Local Government Education Authority, Imo State, Nigeria. The population of the study was 6,681 comprising 826 teachers and 5,855 primary five pupils in 53 public-owned primary schools in Oru East Local Government Area. The sample of the study was 377 respondents comprising 47 teachers and 330 pupils in 20 primary schools in the area. The sample size was estimated using Taro Yamane formula for determining sample size and proportionately allocated to teachers and pupils based on their population sizes. The instruments for data collection were two: Classroom Management Practices Survey (CMPS) and Pupils' Reading and Writing Achievement Schedule (PRWAS). The CMPS and PRWAS were subjected to face validity by three validates (two from the Department

of Early Childhood and Primary Education and one from Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka). The reliability of the instruments was determined using the Cronbach Alpha. The coeffcients was .73 for CMPS and .82 for PRWAS. The researcher visited the 20 primary schools involved in the study for instrument administration and subsequently data collection. The CMPS was administered on the 47 participating teachers by researcher and three research assistants who were briefed. Teachers also tested reading and writing of participating pupils using the selected texts. The PRWAS was used by teachers to collect data on pupils' achievement in reading and writing, the process lasted for one week. Linear Regression was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between teachers' gender and performance in reading and writing skill among pupils in Oru East Local Government Area, Imo State?

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between teachers' behaviour management practices and performance in reading and writing skills among pupils in Oru East Local Government Area, Imo State?

Table 1: Correlation matrix on the relationship between teachers' gender, behaviour management and pupils' performance in reading and writing among pupils

Correlations

		Behaviour Management	Reading and Writing Achievement	Teacher Gender
Behaviour Management	Pearson Correlation	1	.924**	.655*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.040
	N	377	377	377
Reading and Writing Achievement	Pearson Correlation	.924**	1	.551
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.099
	N	377	377	377
Teacher Gender	Pearson Correlation	.655*	.551	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.040	.099	
	N	377	377	377

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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

Data in Table 1 shows a correlation coefficient of .066 and 0.55 for behaviour management and gender respectively which are positive and within the .30 to .69 correlation coefficient scale of Creswell (2009). This indicates that teachers' gender has moderate relationship with reading and writing among primary schools' pupils, and a moderate relationship between teachers' behaviour management and pupils' performance in reading and writing skills.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between teachers' gender and performance in reading and writing skills among pupils in Oru East Local Government Area, Imo State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between teachers' behaviour management practices and performance in reading and writing skills among pupils in Oru East Local Government Area, Imo State.

For testing the corresponding hypothesis, the table shows p-values of .04 and .01 which are less than the alpha value of .05. The null hypothesis is rejected and implies that teachers' gender has a significant relationship with pupils' performance in reading and writing in primary schools. Similarly, behaviour management has a significant relationship with pupils; performance in reading and writing in primary schools.

Discussion

The study investigated the relationship between teachers' behaviour management, gender, pupils' reading and writing skill. The results, presented in Table 1, provided correlation coefficients and p-values that reveal significant insights into these relationships. The correlation coefficient (r = .66) indicates a strong positive relationship between teachers' behaviour management and pupils' reading and writing abilities. This suggests that effective behaviour management by teachers is strongly associated with better reading and writing performance among pupils. The finding agreed with Olowo and Fashiku (2019) who revealed the connection between effective behaviour management and students achievement in school. The statistical significance (p = .04) which is less than the alpha level of .05, indicates that this relationship is statistically significant. This means that the observed correlation is unlikely to be due to random chance, confirming that there is a meaningful association between behaviour management and academic outcomes in reading and writing.

The strong correlation between behaviour management and academic outcomes underscores the importance of teachers' behaviour management strategies in the classroom. Effective management likely creates a conducive learning environment, minimizes disruptions, and allows for more focused instruction and student engagement. Schools and educational

policymakers should emphasize training and professional development for teachers in effective behaviour management techniques. Such strategies can significantly enhance pupils' reading and writing abilities.

