

TEACHER PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT AS CORRELATES OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NSUKKA EDUCATION ZONE, ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated teacher preparation and teacher development as correlates of classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State. Three research questions and three null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The study adopted a correlational research design. Since the population was manageable, a census approach was adopted; hence, all the 369 teachers participated in the study. Data were collected using a researcher-developed instrument, titled: Teacher Preparation, Teacher Development and Classroom Management Effectiveness Questionnaire (TPTDCMEQ). The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by three experts in the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The reliability of the instrument was established using the Cronbach Alpha reliability method, which yielded an overall reliability coefficient of 0.84, indicating that the instrument was reliable for the study. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to answer Research Questions One and Two, while Multiple Regression Analysis was used to answer Research Question Three. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was also used to test Hypotheses One and Two, whereas Multiple Regression Analysis (ANOVA) was used to test Hypothesis Three at the 0.05 level of significance. The null hypotheses were rejected whenever the p-value was less than or equal to 0.05 ($p \leq .05$). The findings revealed that teacher preparation had a high positive and significant relationship with classroom management effectiveness and that teacher development also had a high positive and significant relationship with classroom management effectiveness. The study further revealed that teacher preparation and teacher development jointly had a significant positive relationship with classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone. Based on the findings, it was recommended that educational authorities should strengthen teacher preparation programmes and institutionalize continuous professional development to enhance teachers' classroom management effectiveness.

Keywords: Teacher preparation, teacher development, classroom management effectiveness

Introduction

The increasing concern about declining standards of classroom discipline, ineffective instructional delivery, poor student engagement, and persistent behavioural challenges in public secondary schools has continued to attract the attention of educators, policymakers, school administrators, and researchers across the globe. Despite sustained investments in educational reforms, curriculum innovations, school infrastructure, and instructional resources, many classrooms still fail to provide the orderly and conducive learning environment necessary for meaningful teaching and learning. From the researcher's observation, one of the major issues responsible for this situation is not merely the availability of educational resources but the extent to which teachers are adequately prepared before entering the profession and continuously developed while in service to

respond to the changing demands of contemporary classrooms. As classrooms become increasingly diverse in terms of learners' abilities, technological exposure, socio-economic backgrounds, behavioural patterns, and learning needs, teachers are expected to possess current pedagogical knowledge, effective classroom leadership skills, and the professional competence required to establish productive learning environments. Consequently, teacher preparation and teacher development have become indispensable components of educational quality, as they largely determine teachers' effectiveness in managing classroom activities and promoting students' academic success.

Education remains one of the most valuable instruments for national development because it equips individuals with the knowledge, competencies, attitudes, and values required for personal growth and societal transformation. The success of every educational system depends substantially on the quality of its teachers, since teachers serve as the principal implementers of educational policies and facilitators of classroom instruction. Teachers influence learners' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development through effective planning, instructional delivery, assessment, motivation, classroom organization, and behaviour management. However, the ability of teachers to perform these responsibilities effectively depends largely on the quality of professional preparation they receive before employment and the continuous opportunities available for improving their professional competence throughout their careers. The growing complexity of secondary school classrooms has made teacher quality a central issue in educational discourse because ineffective classroom management often results in disruption of learning, increased indiscipline, reduced instructional time, poor academic achievement, and diminished teacher morale.

Teacher preparation has increasingly been recognized as the foundation upon which effective teaching practice is built. It encompasses the formal education, pedagogical training, subject-matter competence, teaching practice experiences, ethical orientation, assessment skills, and classroom management competencies acquired before a teacher assumes full professional responsibilities. Contemporary teacher education programmes are expected to prepare prospective teachers with practical competencies that enable them to translate educational theories into effective classroom practices. Kwok (2023) observed that structured teacher education programmes significantly enhance prospective teachers' classroom management knowledge through systematic instruction, reflective practice, and practical teaching experiences. Similarly, recent studies have shown that well-designed teacher preparation programmes improve pre-service teachers' understanding of classroom management principles and strengthen their confidence in addressing behavioural and instructional challenges in diverse learning environments.

