

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**Teachers' classroom management practices in early
childhood centres in Asutifi North District**



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**TEACHERS' CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN
EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES IN ASUTIFI NORTH
DISTRICT**



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of the requirements for the award of the degree of
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MARCH, 2024

DECLARATION

I, **Emmanuel Amponsah**, hereby declare that, this thesis with the exception quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and dully acknowledged, is entirely my own original research work, and it has not been submitted, either in parts or in whole for another degree elsewhere.

Signature.....

Date.....

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis was done in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of the thesis laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Name of Supervisor: Professor Hans Kweku Wiabo Baffoe

Signature.....

Date.....

DEDICATION

To my wife Diana Amponsah, Kathryn Kuhlman Amponsah (Daughter) and
Mehiel Nana Agyemang Amponsah (Son).



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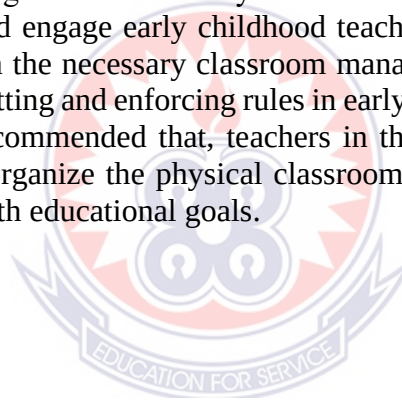


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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate teacher classroom management practices in early childhood education centers in Asutifi North District. The study used case study design. A total number of eight (8) participants were sampled for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the participants for the study. Semi-structured interview guide and observational guide (Checklist) were used as data collection instruments. Thematic and content analysis were used to analyse the collected data. The study revealed that some teachers exhibited a profound understanding of child development and principles of effective behaviour management. Teachers who possessed in-depth knowledge created a conducive learning environment and adapt to the diverse needs of their learners. It was also revealed that well-organized seating layouts positively impact learner engagement and behaviour where classrooms with flexible and adaptable seating arrangements tend to create a positive learning environment. Also, effective communication of rules and expectations was a priority in creating a structured and respectful learning environment as well as combination of reinforcement and consequences was used to enforce rules, maintaining consistency in rule enforcement. The study further revealed creation of physical layout to promote interaction, accommodate individual learner needs, and align with educational goals coupled with well-organized seating arrangements, group discussion areas, and personalized spaces enhance learners' interaction and engagement. The study therefore recommends that Asutifi North Educational Directorate should engage early childhood teachers in professional training and workshops to equip them with the necessary classroom management practices as well as the adoption of best practices in setting and enforcing rules in early childhood centers in the Asutifi North District. It was also recommended that, teachers in the Asutifi North District should employ diverse strategies to organize the physical classroom space, emphasizing flexibility, adaptability, and alignment with educational goals.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Worldwide, effective education refers to the degree to which schools are successful in accomplishing their educational objectives. According to United Nations (2015) Sustainable Development Report, education is a valued item on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a key priority of every government. The UN Sustainable Development Report further explained that education is the most important investment a country can make in its people for socio-economic development because it is seen as one of the greatest tools for social mobility in every society. Its positive effects of increasing productivity, creativity, entrepreneurship and technological advancements are the reasons why most governments pay critical attention to it (United Nation, 2015).

Classroom management is one of the most important aspects of teaching, especially in early childhood education. Around the world, teachers are seen not only as facilitators of knowledge but also as managers of the learning environment. Effective classroom management in early childhood settings helps create a safe, structured, and supportive space where young children can explore, learn, and develop key life skills (Evertson & Weinstein, 2013).

Globally, early childhood education is recognized as a foundation for lifelong learning and development. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) highlights that early childhood care and education is vital for preparing children for school and laying the foundation for their future success (UNESCO, 2016).

For this reason, attention has been placed on improving teaching practices, including how teachers manage classrooms for effective learning.

Effective classroom management involves organizing the physical space, managing children's behaviour, establishing rules, and promoting positive relationships. According to McLeod et al. (2003), good classroom management helps reduce disruptive behaviours and increases engagement in learning activities. In early childhood centres, where learners are still developing self-control and communication skills, it is especially important for teachers to adopt child-friendly and consistent management practices.

Seating arrangements, classroom rules, and behaviour management strategies are all part of classroom management. These elements help teachers guide young children's behaviour and promote a smooth and productive classroom environment (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). For example, flexible seating arrangements support cooperative learning, while clear classroom rules help children understand expectations.

In countries such as Finland, Canada, and Australia, early childhood teachers are trained in classroom management as part of their professional development. In these settings, teachers use a combination of proactive and responsive strategies to manage young learners effectively. Proactive strategies include setting routines, arranging the classroom to reduce distractions, and reinforcing positive behaviour, while responsive strategies involve dealing with misbehaviour in calm and constructive ways (Jones & Jones, 2012).

Despite global awareness of the importance of classroom management, many countries still face challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, limited teacher training, and lack of resources. These issues can affect the way teachers manage early childhood classrooms, especially in low-income settings.

In Africa, early childhood education is gaining attention as governments and education stakeholders recognize the importance of the early years in a child's development. The African Union's Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16–25) emphasizes the need for inclusive and quality early childhood care and education (African Union, 2016). As a result, many African countries are working to improve early childhood education, including teacher preparation and classroom management practices.

Classroom management in African early childhood centres varies widely depending on the country, region, and available resources. In some urban centres, teachers have access to well-structured classrooms, teaching materials, and professional development programs. However, in many rural and under-resourced areas, early childhood classrooms are overcrowded, poorly equipped, and lack trained teachers (UNICEF, 2019).

Behaviour management is a major challenge for early childhood teachers in many African countries. According to Akinbote (2010), teachers often use traditional methods such as shouting or physical punishment to control behaviour, even though these methods are not recommended. The use of positive discipline strategies, such as praising good behaviour and setting clear expectations, is still developing in many African contexts.

In terms of seating arrangements and classroom space, many African early childhood centres use basic and limited classroom furniture. Some classrooms use rows of benches, which limit child interaction and group work. Research by Essien and Monyooe (2016) suggests that child-friendly and flexible seating arrangements encourage participation and collaboration among young learners.

Setting classroom rules is another important aspect of management. In well-managed African early childhood centres, teachers involve children in creating simple, clear

classroom rules that guide behaviour. However, in some cases, rules are not explained clearly, and children are punished for breaking rules they do not fully understand (Mwaura, 2015). This shows the need for more training and support for teachers on how to set and communicate classroom rules in developmentally appropriate ways.

Organizing the physical classroom space is also critical for early learners. In many African settings, teachers must be creative in using the little space and materials they have. A well-organized classroom allows for different activity areas such as play, reading, and group work, which are essential for young children's development (Mtahabwa, 2009). When classrooms are disorganized or too crowded, it can lead to increased misbehaviour and reduced learning outcomes.