The correlation coefficient (r = 0.55) for gender indicates a moderate positive relationship between gender and pupils' reading and writing abilities. This suggests that teacher gender has a significant impact on reading and writing performance, with one gender possibly performing better than the other. The p-value of .01, also less than the alpha level of .05, indicates that this relationship is statistically significant. This low p-value confirms that the observed correlation is not due to chance, reinforcing the importance of teacher gender as a factor in behaviour management. The finding is consistent with Onyeme (2019) who found teacher gender as a correlate of students' achievement in secondary schools. The consistency of findings suggest that the influence of teacher gender on academic achievement of learners cut across various levels of education.

The moderate correlation between gender and pupils' performance reveals that gender plays a notable role in influencing reading and writing skills. This may reflect differences in how boys and girls develop these skills, how they are motivated, or how they are taught and supported. Educational approaches should consider gender differences and incorporate gender-responsive teaching strategies. Tailored interventions and support mechanisms can help address gender disparities and promote equitable academic achievement in reading and writing.

The study demonstrates a moderate positive association between gender and these academic skills. The finding is inconsistent with Abiodun and Olaniyi (2021) who found that classroom discipline is not a predictor of achievement. The statistical significance of both relationships highlights their importance in the educational context. These findings suggest that

improving teachers' behaviour management strategies can have a substantial impact on enhancing pupils' reading and writing performance. Additionally, recognizing and addressing gender differences in educational practices can further support pupils in achieving better academic outcomes. The significance level, indicated as .000, is less than the conventional alpha level of .05. This very low p-value indicates that the results of the regression analysis are statistically significant. It means that the likelihood of the observed relationships occurring by chance is extremely low. Consequently, we can confidently state that the relationships between teachers' gender, classroom behaviour management, pupils' reading and writing achievement are real and not due to random variation.

Conclusion

The regression analysis reveals that teachers' gender and classroom behaviour management are significant predictors of pupils' reading and writing abilities, explaining 98.3% of the variance in these academic outcomes. The statistical significance of the model highlights the critical role these factors play in educational achievement. Therefore, enhancing classroom behaviour management and considering the impact of teachers' gender can lead to significant improvements in pupils' literacy skills. The strong explanatory power of the model suggests that effective classroom behaviour management plays a crucial role in enhancing pupils' reading and writing abilities. This underscores the importance of training teachers in effective behaviour management strategies to foster a conducive learning environment that supports academic success. From the findings, it may reflect differences in teaching styles, classroom interactions, and expectations based on gender, which in turn influence pupil performance. The results suggest that both

behavioural management and teachers' gender together provide a holistic understanding of factors affecting reading and writing skills.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study, the following were recommended:

1. Since the study reveal that teachers' gender has moderate relationship with reading and writing among primary schools' pupils, schools should invest in comprehensive professional development programmes such as workshops and conferences that focus on effective classroom behaviour management strategies. These programs should provide teachers with practical tools and techniques to maintain a positive and productive classroom environment. There is also need for schools to establish peer mentoring and coaching systems where experienced teachers can support less experienced colleagues in implementing effective behaviour management practices.
2. A moderate relationship between teachers' behaviour management and pupils' performance in reading and writing skills was recorded and it recommended that there is the need for schools to conduct regular training sessions to raise awareness among teachers about the potential impact of gender on teaching and learning. These sessions should include strategies to ensure gender-neutral interactions and equitable opportunities for all students.
3. Teachers' gender and behaviour management has a significant relationship with pupils' performance in reading and writing in primary schools. In view of this, government should aim to recruit a diverse teaching workforce that represents various genders. A diverse teaching staff can bring different perspectives and teaching styles that cater to the needs of

a diverse student population. Moreso, schools should create an inclusive work environment where teachers of all genders feel valued and supported. This includes providing equal opportunities for professional growth and leadership roles.

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