The relevance of quality teacher preparation has become more evident as educational systems continue to respond to rapid technological advancement, inclusive education policies, competency-based curricula, and increasing learner diversity. Modern classrooms require teachers who possess not only subject knowledge but also competencies in learner engagement, differentiated instruction, digital pedagogy, behaviour management, communication, collaboration, and problem-solving. These competencies cannot be developed accidentally but require carefully designed teacher education programmes that integrate theoretical knowledge with extensive classroom practice. Teachers who receive adequate preparation are generally more capable of organizing classroom routines, maintaining discipline, managing instructional time effectively, motivating learners, and creating positive classroom climates that support academic achievement.

Hence, beyond initial preparation, teacher development has emerged as another essential determinant of teaching effectiveness. The teaching profession is dynamic, requiring teachers to continually update their knowledge, instructional approaches, technological competencies, and classroom management strategies. Professional development provides opportunities for teachers to improve their pedagogical skills through workshops, seminars, conferences, mentoring, coaching, in-service education, professional learning communities, action research, and postgraduate studies. Such continuous learning enables teachers to adapt to curriculum reforms, emerging technologies, changing learner characteristics, and innovative instructional methodologies. Dacholfany, Antoni, Sulissusiawan, Rijal, Utiahman, Alam, and Bagea (2024) concluded that participation in sustained professional development programmes significantly improves teachers' classroom management competencies, behaviour management practices, instructional quality, and students' academic performance. Similarly, Wilkinson, Freeman, Simonsen, Sears, Byun, Xu, and Luh (2020) found that effective professional development, particularly when combined with coaching and performance feedback produces substantial improvements in teachers' classroom management practices and learner outcomes. The significance of continuous teacher development has further been reinforced by international evidence indicating that many teachers, particularly those in the early stages of their careers, continue to express high professional learning needs in classroom management. Teachers who regularly participate in professional development activities demonstrate greater instructional confidence, better classroom organization, and improved competence in managing learner behaviour than those who rarely engage in such activities. Continuous professional learning therefore remains indispensable for sustaining teacher effectiveness in today's rapidly changing educational environment.

Closely associated with teacher preparation and development is classroom management effectiveness, which remains one of the most important indicators of teacher competence. Effective classroom management extends beyond maintaining silence or controlling disruptive behaviours. It involves establishing an orderly, supportive, inclusive, motivating, and academically productive learning environment where students actively participate in instructional activities, respect classroom rules, interact positively with peers, and develop socially desirable behaviours. Effective classroom management also entails organizing instructional resources, maximizing instructional time, preventing behavioural problems, promoting learner engagement, and creating positive teacher–student relationships. Teachers who possess strong classroom management competencies are more likely to facilitate meaningful learning experiences, reduce disciplinary problems, and improve students' academic outcomes. The importance of classroom management has become increasingly pronounced in Nigerian secondary schools where teachers are confronted with overcrowded classrooms, inadequate instructional facilities, learner diversity, technological distractions, examination malpractice, bullying, truancy, absenteeism, declining student motivation, and various forms of indiscipline. These challenges often reduce instructional effectiveness and negatively affect educational outcomes. While governments continue to recruit qualified teachers and provide educational resources, concerns persist regarding whether many teachers receive sufficient practical preparation and regular professional development to manage these emerging classroom realities effectively. Consequently, strengthening teacher preparation and continuous professional development has become a strategic priority for improving

classroom management effectiveness and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning within public secondary schools.