In Ghana, early childhood education is part of the basic education system and includes children from age 4 to 8. The Ministry of Education, through the Ghana Education Service (GES), has made efforts to strengthen early childhood education by providing policies, training, and curriculum guides. According to the National Pre-Tertiary Education Curriculum Framework (NaCCA, 2019), early childhood education should be play-based, child-centered, and inclusive.

However, one key area of concern in Ghanaian early childhood centres is classroom management. Many teachers report challenges in managing behaviour, setting classroom rules, and organizing the learning space. Studies show that while some teachers use positive strategies like singing songs, storytelling, and using classroom jobs to manage children, others still rely on shouting or punishments to maintain order (Owusu & Otube, 2019).

In rural districts like Asutifi North, classroom management practices may be influenced by several factors such as teacher training, availability of resources, and community

expectations. Many early childhood teachers in these areas have limited training in modern classroom management strategies. As a result, they may struggle to maintain an organized and engaging learning environment.

One of the important classroom management practices is the way teachers set behavioural expectations. According to Adu-Gyamfi and Osei-Poku (2016), some Ghanaian teachers use classroom rules and daily routines to guide learners, but there is inconsistency in how these rules are applied. In some classrooms, children are not part of the rule-setting process, making it difficult for them to understand or follow the rules.

Seating arrangements also play a role in learning and behaviour management. In many early childhood centres in Ghana, especially in rural districts, seating arrangements are often fixed and do not support group work or movement. Flexible seating helps children learn to cooperate and move around the classroom in a safe way (Ampadu, 2018). Unfortunately, in places like Asutifi North, limited space and furniture can restrict how teachers arrange their classrooms.

Another important classroom management practice is how teachers organize the physical environment. A well-organized classroom allows children to find learning materials, move around easily, and engage in different types of play and learning activities. However, studies by Anamuah-Mensah et al. (2019) show that many early childhood classrooms in Ghana lack the resources needed for creating different learning corners or play areas. This can make the classroom less engaging and harder to manage.

Teachers' views on behaviour management also affect how they respond to children. If teachers believe that young children are naturally disobedient, they may use harsh discipline methods. However, if teachers understand child development and use positive

strategies such as praise, redirection, and class routines, they are more likely to create a safe and supportive classroom (Arkorful, 2017).

Reckhow (2013) opined that Early Childhood Education (ECE) is one of the best investments any country can make in its future workforce to enhancing the quality of young learners' lives as a national and international priority. The early years are critical for a child as he/she begins to engage with the surroundings and develops holistically (Global Partnership for Education, 2017). Hertzman (2010) stated in support that, the experiences they acquire affect their physical, cognitive, emotional and social development. Hertzman further added that, learners develop the healthiest when they are provided environments in which they can explore, play with peers, and learn to speak and listen to colleagues and teachers. Such an environment ensures early brain development and also affects the way they learn later in life. Anything deficient of the above can likely impact negatively on the learning in the future (Mustard, 2010). Research (e.g. Burger, 2010; Ceglowski & Bacigalupa, 2002; Kamerman, 2006) has therefore, shown that quality early childhood education should be a priority to ensure learners acquire the best foundation for their subsequent future learning.

It is every teacher's wish to help learners to benefit from his/her teaching, a task which requires a lot of effort and varied strategies in managing learners' behaviour in the classrooms. Teachers in the classroom are the managers of the classroom activities. They are concerned with maintaining order, regulating the sequence of events and directing their own attention towards achieving educational goals (Martin, 2019). It is imperative that classroom administration systems assume a fundamental part in upgrading learners' learning, which involves the exercise to compose and guide classes to accomplish particular objectives (Ahmad et al., 2017). In order to achieve these objectives, Ahmad et al., indicated that every teacher has a responsibility to maintain a

positive learning environment in the classroom, which is done through strategies he or she adopts. According to Zhang and Zhao (2010), there are five qualities of an effective classroom which are; security, open correspondence, common enjoying, shared objectives and connectedness.

In the opinions of Jones and Jones (2012) and Grift et al (2011), effective teaching and learning for effective performance can only take place in a serene and well managed classroom. Effective classroom management strategies support and facilitate effective teaching and learning. Effective classroom management is generally based on the principle of establishing a positive classroom environment to facilitate good academic performance (Wubbels et al, 2014). In the opinion of Evertson and Weinstein (2006), classroom management strategies are "the actions teachers take to create an environment that supports and facilitates both academic and social-emotional learning" (p. 4-5).

Mecreary, as cited in Agabi et al., (2013) defined classroom management as the process and strategies an educator uses to maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to learners learning and success. Similarly, Dollad and Christensen (1996) defined classroom management as the action a teacher takes to bring about an environment that support and make easy instructions, academic, social and emotional learning. Classroom management refers to every word and action that teachers take in the classroom to orchestrate, enhance and elevate learners' achievement (Marzano and Marzano, 2003; Weinstein, 2004). The action entails arranging the physical environment, establishing rules and procedures, and maintaining learners' attention to lessons and engagement in activities (Brophy, 2006). The concentration of this definition includes the responsibility of the teacher and the use of classroom management strategies (CMS) to motivate learners' learning. The importance of

classroom management is demonstrated in its highlights across numerous research studies as a major variable that affects learners' academic performance (Marzona, 2008). The explanation to this is that, effective teaching and learning triumph on effective classroom management with good performance as the end result. Marzona opined that classroom management sets a tone in the classroom because of its potential to capture learners' attention. This statement is obvious since a classroom which is chaotic and disorganized as a result of poor classroom management is highly unlikely to enhance expansive learning and learners' academic performance and might, indeed, inhibit it (Idopise, 2014).

According to Stronge (2018), classroom management differs from one teacher to another because of the teacher's personality, teaching style, preparedness, and number of learners in the classroom, thereby making the concept of classroom management very broad and varied. Morse (2012) argued that classroom management involves curtailing learner's disruptive behaviours such as fighting and noise making, close observation, arrangement of classroom learning materials, and response to learners' individual needs.

When classroom management (CM) is viewed in a wider and holistic sense, incorporating every element of the classroom from lesson delivery to classroom environment becomes important (Earl, 2012). Earl elaborated that, classroom management includes creating organized and orderly classroom, establishing expectations, inducing learners' cooperation in learning tasks, and dealing with the procedural demands of the classroom. According to Bassey (2012), the wider view of classroom management shows increased engagement, reduction of inappropriate and disruptive behaviours, promotion of learners' responsibility for academic work, and improved academic performance of learners.

Poorly managed classrooms are usually characterized by disruptive behaviours such as sleeping in class, coming to school late, noise making, verbal or physical threat to fellow learners or the teacher (Ekere, 2016). Additionally, Martinez as cited in Gyapon et al, (2020) identified hitting, kicking, catching, or poking other peers as common problem behaviours among learners. These disruptive behaviours according to Ekere disorganize learning processes and hamper academic performance of learners. Effiong (2007) suggested that teachers can deal with these disruptive behaviours in the classroom and reduce them to the minimum through effective classroom management so that effective learning can take place.

Classroom management refers to every word and action that teachers take in the classroom to orchestrate, enhance and elevate learner achievement (Marzano and Marzano, 2003; Weinstein, 2004). It is also construed to denote actions taken to create and maintain a learning environment conducive to successful instruction. The action entails arranging the physical environment, establishing rules and procedures, and maintaining learners' attention to lessons and engagement in activities (Brophy, 2006). Behaviour problems in a classroom increase the stress levels for both the teacher and learners, disrupt the flow of lessons and conflict with both learning objectives and the processes of learning. They also change the classroom dynamic as the focus of attention shifts from the academic tasks at hand to the distractions provided by disruptive behaviours. Typically, one or two learners are identifiable as 'problems', sometimes they act in ways that compound management difficulties by inciting each other and, possibly, others in the class into disruptive activities. The usual response to problematic behaviour is to identify the learners involved as 'the problem', to focus on them as a source of 'trouble' and to devise strategies specifically to deal with their inappropriate behaviour (Johansen et al, 2011).

Establishing classroom rules helps teachers maintain class routines and learner expectations for classwork and behaviours. Classroom rules that are clearly defined and posted help learners understand what is appropriate and what is not, as well as the consequences for rule violations. Clear classroom rules create a framework that provides choices to learners and helps teach them to self-manage their classroom behaviours (Emmer & Evertson, 2013).

Learners spend a large amount of time in a classroom, where desks are arranged in a specific way and individual seats are determined by the teacher. At the beginning of the school year, as part of classroom management, teachers face the question of how and where to seat their learners. This is an important decision, as classroom seating arrangements influence classroom climate and learners' relationships with each other (Berg et al. 2012; Gest and Rodkin 2011; McKeown et al., 2015). In addition, the physical space of the classroom influences learning and impacts teachers' and learners' attitudes towards school (Denton, 1992). However, it is far from clear what considerations teachers have when making seating arrangements. This insight may help teachers to make (even) more structured and considered decisions, resulting in more effective seating arrangements and less concerns for teachers about how to arrange the classroom in a good way (McKeown et al. 2015). It can also stimulate a better academic and social development for the learners (Van den Berg et al. 2012; Wannarka & Ruhl 2008).

Studies have shown that seating arrangements directly affect learners behaviourally and academically (Wannarka & Ruhl, 2008; McCroskey & McVetta, 1978). Wannarka and Ruhl found that the physical arrangement of seats is critical classroom consideration because they have the potential ability to prevent problem behaviours that interfere with learner attention and diminish instructional time. In addition, they suggested that desk

configurations altered the nature of learner interaction. It is concluded that teachers should be able to eliminate disruptions and increase participation through the use of the appropriate arrangements.

Physical classroom spaces may not be meeting the needs of small children (Tanner, 2000). Planning Physical classroom spaces for use by children tends to be ignored even while new curricula, testing, and accountability are being put in place (Jarman, 2008; Sommer, 1977). As Achilles (1999) stated, “One place to start observing classrooms is to consider space, space use, and the environment or context of the teaching-learning process” (p. 38). A greater amount of attention must be paid to the arrangement of a classroom physical space and how it evolves (Lowe, 1990; Sargent, 1991; Weinstein, 1992). Lacking adequate instruction in teacher preparation programs, teachers copy the structural mistakes they see in other classrooms (Tanner, 2000). Open space changes classroom dynamics. Teachers who have reduced the amount of material and furniture in their classroom to open floor space have recognized the benefits. Adding just 80 square feet of open space provides benefits for learners: extra books permit learners to read for fun; learners find materials on their own; organizational improvement by the teacher is copied by learners; learners find a space to read by themselves or with a partner; and distractions lessen when distance between learners increases (Duncanson, Volpe, & Achilles, 2009).

In the view of Opoku-Agyemang (2015), managing classrooms today as a teacher, one need to manage all the situations listed below; Class sizes which are generally larger and classrooms more crowded, noncompliance which is common, verbal abuse of pupils at all ages, pupil’s problems at home and resorting to violence to make a point or settle an argument. All these concerns may influence classroom behaviour as well as academic performance negatively hence the need for teachers at early childhood

education centres to adopt strategies to manage them. For instance, a study which looked at the impact of class size on learners' academic performance, found a statistically significant negative relationship (Barber & Mona, 2007).

Ameyaw (2011) stated that quality gap in terms of educational performance outcomes persisted in Ghanaian basic schools and seemed to be deteriorating year after year. Oppong-Sekyere and Akpalu (2013) also demonstrated that performances of basic school learners which included learners in the Asutifi North District consistently and grossly fell below the least national average of 46.93% generating series of questions that require urgent attention and a probe into the classroom management strategies that early childhood education centres teachers in the Asutifi North District mostly employ in their classrooms and how these strategies influence academic performance of the learners.

This study, therefore, was to investigate teacher classroom management practices in early childhood centres in Asutifi North District.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, specifically under Article 38, mandates the Government to provide Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) to all children of school-going age. This policy has helped increase enrolment in public basic schools across the country (Opoku-Agyemang, 2015). However, while this increase is a positive step towards educational accessibility, it has also introduced major challenges—especially in classroom management. A key issue is the overcrowding of classrooms, which places a heavy burden on teachers and threatens the quality of teaching and learning (Barber & Mona, 2007).

From the researcher's experience as an Early Childhood Coordinator within the Asutifi North District, this national issue is clearly evident at the local level. During monitoring and supervision visits to various schools in the district, it was commonly observed that many early childhood classrooms especially from Kindergarten 1 to Basic 3 are overcrowded and chaotic. The large number of pupils makes it difficult for teachers to manage the class effectively. Children are often seen engaging in problem behaviours such as shouting, fighting over learning materials, crying, and disorganizing the classroom furniture. These behaviours disrupt the teaching and learning process and make it hard for teachers to maintain control and achieve learning objectives.

Reports from School Improvement Support Officers (SISOs) in the district also confirm these challenges. In their fourth quarter report (2021), the SISOs highlighted that during monitoring visits, they observed young learners displaying disruptive behaviours. The classrooms lacked order and discipline, and the learning environment was not conducive. This aligns with Martinez's (2014) findings that problem behaviours such as hitting, poking, and yelling are common in early childhood centres, and teachers often become overwhelmed when their verbal instructions fail to bring about the desired behavioural change.

Additionally, observations made during school monitoring exercises with the District Director of Education provided further insights. It was noted that many early childhood teachers struggled to implement basic classroom management practices such as effective seating arrangements and the setting of classroom rules. Due to limited space and high enrolment, learners were often cramped into small classrooms, making movement difficult for both teachers and pupils. This contributed to disorder and

restlessness, which in turn impacted the learners' focus and academic engagement (Asutifi North District Director's Monitoring Report, 2021).

The researcher's direct interactions with teachers revealed that while they are aware of good classroom management strategies, they face difficulties applying them consistently due to the high number of learners and lack of classroom resources. Some teachers shared that they tried using group work or activity centres to manage large numbers, but these efforts were not always successful, especially in the absence of teaching assistants. Other teachers reported setting classroom rules, but the rules were often not enforced effectively due to the difficulty of monitoring all learners simultaneously in overcrowded spaces.