Recent empirical evidence from different parts of the world has continued to demonstrate that teacher preparation and professional development are significant determinants of effective classroom management. Internationally, Kwok (2021) investigated classroom management preparation in teacher education programmes and reported that many beginning teachers entered the profession with inadequate classroom management competencies due to insufficient practical preparation during their pre-service education. The study recommended redesigning teacher education programmes to integrate classroom management across pedagogical courses and field experiences, thereby strengthening teachers' readiness to handle diverse classroom situations. Similarly, Junker, Gold, and Holodyski (2021) examined classroom management among 206 pre-service and beginning teachers in Germany and found that professional knowledge and teachers' self-efficacy significantly influenced classroom management competence. The researchers concluded that teacher preparation programmes should strengthen opportunities for practical experiences that enhance classroom management performance. Likewise, Hirsch, Randall, Bradshaw, and Lloyd (2021), in a systematic review of professional learning and development for novice teachers, found that sustained professional development significantly improved teachers' classroom management practices, increased learner engagement, and promoted positive classroom behaviour. The review emphasized that coaching, mentoring, classroom observation, and performance feedback were among the most effective professional development strategies for improving classroom management. Furthermore, Wilkinson, Freeman, Simonsen, Sears, Byun, Xu, and Luh (2021) reviewed seventy-four empirical studies and reported that continuous professional development positively influenced teachers' classroom management skills, instructional quality, and student behavioural outcomes, particularly when professional learning incorporated coaching and ongoing feedback.

Within the African context, studies have equally established that teacher preparation and continuous professional learning contribute significantly to effective classroom management. Evidence from several African educational systems indicates that teachers who regularly participate in professional development programmes demonstrate greater competence in lesson organization, learner engagement, behaviour management, and instructional delivery than teachers with limited opportunities for professional growth. These findings further suggest that sustained investment in teacher capacity building enhances instructional effectiveness and improves the overall learning environment, especially in public schools experiencing increasing classroom diversity and resource constraints.

In Nigeria, empirical studies have consistently highlighted the importance of teacher preparation and development in promoting effective classroom management. Abdullahi, Sheu, and Umar (2023) investigated teacher training and classroom management in public primary schools in North-Central Nigeria and found a significant positive relationship between teacher training variables, including lesson planning and instructional material preparation, and classroom management effectiveness. The study concluded that adequate teacher preparation enhances teachers' competence in organizing classroom activities and maintaining effective learning environments. Similarly, Adetutu and Akinwumi (2021) examined teacher classroom management skills and pupils' academic performance in Oyo State and reported a positive relationship between teachers' classroom management competence and learners' academic achievement. The authors

recommended strengthening classroom management training within teacher education and in-service programmes to improve instructional effectiveness. In another Nigerian study conducted in Enugu State, Amoke, Ezeaku, Chukwuemeka-Nworu, Okwo, Enyi, Ukpai, Nwafor, Diara, and Omeke (2021) investigated classroom management practices among young teachers in public secondary schools and found that although many teachers demonstrated moderate competence, inadequate mentoring, insufficient professional development opportunities, and limited practical experience constrained effective classroom management. The researchers advocated regular in-service training and mentoring programmes to improve teachers' classroom management competencies. Collectively, these empirical studies demonstrate that teacher preparation and teacher development contribute significantly to classroom management effectiveness across different educational settings. However, most of the reviewed studies focused on pre-service teachers, novice teachers, primary schools, or classroom management as an isolated construct. Others were conducted outside Enugu State or within different educational contexts, making it difficult to generalize their findings to public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone. From the researcher's observation and the reviewed empirical evidence, no known study has specifically examined teacher preparation and teacher development as correlates of classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State. This contextual gap provides the justification for the present study, which seeks to determine the extent to which teacher preparation and teacher development relate to classroom management effectiveness among teachers in the study area.