Furthermore, despite government policies like the FCUBE, the school feeding programme, and free uniforms aimed at boosting enrolment and reducing the cost of education (Braimoh, 2010), these interventions have indirectly contributed to the overcrowding problem in schools. Adadzi (2006) explained that large class sizes lower educational outcomes, especially in the early years when learners need more attention and care. The Asutifi North District is no exception. According to the 2021 District Educational Management Information System (EMIS), the Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) in early childhood classrooms often exceeds the national standard of 40:1. In some schools, the ratio is as high as 60:1 or more, making classroom control a daunting task for teachers.

Globally, overcrowding and its impact on classroom management are not unique to Ghana. Studies from the United States, United Kingdom, Ireland, China, South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya all show that overcrowded classrooms limit the ability of teachers

to manage learners effectively and create a safe and engaging learning environment (Hachem & Mayor, 2019; Donnelly, 2019; Motshekga, 2012; Mutisya, 2020).

Despite the seriousness of the problem, classroom management continues to be a neglected area of training and support for teachers, especially in early childhood education. Research shows that one of the keys to effective teaching is the ability of the teacher to manage the classroom and deliver well-organized instruction (Emmer, Evertson, & Worsham, 2000; Brophy, 1988). A major study by Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1994) also emphasized that classroom management is the single most important factor influencing student learning. Yet, it remains one of the top challenges facing schools today (Bushaw & Gallup, 2008; Rose & Gallup, 2005).

In the Asutifi North District, teachers have limited space to organize their classrooms. In some cases, learners sit too close to each other, leading to distractions and conflict. Observations made during monitoring visits indicated that most classrooms do not have a well-planned seating arrangement or clearly defined learning areas such as reading corners or play centres. This lack of organization makes it difficult for teachers to direct learners' attention and manage transitions between activities effectively. As Frimpong (2019) argued, the physical environment of a classroom can serve as a "third teacher" by supporting or hindering learning. When the space is not managed well, learners may become disoriented, inattentive, or even aggressive.

Moreover, the researcher's discussions with teachers revealed that many of them do not have a clear understanding of how to establish classroom rules with learners. In some cases, rules are not visibly posted, and learners do not know what is expected of them. In other cases, teachers fail to involve the children in setting the rules, making it difficult for learners to take ownership of classroom norms. This supports findings by Martinez

(2014) and Morin (2014), who noted that learners tend to test limits when rules are unclear or inconsistently enforced.

Although studies have been done on classroom management in Ghana, most have not addressed the specific components explored in this study namely behaviour management, classroom rules, seating arrangements, and organization of physical space. For example, Gyapon et al. (2020) focused mainly on behaviour management in Effutu Municipality. Kontor (2020), Bampo & Asamani (2017), and Asiamah (2021) also explored various aspects of classroom control, but not all the dimensions covered in this study. Therefore, this research aimed to fill that gap by providing a more comprehensive understanding of teachers' classroom management practices in early childhood centres in Asutifi North District.

Research findings continuously have shown that one of the keys to success in teaching is the teacher's ability to manage the classroom and to organize instruction (Brophy, 1988; Cakmak, 2008; Emmer, Evertson, & Worsham, 2000). A meta-analysis of the past 50 years of classroom research identified classroom management as the most important factor, affecting learner learning (Wang, Haertel & Walberg, 1994). It continues to be one of the top three problems facing public schools (Bushaw & Gallup, 2008). It has been ranked second only to funding as the biggest problem in schools (Bushaw & Gallup, 2008; Rose & Gallup, 2005). It is possibly the most difficult aspect of teaching for many teachers and indeed causes many problems for teachers (Johns, McNaughton & Karabinus, 1989).

Most studies in Ghana have researched into classroom management strategies for instance; Jones and Jones (2012) looked at how classroom management aided effective teaching and learning. Gyapon et al, (2020) researched managing children's problem

behaviour in early childhood centers in Effutu Municipality with sequential explanatory mixed method for the kindergarten teachers in both the public and preparatory schools with a sample size of 60. Frimpong (2019) also researched the classroom physical environment as a “Third Teacher” for an early childhood education provision in the Ga-West Municipality by using convergent design to mixed methods and (Kontor, 2020; Bampo & Asamani, 2017; Deku, Amponsah, Opoku, 2013; Asiamah, 2021) also considered other areas of classroom management. But all these studies did not specifically consider behaviour management, setting classroom rules, seating arrangements, and organization of physical classroom space as strands under this study; teachers’ classroom management practices. This study was, therefore, intended to fill this gap.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers’ classroom management practices in early childhood education centers in Asutifi North District.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Explore teachers’ views in behaviour management in early childhood education centres in Asutifi North District.
2. Find out the types of seating arrangement used by teachers in early childhood education centres in the Asutifi North District.
3. Examine how teachers set classroom rules in early childhood education centres in the Asutifi North District.
4. Explore how teachers organize the physical classroom space in early childhood education centres in the Asutifi North District.

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What views do teachers have about behaviour management in early childhood centres in Asutifi North District?
2. What type of classroom seating arrangement does teachers in early childhood centres in the Asutifi North District?
3. How do teachers set classroom rules in early childhood centres in the Asutifi North District?
4. How do teachers organize the physical classroom space in early childhood centres in the Asutifi North District?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study was intended to inform teacher education institutions about classroom management and encourage them to incorporate classroom management practices in teacher education curricula and to let them know the need for teachers to acquire knowledge in classroom management. The study would also bring to bear on teachers the need to understand classroom management practices and how it relates to effective teaching learning process. This would provide teachers and policymakers as well as the community with information on classroom management practices consisting of setting classroom rules, setting good classroom physical space, good seating arrangement and appropriately responding to children's behavioural problems.

Empirical evidence that results from classroom management practices would encourage researchers with information on what needs to be done by way of further research in the area. And also, it would contribute to literature on teacher classroom management practices in early childhood centers.

1.7 Delimitations

The study was conducted in the Asutifi North District in the Ahafo Region in order to maintain focus and clarity, make the study manageable, accurate and precise and feasible. The study specifically focused on eight selected public Basic Schools (Early Childhood Centers) from the eight circuits in the district with the reason of gathering and managing data more efficiently, feasibly and to focus on early childhood teachers with specific characteristics. In content, the study was delimited to only four classroom management practices namely; behaviour management, setting of classroom rules, seating arrangement and organization of physical classroom space. The reasons were to narrow the scope of the study, make it focused and manageable for a deeper and more detailed investigation of teachers' classroom management practices. The study was also delimited to early childhood centers (Kindergarten to Basic three) in the public basic schools within the Asutifi North District because the researcher identified the problem of teachers' inability to manage their classrooms during teaching and learning in the early childhood centers and aimed to address that specific phenomena in the early childhood centers.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Behaviour Management: This refers to the daily maintenance of the classroom which includes classroom rules for learners' impute during instructional time and the type of reward system utilized. Behaviour management in the context of this study treated as a strand which refers to strategies teachers use to control learners' disruptive behaviours for effective teaching and learning.

Classroom: This refers to a formal place, organize by educational planners where reasonable learners' gather to learn and to achieve common educational goal from more knowledgeable person.

Classroom Management (CM): These are a variety of skills and techniques that teachers use to keep learners organized, orderly, focused, attentive and academically productive classrooms.

Classroom management practices: refer to behaviour management, setting of rules, seating arrangement and organization of physical classroom space.

Early Childhood Centers: refer to classes in the public basic schools starting from kindergarten to basic three.

Classroom Rules: are guidelines set by teachers to ensure a conducive teaching and learning environment.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The organization of the study was in five chapters. The first chapter dealt with the introduction of the study; it covered the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study; research questions, significance of the study, delimitation, limitations of the study, definition of terms and organization of the study. The second chapter reviewed literature on the issues related to classroom management practices employed by teachers in the early childhood centers. The chapter was under the following major headings: Theoretical Framework: Behaviour Management, Setting Rules and Regulations, Seating Arrangement and Organization of Physical Classroom Space. The third chapter described the methodology employed in collecting data for the study; it included the research design, study site, population, sample and sampling techniques, instruments, trustworthiness, data collection procedure and data analyses. The fourth chapter looked at the data analyses and discussion of findings that resulted from the analyses. The final chapter was composed of the summary of the study and conclusions implied in the findings as well as recommendations and area for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Overview

This chapter focuses on the review of literature that is related to the research problem. The review covered these areas; Theoretical Perspective: Skinner's operant conditioning theory and Proshansky's Environmental Psychology theory: The concept of Behaviour Management, Setting Rules, Classroom Seating Arrangement and Organization of Classroom Space.

2.1 Theoretical Perspective

This part of the study spelt out the theory on which the study was premised. It gave details of the study and why that theory was chosen. The theory on which this study was based was Skinner's theory of operant conditioning and Proshansky's Environmental Psychology theory.

2.1.1 Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory (1938)

Skinner's theory of operant conditioning which is a behaviour modification model was used as a basis for the study. The Classroom management theory of Skinner is said to have been incorporated in the school system in various ways. Most of the behaviour management systems applied in schools are said to be strongly influenced by his work. Skinner's Behaviour Management theory focused on consequences for behaviour. He emphasized reinforcement which according to him increased desired behaviours and decreased unwanted behaviours. He believed that behaviour is shaped by the consequences that followed an individual's actions. He argued in favour of immediate praise, feedback, and reward when seeking to change undesirable behaviour or encourage desirable behaviour in the classroom. Skinner also advocated for teachers to

identify and reflect on the environmental effects on learners' behaviour (Omomia & Omomia, 2014).

According to Skinner (1974),

“Everything we know about operant conditioning is relevant to making behaviour more or less likely to occur upon a given occasion. This is the traditional field of rewards and punishment, but much sharper distinctions can be made in taking advantage of what we know about contingencies of reinforcement” (p.181).

He implied that a teacher can control the classroom environment through instantaneous reinforcement. These reinforcements can come in two folds, which are positive (special opportunities, celebrations, candy) and or negative (loss of opportunities, office referrals, in school suspension, out of school suspension) forms to create an environment where each learner works productively.

Traditionally, learner behaviour management has heavily depended on behaviourism theory, which is primarily based on rewards and punishments as well as reinforcement. Behaviourism mainly focuses on modifying individual behaviour to lead the learner to build positive behaviour in the classroom. Behaviourism essentially forces external controls over the learner to shape his or her behaviours in a desirable way (Lerner, 2003). Teacher is the dominant person in the classroom and has the responsibility of all ongoing issues in the classroom; from learners' motivation to misbehaviours. Teacher exerts control over learners. Teacher's job is to mediate the environment where possible, and by incorporating a reward and punishment approach to redirect the learner's behaviour when needed. In these teacher-centred classrooms learners are passive learners and compliance is valued rather than initiative (Freiberg, 1999).

From the perspective of behaviourism, teachers can easily reach the conclusion that learner misbehaviours can be decreased by rewards or punishments. Some educators, however, have criticized behaviourism because of the passive role of the learner while the teacher is in control. For instance, learners always sit and wait for teacher directions. Many educators contend that a fundamental deficiency in behaviourism lies in the lack of learners' initiative within the learning process (Freiberg, 1999).

Operant conditioning works on a system of reinforcement and punishment. Reinforcement is meant for behaviour to be increased, whilst punishment reduces the chances of behaviour occurring again. This means that the right guidelines for punishment should be followed (Mangal, 2012). The teaching and learning process in the school can be positively enhanced if the actors (in this context, the learners, administrators or principals and teachers) are adequately motivated through rewards. This can be catalyzed through a consistent process of reinforcement. Akinboye (1992) argued that reinforcement is a central concept in human acquisition of skills and performance competence. The skills for teaching, learning and administration are thus sharpened through the process of reinforcement.

By extension, it could be argued that reinforcement is any factor which when made to follow a response immediately will increase the probability of the occurrence of the response to a conditioned stimulus or stimulus event (Igbinoba & Marvelous, 2015).

The direct implication is that any consequence that follows behaviour must be contingent upon the behaviour (Elliott, Kratochwill, Littlefield-Cook and Travers, 2000). In applying Skinner's theory in the classroom, we can do the followings: set up reinforcement schedules with our learners, especially those with behaviours that need quick intervention to reinforce positive behaviour. For example, if a learner gets out of

his seat frequently, we can set a timer for, say ten minutes, and each time he remains on his seat after that duration, a token (reward) is given to him.

Another example is the creation (in some occasions with the contribution of learners) of a system of positive incentives for the class. This could be by rewarding positive behaviour before punishing negative behaviour. For example, if learners are asked to turn in their home work, you reward those who turned in their homework consistently. Those who did not turn in their homework, even without being punished will likely be induced to follow suit with those rewarded for turning in their homework consistently. It is suggested that positive reinforcement should be immediately applied so as to easily associate it with the positive behaviour being rewarded.