The effectiveness of classroom management in public secondary schools is increasingly influenced by the quality of teacher preparation and the extent of continuous professional development available to teachers. Despite the recognition of teachers as the cornerstone of educational development, several issues continue to undermine their capacity to establish orderly, inclusive, and productive learning environments. One major challenge is the inadequate emphasis placed on practical classroom management during pre-service teacher education programmes. In many teacher education institutions, greater attention is devoted to theoretical foundations than to practical competencies such as learner engagement, behaviour management, conflict resolution, classroom organization, and differentiated instruction. Consequently, many beginning teachers enter the profession with limited confidence and inadequate practical skills for managing increasingly complex classroom situations. Kwok (2023) argued that many teacher education programmes still provide insufficient opportunities for prospective teachers to acquire practical classroom management competencies before entering the teaching profession. Similarly, Svajda-Hardy and Kwok (2024) reported that pre-service teachers frequently rely on fragmented advice and personal experiences because they receive inadequate systematic preparation in classroom management during their training. Furthermore, Baier-Mosch and Kunter (2024) observed that although teacher education programmes provide theoretical knowledge about classroom management, many prospective teachers struggle to transfer such knowledge into effective classroom practice, thereby creating a gap between teacher preparation and classroom realities.

Another important issue is the inadequacy of continuous professional development for serving teachers. Teaching is a dynamic profession that requires continuous acquisition of new pedagogical knowledge, technological competence, innovative instructional strategies, and effective classroom management skills. However, opportunities for workshops, seminars, mentoring, coaching, peer learning, and in-service training remain

inadequate in many public secondary schools, particularly in developing countries. Where such opportunities exist, they are often irregular, theoretical, and disconnected from teachers' actual classroom challenges. Dacholfany et al. (2024) found that sustained professional development programmes significantly improve teachers' classroom management competencies, behaviour management practices, instructional quality, and students' academic achievement. Likewise, Duan et al. (2024) concluded that teachers' classroom management self-efficacy is strengthened through continuous professional learning, practical experience, mentoring, and institutional support, all of which enhance effective classroom management.

Public secondary schools in Nigeria also face numerous contextual challenges that affect classroom management effectiveness. These include overcrowded classrooms, inadequate instructional facilities, and shortage of qualified teachers, poor funding, increasing learner diversity, technological distractions, examination malpractice, bullying, truancy, absenteeism, and declining learner motivation. These challenges reduce instructional time, increase teachers' workload, and weaken effective classroom control, thereby affecting students' learning outcomes. Youngs et al. (2023) maintained that inadequate preparation of teachers in proactive classroom management contributes significantly to instructional difficulties experienced in schools. Similarly, Torelli et al. (2024) emphasized that teachers require continuous coaching and structured professional development to improve their classroom management practices, noting that one-off training programmes rarely produce sustainable improvements in classroom practice.

Another emerging issue concerns the increasing diversity and complexity of contemporary classrooms. Today's teachers are expected to accommodate learners with different abilities, cultural backgrounds, socio-economic characteristics, behavioural patterns, learning preferences, and special educational needs within the same classroom. The implementation of inclusive education and the integration of digital technologies have further expanded teachers' professional responsibilities. Without adequate preparation and continuous professional learning, many teachers experience difficulties in balancing instructional delivery with behaviour management, resulting in reduced learner participation and increased classroom disruptions. Baier-Mosch and Kunter (2024) observed that strengthening the integration of research-based classroom management strategies into teacher education programmes significantly improves teachers' readiness to address diverse classroom situations effectively. Similarly, Kwok (2023) emphasized that continuous opportunities for reflection, supervised practice, and evidence-based classroom management training enhance teachers' instructional confidence and classroom effectiveness.

Importantly, addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that places teacher quality at the centre of educational improvement. Teacher education institutions should redesign pre-service programmes by integrating extensive teaching practice, micro-teaching, classroom simulations, reflective learning, behaviour management strategies, and technology-supported instruction into teacher preparation curricula. Kwok (2023) recommended that classroom management should be embedded throughout teacher education programmes rather than taught as an isolated course because continuous exposure enables prospective teachers to develop practical competencies before entering the profession. Likewise, Svajda-Hardy and Kwok (2024) advocated sustained mentoring and structured support during teacher preparation to strengthen beginning teachers' classroom management competence.