The theory of Skinner could be said to be different from that of his predecessors who based theirs on classical conditioning. On his part, he studied operant conditioning. That is voluntary behaviours used in operating on the environment (Mergel, 2011). According to him, he based his operant conditioning on the following mechanisms:

1. Positive Reinforcement or reward: Responses that are rewarded are likely to be repeated. For example good grades reinforce careful study.
2. Negative Reinforcement: Responses that allow escaping from painful or undesirable situations are likely to be repeated. For example, being excused from writing a final examination because of good term work.
3. Extinction or Non-Reinforcement: Responses that are not reinforced are likely to be repeated. For example ignoring learner's misbehaviour should extinguish that behaviour.
4. Punishment: Responses that bring painful or undesirable consequences will be suppressed. But they could reappear if reinforcement contingencies change. For

example, penalizing late learners by withdrawing privileges will likely stop their lateness (Mergel, 2011 p.89)

In other words, the deep assumption of the theory of behaviourism is that behaviour is determined by a desire to gain positive reinforcement and to avoid negative reinforcement. The consequence is that, positive reinforcement tends to cause behaviours to be repeated. While negative reinforcement motivates behaviour in the attempt to remove or avoid some undesirable effect (Stahlman & Blaisdell, 2011). On their part, Giffith and Hamza (2006) argued that behaviourism is primarily concerned with the consequences of behaviours that are tangible and observable responses or behaviours. Five fundamental steps guide the behaviour change process under the behaviourism guidelines:

1. Set behaviour goals
2. Determine the appropriate reinforcers
3. Select procedures for changing behaviours
4. Implement procedures and record results, and
5. Evaluate progress and revise as needed (Skinner, 1974 p.201)

Skinner also introduced the concept of a discriminative stimulus. This is a stimulus that can serve as signal or cue in operant conditioning. Rather than having to wait for the operant response to be given on a random basis, the educator can cue the learners to behave in a certain way if they want to receive reinforcement. He again talked about Social reinforcers which he referred to as the desirable interactive experiences with other people for example learners. They include praising, smiling, patting on the back, hugging and kissing. Tokens are things that can be converted to a basic form of reinforcer, e.g. gold stars or smiling faces posted in a learner's book; money may also be used in the same manner. Finally, there are activity reinforcers that are enjoyable

things to do; e.g. going out to play, having recess and going on a field trip (Tuckman, 1992).

Skinner stated that certain techniques can be used to achieve the required modification and they include prompting, chaining and shaping. Prompting entails adding discriminative stimuli that are likely to signal the desired response rather than waiting for the required response to occur on a chance basis. For example, an educator may inform the class what behaviour to perform and when to perform it. It is mainly used in reading. Chaining on the other hand involves connecting simple responses in sequence to form more complete responses that would be difficult to learn all at one time. Simple behaviours are joined into a sequence of behaviour, which is then reinforced at its completion. Shaping is used when the desired response (target) is not one the learner is already able to perform (i.e. the desired response not in the learner's repertoire) or when there is no way to prompt the response. There are two types of shaping, namely, shaping only those behaviours that meet a given criterion; and shaping/reinforcing behaviour that approximates or is closely similar to the target behaviour (Tuckman, 1992).

According to behaviourist thinkers, the effective use of reinforcement should make the use of punishment unnecessary. They maintain that the most effective technique for weakening behaviour is to use non-reinforcement, thus to ignore it. Punishment is not a preferred method of changing behaviour or maintaining discipline. According to Skinner as cited in Tuckman (1992), when bad behaviour is punished, it may merely be suppressed and may reappear later under different circumstances. Ironically, the punisher may serve as a model for future aggressive behaviour on the part of the person being punished. This claim implies that educators who have been subjected to corporal punishment as a child may as an adult educator also prefer to use corporal punishment.

Tuckman (1992) stated that there are two circumstances when punishment, as a last resort, may be used effectively. Firstly, when undesirable behaviour is so frequent that there is virtually no desirable behaviour to reinforce, extreme aggressiveness in a child may leave no room for reinforcement. Secondly, this may be necessary when the problem behaviour is so intense that someone, including the child himself may get hurt. Here again, aggressiveness is an example of such intense behaviour. A major concern about the Skinnerian model is that whilst it is effective in teaching learners desirable behaviour, it is less successful in teaching them what not to do.

The operant conditioning theory provides evidence that suggests that reinforcement and punishment can shape individual's behaviour by enforcing classroom rules, managing good seating arrangements and physical classroom space to promote conducive environment for teaching and learning to influence positive learning outcomes. The researcher, therefore, found this theory relevant to the current study.

2.1.2 Environmental Psychology Theory (Harold M. Proshansky, 1970)

Harold M. Proshansky's Environmental Psychology Theory, articulated in 1970, offers a profound understanding of how physical environments influence human behaviour and experience. This theory posits that environments, encompassing both natural and built spaces, play a crucial role in shaping individuals' actions, emotions, and cognitive processes (Proshansky, 1970). By examining the dynamic interplay between people and their surroundings, Proshansky's work emphasizes the significance of context in psychological processes, laying the groundwork for subsequent research in environmental psychology.

Proshansky's theory introduces several key concepts, including the notion of "place identity," which refers to the way specific environments become integral to an individual's self-concept. This idea suggests that physical spaces are not merely

backdrops for human activity but are deeply intertwined with personal and communal identities (Proshansky, 1970). Additionally, the theory explores how environmental factors, such as layout, design, and spatial organization, impact behaviours, including learning, social interaction, and well-being.

2.1.3 Application to Early Childhood Education (ECE) Settings

Applying Proshansky's Environmental Psychology Theory to Early Childhood Education (ECE) settings underscores the critical role that physical classroom spaces and seating arrangements play in fostering young children's development. The layout of a classroom can significantly influence children's learning experiences, social interactions, and emotional well-being, aligning with Proshansky's assertion that environments shape behaviour and identity.

2.1.4 Seating Arrangements

In ECE settings, seating arrangements are pivotal in creating conducive learning environments. Proshansky's theory highlights that physical spaces should support desired behaviours and outcomes (Proshansky, 1970). For instance, arranging seats in a circular or semi-circular manner can promote inclusivity and enhance social interactions among children. This setup allows for better eye contact, encourages participation, and facilitates group discussions, aligning with the social constructivist approach to learning, which emphasizes the importance of social interactions in cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978).

Conversely, traditional row seating might limit interaction and collaboration among young children, potentially hindering social development and engagement. Proshansky's insights suggest that such an arrangement might not optimally support the developmental needs of young learners, as it restricts movement and peer

communication (Proshansky, 1970). Therefore, flexible seating arrangements that accommodate different activities and learning styles can create a more dynamic and responsive educational environment.

2.1.5 Physical Classroom Space

The broader physical classroom space, including its design and organization, also profoundly impacts children's behaviour and learning, resonating with Proshansky's environmental psychology principles. A well-designed classroom should offer various zones or areas tailored to different activities, such as reading corners, art stations, and play areas. This zoning aligns with Proshansky's idea that distinct environmental features can support specific behaviours and cognitive processes (Proshansky, 1970).

For example, a quiet, cozy reading corner can encourage literacy and a love for books, while an open, spacious play area can facilitate physical activity and imaginative play. The presence of natural elements, such as plants and natural light, can enhance children's well-being and concentration, echoing Proshansky's emphasis on the beneficial effects of nature in built environments (Proshansky, 1970).

Moreover, the accessibility and arrangement of materials and resources within the classroom can foster independence and self-directed learning. Low shelves, clearly labeled bins, and strategically placed learning materials can empower children to make choices and engage in activities autonomously, promoting a sense of competence and agency, which are crucial for early childhood development (Montessori, 1967).

In conclusion, Harold M. Proshansky's Environmental Psychology Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the impact of physical environments on human behaviour and development. Applying this theory to ECE settings highlights the importance of thoughtful classroom design and seating arrangements in supporting young children's learning, social interactions, and overall well-being. By creating

environments that are responsive to children's developmental needs, educators can foster more effective and enriching educational experiences.

2.3 How the theories relate to the study

Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory and Proshansky's Environmental Psychology Theory both provide valuable theoretical insights that support the understanding of teachers' classroom management practices in early childhood centres. These two theories, although distinct in focus, are interconnected in the way they explain how behaviour is shaped within the learning environment.

Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory emphasizes that learners' behaviours are influenced by the consequences that follow them. According to Skinner (1953), behaviours followed by positive reinforcement, such as praise, rewards, or recognition, are more likely to be repeated, while behaviours followed by punishment are likely to decrease. In the context of early childhood education in Asutifi North District, teachers use classroom management strategies such as reward systems, verbal encouragement, or the removal of privileges to manage behaviour. These practices align with Skinner's idea that reinforcement and punishment can be used effectively to shape and maintain desirable classroom behaviour.

Proshansky's Environmental Psychology Theory, on the other hand, focuses on the impact of the physical and social environment on human behaviour. Proshansky (1976) argue that the design, structure, and atmosphere of the classroom significantly influence children's behaviour, mood, and learning engagement. In early childhood centres, the way a teacher arranges furniture, displays learning materials, controls noise levels, and establishes routines contributes to a positive learning environment. A

well-organized and child-friendly classroom can prevent behavioural issues and support self-regulation among young learners.

The connection between the two theories lies in the understanding that both external consequences (Skinner) and environmental structure (Proshansky) interact to influence children's behaviour and learning experiences. While Skinner focuses on behavioural management through consequences, Proshansky stresses the importance of the classroom environment in shaping learner conduct. In practice, effective classroom management in early childhood centres in the Asutifi North District depends not only on how teachers respond to behaviour, but also on how they design the classroom setting to promote positive interactions and engagement.

Together, these theories provide a holistic foundation for examining teachers' classroom management practices. They highlight that managing young learners' behaviour requires both the strategic use of reinforcement and the thoughtful arrangement of the learning environment to meet developmental needs.

2.2 Concept of Behavioural Management

The topic of how to manage learner behaviour in schools has been around as long as there have been schools. Behaviour management has been and still is the chief concern of educators across the country (Dunlap et al., 2010; Westling, 2010).

According to Martin & Sass (2010), behavioural management refers to the general daily maintenance of the classroom which includes classroom rules for learners impute during instructional time and the type of reward system utilized. They continued that behavioural management is similar to but different from discipline in that it includes pre-planned efforts to prevent misbehaviour as well as the teachers' respond to it. Opining, Zimmerman (2011) said that Behavioural Management (BM) is related to the

expectations a teacher hold for his or her learner. That it is not enough to expect learners to keep their hands to themselves or raise their hand to speak, learners also need to understand how you expect them to walk in the classroom, how to turn in their papers, how you want them to sit at their desk; they need to know how to get your attention appropriately and what voice level to use, at what time. Slater (2002) mentioned five areas an educator should make his or her focal point as he or she desire to manage learner behaviour: communication, fairness, listen, empower and change.

Managing behaviour of learners in the classroom is significant for the teacher because it can affect instruction, learning and performance. Walker (2009) asserted that the best teachers don't simply teach content, they teach people and Marzano et al., (2001) said to effectively teach their learners, teachers need to employ effective behavioural management strategies. When learners with behaviour issues are not properly handled, they can negatively influence the learning environment by persuading others to join them.

When learners misbehave, they learn less and keep their peers from learning. Classroom behaviour problems take up teachers' time and disrupt the classroom and school. In fact, difficulty managing learner behaviour is cited as a factor associated with teacher burnout and dissatisfaction. For example, "50 percent of urban teachers leave the profession within the first five years of their career, citing behaviour problems and management as factors influencing their decision to leave" (McKinney et al., 2005, p. 16).

Behaviour problems in a classroom increase the stress levels for both the teacher and pupils, disrupt the flow of lessons and conflict with both learning objectives and the processes of learning. They also change the classroom dynamic as the focus of attention

shifts from the academic tasks at hand to the distractions provided by disruptive behaviours (Parsonson, 2012).

To place problem behaviour in context, 88 percent of a sample of 42 New Zealand teachers responding to a questionnaire rated classroom mismanagement as ‘sometimes’ or ‘very often’ a cause of problematic classroom behaviour (Johansen et al., 2011).

In recent years, behaviour management has gained the attention of researchers in the field of education owing to its significant effects in improving children’s behaviour through increasing desired behaviour and decreasing undesired behaviour (Eshun, 2016). According to Alkhateeb & Alhadidi, cited in Al-Bustanji et al., (2018), behaviour management has important implications in teaching strategies and techniques when used with children, especially those with special needs regardless of their disabilities. Indeed, as a well-managed classroom can provide an exciting and dynamic learning experience for everyone, its opposite could also overwhelm teachers, rendering them “powerless” in dealing with behavioural issues in the classroom environment. Canter, as cited in Kakkad (2012) explained that, in the past, a simple stern look or warning was appropriate to shape up a classroom. Therefore, it is important to find a behaviour management approach which suits the needs of both the teacher and learner. Conversely, early and persistent problem behaviour can affect the child's development across academic, societal, and emotional domains and put the child at risk of early academic failure (Bulotsky-Shearer & Fantuzzo, 2011; Yoleri, 2013) as well as later problems in adolescence (Dodge, Coie & Lynam cited in Gyapong et al., 2020).

Given these risks, the main theoretical worldwide approach has been targeted at prevention of young children’ challenging behaviour and early intervention for them and their families (New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, 2003; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). One of the important elements of an effective manager is a teacher

who is well read on what triggers problem behaviours in children. Earlier research conducted by (Thompson, 2011) revealed that the most common children's problem behaviour is that they do not follow directions from a teacher or caregiver. In circle time, for example, children like to talk constantly with their peers and not to listen to a teacher or health professional. Thompson further explained that children behave in such a way because they cannot understand what teachers are teaching or maybe because they do understand the words employed by teachers.

Additionally, (Martinez, 2014) identified hitting, kicking, catching, or poking other peers as common problem behaviours among children. Also, Martinez, (2014) and Morin (2014) were of the view that children often put up certain problem behaviour to test limits and standards and to split down the precepts set out by teachers or caregivers, as well as to find out how teachers or caregivers would respond to such behaviours.

If the study by Johansen et al. (2011) accurately represents teacher awareness that poor classroom management is an important factor associated with disruptive behaviour, then it would follow that interventions which target teaching skills and classroom behaviour management have the potential to produce significant impacts on disruptive behaviour. According to the Elton's Report cited in the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills 2005, section 65, p.15), it was estimated that in the United Kingdom 80 percent of disruptive behaviour was attributable "to poor classroom organization, planning and teaching". According to the report, British teachers stated behaviours such as talking out-of-turn, and other forms of persistent low-level disruption as the most frequent and stress-inducing because of their constantly disruptive effect on both classroom activities and the teaching-learning process. Important factors identified related to teacher confidence and competence,

their ability to engage children in the curriculum and for teachers to have good group management skills so that the class focus was on appropriate behaviour.