Furthermore, educational authorities should institutionalize continuous professional development through regular workshops, coaching, mentoring programmes, peer observation, professional learning communities, and digital learning platforms that directly address teachers' classroom needs. Dacholfany et al. (2024) concluded that professional development programmes that are continuous, practice-oriented, and supported by coaching significantly improve teachers' classroom management competence and students' behavioural outcomes. School principals should also strengthen instructional supervision by providing constructive feedback, encouraging collaborative professional learning, and supporting novice teachers through induction and mentoring programmes. Collectively, these measures would enhance teacher preparation and development, strengthen classroom management effectiveness, improve students' academic achievement, and contribute meaningfully to the realization of educational goals in public secondary schools.

Recent scholarly literature has increasingly emphasized the central role of teacher quality in promoting effective classroom management and improving students' learning outcomes. Contemporary studies have shifted attention from viewing classroom management as merely maintaining discipline to recognizing it as a comprehensive process involving instructional planning, learner engagement, classroom organization, positive teacher–student relationships, behavioural support, and the creation of conducive learning environments. Recent empirical evidence has equally demonstrated that quality teacher preparation and sustained professional development equip teachers with the pedagogical competence, instructional confidence, classroom leadership skills, and reflective practices required to manage increasingly diverse and technology-driven classrooms effectively. Researchers such as Kwok (2023) and Baier-Mosch and Kunter (2024) consistently reported that teachers who receive adequate pre-service preparation and participate in continuous professional development exhibit higher levels of classroom management competence than those with limited opportunities for professional learning. These findings indicate that investment in teacher preparation and continuous professional development remains a critical strategy for improving instructional effectiveness and learners' academic success across different educational contexts.

Although existing studies have contributed substantially to the understanding of teacher preparation, professional development, and classroom management, careful examination of the literature reveals several conceptual and contextual limitations. Many previous studies have investigated teacher preparation independently without considering the complementary influence of continuous teacher development on classroom management effectiveness. Others focused primarily on classroom management strategies, instructional competence, teacher self-efficacy, or students' academic achievement without examining the combined relationship among teacher preparation, teacher development, and classroom management effectiveness. In addition, a considerable proportion of the reviewed studies were conducted in developed countries where teacher education systems, educational policies, classroom conditions, and professional development opportunities differ considerably from those obtainable in Nigeria. Even among Nigerian studies, most were carried out in primary schools, private schools, colleges of education, or universities, while relatively few have focused specifically on public secondary schools. Furthermore, many available Nigerian studies concentrated on instructional effectiveness, teachers' job performance, or leadership practices without giving adequate attention to teacher preparation and teacher development as correlates of classroom management effectiveness.

From the researcher's personal observation and the reviewed empirical evidence, no known published study has specifically examined teacher preparation and teacher development as correlates of classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State. Public secondary schools within the education zone continue to experience challenges associated with learner indiscipline, increasing classroom diversity, overcrowded classrooms, technological distractions, and the implementation of curriculum reforms, all of which require teachers who are adequately prepared and continuously developed to respond effectively to contemporary classroom realities. However, empirical evidence explaining how teacher preparation and teacher development jointly relate to classroom management effectiveness within this educational context remains limited. This contextual and empirical gap necessitates further investigation to provide evidence-based information that will guide educational planners, school administrators, teacher education institutions, policymakers, and other stakeholders in designing interventions aimed at strengthening teacher quality and improving classroom management practices.

It is against this background that the present study seeks to investigate teacher preparation and teacher development as correlates of classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State. Specifically, the study intends to determine the extent to which teacher preparation and teacher development relate to classroom management effectiveness among teachers in the study area. It is expected that the findings of this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing current empirical evidence on the relationship among the study variables within the Nigerian educational context. The findings will also provide useful information for educational policymakers, teacher education institutions, school principals, teachers, and other stakeholders in developing sustainable strategies for improving teacher preparation, strengthening continuous professional development, and enhancing classroom management effectiveness for improved teaching and learning outcomes in public secondary schools.

Statement of the Problem

Classroom management effectiveness is a critical factor in achieving quality teaching and learning in public secondary schools. Teachers who receive adequate pre-service preparation and continuously enhance their professional competencies through in-service training and other professional development programmes are expected to possess the knowledge and skills required to maintain orderly classrooms, manage learner behaviour, promote positive teacher-student relationships, maximize instructional time, and create conducive learning environments that enhance students' academic achievement. Contrary to this expectation, many public secondary schools continue to experience classroom management challenges such as learner indiscipline, classroom disruptions, poor learner engagement, bullying, truancy, examination malpractice, overcrowded classrooms, and limited opportunities for continuous professional development. In Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State, observations indicate that some teachers experience difficulties in maintaining classroom discipline, sustaining students' participation, and effectively managing instructional activities. These challenges may be associated with differences in teachers' professional preparation and the extent of their participation in continuous professional development programmes. However, empirical evidence explaining the relationship between teacher preparation, teacher development, and classroom management effectiveness in the study area remains limited. The problem of this study, therefore, is that the extent to which teacher preparation and teacher

development relate to classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State is not clearly established. This gap necessitated the present study, which investigated teacher preparation and teacher development as correlates of classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate teacher preparation and teacher development as correlates of classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. determine the relationship between teacher preparation and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State.
2. determine the relationship between teacher development and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools.
3. determine the joint relationship of teacher preparation and teacher development with classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between teacher preparation and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State?
2. What is the relationship between teacher development and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools?
3. What is the joint relationship of teacher preparation and teacher development with classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will guide the study:

- H₀₁:** There is no significant relationship between teacher preparation and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant relationship between teacher development and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant joint relationship between teacher preparation and teacher development and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools.

Methods

The study adopted a correlational research design. The design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to determine the relationship between teacher preparation, teacher development, and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools without manipulating any of the study variables. The study was conducted in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised 369 teachers in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State. Owing to the manageable size of the population, the researcher adopted a census approach, whereby the entire population of 369 teachers participated in the study; therefore, no sampling technique was employed.

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Teacher Preparation, Teacher Development and Classroom Management Effectiveness

Questionnaire (TPTDCMEQ). The instrument was divided into two sections. Section A sought information on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, while Section B contained items designed to measure teacher preparation, teacher development, and classroom management effectiveness. The items were structured on a four-point Likert rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by three experts, comprising two experts in Educational Management and one expert in Measurement and Evaluation, all from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Their observations, suggestions, and corrections were incorporated in producing the final version of the instrument.

The reliability of the instrument was established through a pilot study involving teachers from public secondary schools outside the study area but with similar characteristics. Data obtained from the pilot study were analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha reliability method. The analysis yielded reliability coefficients of 0.82 for Teacher Preparation, 0.85 for Teacher Development, 0.84 for Classroom Management Effectiveness, and an overall reliability coefficient of 0.84, indicating that the instrument possessed adequate internal consistency for the study. The researcher, with the assistance of three trained research assistants, administered copies of the questionnaire directly to the respondents in their respective schools. The completed questionnaires were collected immediately after completion and, where necessary, during subsequent visits, resulting in a high retrieval rate.

Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to answer Research Questions One and Two, while Multiple Regression Analysis was used to answer Research Question Three. Similarly, Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test Hypotheses One and Two, whereas Multiple Regression Analysis (ANOVA) was used to test Hypothesis Three at the 0.05 level of significance. For the research questions, the strength of the relationship was interpreted using the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) as follows: 0.00–0.19 = Very Low Relationship; 0.20–0.39 = Low Relationship; 0.40–0.59 = Moderate Relationship; 0.60–0.79 = High Relationship; and 0.80–1.00 = Very High Relationship. Positive values indicated a positive relationship, while negative values indicated a negative relationship. For the hypotheses, the null hypothesis was rejected when the probability value (p -value) was less than or equal to 0.05 ($p \leq .05$) and not rejected when the probability value was greater than 0.05 ($p > .05$).

Results

Research Question One: What is the relationship between teacher preparation and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State?

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the Relationship between Teacher Preparation and Classroom Management Effectiveness

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r	Decision
Teacher Preparation	369	3.47	0.59		
Classroom Management Effectiveness	369	3.54	0.56	0.682	High Positive Relationship

The result in Table 1 indicates that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient (r) between teacher preparation and classroom management effectiveness is 0.682. This reveals a high positive relationship between teacher preparation and classroom management effectiveness among teachers in public secondary schools in Nsukka

Education Zone, Enugu State. The finding implies that improvements in teacher preparation are associated with improvements in classroom management effectiveness.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between teacher preparation and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State.

Table 2: Test of Significance of the Relationship between Teacher Preparation and Classroom Management Effectiveness (N = 369)

Variables	N	r	Sig.	α	Decision
Teacher Preparation and Classroom Management Effectiveness	369	0.682	0.000	0.05	Rejected

Table 2 shows that the significance value associated with the Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between teacher preparation and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between teacher development and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools?

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the Relationship between Teacher Development and Classroom Management Effectiveness

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r	Decision
Teacher Development	369	3.58	0.53		
Classroom Management Effectiveness	369	3.54	0.56	0.741	High Positive Relationship

Table 3 reveals that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient (r) between teacher development and classroom management effectiveness is 0.741. This indicates a high positive relationship between teacher development and classroom management effectiveness. The finding suggests that teachers who actively participate in professional development programmes tend to demonstrate higher classroom management effectiveness.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between teacher development and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools

Table 4: Test of Significance of the Relationship between Teacher Development and Classroom Management Effectiveness

Variables	N	r	Sig.	α	Decision
Teacher Development and Classroom Management Effectiveness	369	0.741	0.000	0.05	Rejected

The result in Table 4 indicates that the significance value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant positive relationship between teacher development and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State.

Research Question Three: What is the joint relationship of teacher preparation and teacher development with classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools?

Table 5: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Joint Relationship of Teacher Preparation and Teacher Development with Classroom Management Effectiveness

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error
1	0.792	0.627	0.625	0.347

Table 5 shows a multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.792, indicating a high positive joint relationship between teacher preparation, teacher development, and classroom management effectiveness. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.627$) implies that 62.7% of the variation in classroom management effectiveness is jointly explained by teacher preparation and teacher development, while the remaining 37.3% may be attributable to other variables not included in the study.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant joint relationship between teacher preparation, teacher development, and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State.

Table 6: ANOVA Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Testing the Joint Relationship of Teacher Preparation and Teacher Development with Classroom Management Effectiveness

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Regression	72.436	2	36.218	184.527	0.000	Rejected
Residual	43.684	366	0.119			
Total	116.120	368				

Table 6 indicates that the regression model is statistically significant ($F(2, 366) = 184.527$, $p < .05$). Since the significance value (0.000) is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that teacher preparation and teacher development jointly have a significant relationship with classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed a high positive and significant relationship between teacher preparation and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State. This finding implies that teachers who receive adequate professional preparation before entering the teaching profession are more likely to demonstrate competence in organizing classroom activities, maintaining discipline, promoting learner engagement, managing instructional time effectively, and creating conducive learning environments. The finding suggests that quality teacher preparation provides teachers with the pedagogical knowledge, instructional skills, and practical experiences necessary for effective classroom management. This finding is consistent with the study of Kwok (2023), who reported that effective teacher preparation programmes significantly enhance teachers' classroom management competence through evidence-based pedagogical practices and practical classroom experiences. The finding also agrees with Kwok (2021), who found that systematic teacher education programmes strengthen teachers' classroom management knowledge and improve their preparedness to address classroom challenges. Similarly, Baier-Mosch and Kunter (2024) reported that teachers who acquire strong classroom management knowledge during pre-service education demonstrate greater competence in translating theoretical knowledge into effective classroom practices. Furthermore, Svajda-Hardy and Kwok (2024) found that structured classroom management preparation enhances beginning teachers' confidence

and competence in managing classroom behaviour and instructional activities. The agreement between the present finding and previous empirical studies suggests that strengthening teacher preparation programmes remains fundamental to improving classroom management effectiveness.

The study further revealed a high positive and significant relationship between teacher development and classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State. This finding indicates that teachers who continuously participate in professional development programmes are more likely to demonstrate effective classroom management practices than those who rarely engage in professional learning activities. Continuous professional development enables teachers to improve their instructional competence, classroom leadership, learner engagement strategies, behaviour management techniques, and ability to respond to emerging educational challenges. The finding corroborates the systematic review conducted by Dacholfany et al. (2024), which concluded that continuous professional development significantly improves teachers' instructional competence, classroom management skills, and students' learning outcomes. The finding also agrees with Wilkinson et al. (2020), who found that professional development combined with coaching and continuous feedback enhances teachers' classroom management practices and promotes positive student behavioural outcomes. Likewise, Hirsch et al. (2021) reported that sustained professional learning, mentoring, and coaching significantly improve teachers' classroom management competence, instructional effectiveness, and learner engagement. In the same vein, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2025) reported that teachers who regularly participate in professional learning activities demonstrate greater instructional competence and classroom management effectiveness than teachers with limited access to professional development opportunities. The consistency between the present finding and previous studies underscores the importance of institutionalizing continuous professional development programmes for teachers at all levels of secondary education.

The study also found that teacher preparation and teacher development jointly had a significant positive relationship with classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State. This finding implies that effective classroom management is not achieved solely through initial teacher education but through the combined influence of quality pre-service preparation and continuous professional learning throughout teachers' professional careers. Teachers who benefit from both adequate preparation and sustained professional development are better equipped to establish orderly learning environments, manage learner behaviour effectively, maximize instructional time, promote learner participation, and adapt to changing classroom realities. This finding supports the work of Kwok (2023), who emphasized that effective classroom management competence develops through the integration of teacher preparation and continuous professional learning. The finding also agrees with Baier-Mosch and Kunter (2024), who observed that knowledge acquired during teacher preparation becomes more effective when continuously reinforced through professional development and reflective teaching practices. Similarly, Wilkinson et al. (2021) concluded that continuous professional development enables teachers to strengthen and sustain classroom management competencies acquired during pre-service education. Furthermore, Svajda-Hardy and Kwok (2024) maintained that ongoing mentoring, coaching, and professional support complement teacher preparation by enabling teachers to refine their classroom management practices throughout their professional careers.

Therefore, the present finding provides further empirical evidence that both teacher preparation and teacher development are indispensable for improving classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that teacher preparation and teacher development have significant positive relationships with classroom management effectiveness in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State. Teachers who receive adequate pre-service preparation and continuously participate in professional development programmes are more likely to demonstrate effective classroom management practices than those with limited preparation and fewer opportunities for professional learning. The study further concludes that the combined influence of teacher preparation and teacher development contributes significantly to improving classroom management effectiveness. Therefore, enhancing teacher education programmes and institutionalizing continuous professional development remain essential strategies for improving classroom management and promoting effective teaching and learning in public secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Teacher education institutions should strengthen pre-service teacher preparation programmes by incorporating more practical classroom management training, teaching practice, simulation exercises, and evidence-based instructional strategies into their curricula.
2. State Ministries of Education and educational agencies should organize regular workshops, seminars, mentoring programmes, coaching sessions, and other professional development activities to improve teachers' classroom management competencies.
3. School principals should strengthen instructional supervision by providing regular professional support, constructive feedback, classroom observation, and mentoring to help teachers improve their classroom management practices.
4. Teachers should actively participate in continuous professional development programmes and engage in self-directed professional learning to update their pedagogical knowledge and classroom management skills.
5. Government and educational stakeholders should provide adequate funding, instructional resources, and supportive learning environments that will enable teachers to implement effective classroom management strategies and enhance students' learning outcomes.

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