Establishing clear behaviour expectations and rules is a proactive approach that involves systematically teaching and encouraging children to behave appropriately (Barbetta et al., 2005). Preventing the occurrence of inappropriate behaviours by establishing behaviour expectations and rules is more effective and efficient than addressing inappropriate behaviours as they occur (Barbetta et al., 2005; Jack & Lindeman, 2012). Children who understand what is expected of them are more likely to display appropriate behaviour (Alter & Conroy, 2014). Establishing clear behaviour expectations and rules builds a strong classroom community, promotes physical and emotional safety, and helps children develop confidence and competence (Fox et al., 2003; Mosier, 2009). Behaviour expectations and rules can help children understand appropriate ways to behave in different settings (Stormont et al., 2005).

2.3.1 Behaviour Management Strategies for Early Childhood Classroom

The ultimate goal of education is to mould young people into well-rounded individuals. That often includes making sure that the teaching and learning process flows as smoothly as possible. In theory, your role as a teacher is to plan and deliver your lessons and everything will fall into place. Unfortunately, theory does not always apply in the real world. That is where behaviour management strategies shine to enhance learner behaviour and allow teaching and learning to proceed as planned (Lindeman, 2012). The following are behaviour management strategies that allow teaching and learning to take place as planned according to Lindeman, (2012).

1. Maintain a Routine

Having a set routine is an important behaviour management tool that helps to establish guidelines and behaviour expectations. A routine ensures that learners know what is

coming next, so the teacher will spend less time giving out instructions – freeing up time to the real activity. Include the learners in establishing a classroom schedule that works for everyone and give them responsibility for some routine tasks. Do not leave out disruptive learners in the schedule more often, a sense of responsibility can help reduce behaviour problems. When a learner starts to slide out of the planned routine, use non-verbal cues like hand gesture to remind learners of what they should be doing. Avoid verbal cues to keep the lesson flow uninterrupted.

2. Set Rules together with Learners

Rules define the behaviours that teachers want children to demonstrate. They should be expressed in concrete, observable, and measurable terms and might vary depending on the setting for example, classroom, lunchroom, outside (Jack & Lindeman, 2012). Rules help improve learner's behaviour. However, if classroom teachers set the rules themselves, the class may reject them. That is why it is important to have an audience with the learners to help set the rules. When learners take ownership of the rules, peer pressure works in the teacher's favour to enforce them and improve behaviour management. Also, have a guideline for how infractions will be dealt with. Those guidelines help remove the feeling of being punished, so learners will know what to expect when they are called out about their behaviour. Remember to enforce the guidelines impartially and consistently. If the teacher slacks on the enforcement even once, he or she creates a loophole that every learner will want to take advantage of it. It is also important to remember not to discipline the whole class for one learner's infractions. For example, disrupting class proceedings to deal with one learner. This will likely alienate the whole class, who will feel wrongfully punished.

3. Create Stimulating Lessons

Imagine sitting through a meeting where the facilitator drones on for hours on end? You will probably start fiddling with your keys or just zone out right in the middle of it. That is exactly how learners feel when lessons are not exciting. Monotonous classes are sure to bring out the worst in learners. To get rid of problem behaviours, make the class activities as exciting and stimulating as possible. Structure the activities to engage and involve learners throughout the lesson. Strive to allow learners to uncover knowledge with practical activities. Most importantly, vary teaching methods, use plenty of teaching and learning resources and make the lesson interactive and fun. The teacher can draw the attention of the younger learners by incorporating games and using plenty actions in the learning time. With older learners, try to stay relatable, for example, by referencing modern videos or movies.

4. Use Positive Language

Negative language has a way of reinforcing the wrong behaviour. Typically, learners like to do what they are told not to do. So, rather than create a vicious cycle of behaviour challenges, use positive language. For example, instead of saying, “this work is too hard for me”, they will begin to say, “I can try my best.” It is also important to keep the body language positive. Smile more and frown less often. Model the behaviour teachers want to see in learners. Studies have shown that learners learn from the language and behaviour that educator display. Some of the outcomes of positive language approaches include: a safe learning environment, self-discipline, sense of responsibility and self-motivation.

5. Develop Good Relationship with Learners

Teachers should get to know their learners individually. Take time as a teacher to find out their interests and dislikes. If lessons are centered on what the learners like, the

teacher will find it easier to keep them engaged. Also, knowing the learners will help the teacher to identify some triggers to behavioural problems. For example, if a learner suddenly starts lashing out and talking over the teacher in a lesson, he or she may be going through some personal problem at home or facing challenges like bullying at school. If the teacher knows a bit about the learner, he or she may be able to figure out the root of the problem. Instead of punishing the bad behaviour, the teacher can talk to the learner or points them in the direction of help; for example, get them to see the school counselor. One way of developing a good relationship with learners is by speaking positively about them to their parents and Headteacher. Use notes and calls to update their parents on their positive behavioural changes. Or let the Headteacher drop in to commend their good behaviour.

6. Adjust Scoring Methods

Getting an F or zero (0) on an assignment is demoralizing. Typically, learners who get poor grades are disruptive in class and deliberately fall short of behaviour expectations to deflect from the real issue. When dealing with a similar scenario in class, use a less standard scoring method for grading classwork. For example, instead of grading class exercise or an assignment with a specific score, simply put check marks where the learner got it right and point out areas of improvement. This unconventional grading can help reduce the overwhelming feeling of poor grades. Teachers may also turn it into a game. Use points to grade exercise and give some rewards when a learner reaches a specific number of points. Treating scores like a fun game helps motivate learners to focus and improve their scores.

2.3.2 Strategies to Encourage Appropriate Behaviour

Encouraging appropriate behaviour refers to the use of behaviour strategies to teach and reinforce expected behaviour and adherence to classroom rules. To be effective, these

strategies need to be used within the context of a supportive and nurturing relationship and classroom environment (National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning, 2012). When teachers use behaviour reflections (neutral, non-judgmental statements describing learner's behaviour), learners learn that they can receive teacher attention for routine actions as opposed to extreme behaviour (e.g., perfect behaviour, biting) (Kostelnik et al., 2014).

More than 40 years of research indicated that praise (i.e., positive descriptive feedback) for appropriate behaviours and planned ignoring of minor inappropriate behaviours are effective practices for encouraging and supporting positive behaviour in learners (Gable et al., 2009; Hester et al., 2009). The use of praise (i.e., positive descriptive feedback) can increase the occurrence of appropriate behaviour, promote positive teacher-child relationships, and foster a supportive learning environment (Henderlong & Lepper, 2002; Hester et al., 2009; Gable et al., 2009). Planned ignoring is only effective for eliminating inappropriate behaviours that are aimed at seeking attention (Henderlong & Lepper, 2002; Gable et al., 2009; Hester et al., 2009).

Teachers can use several strategies to encourage children's appropriate behaviour and to respond to inappropriate behaviour. The four strategies listed below are just a few that teachers can use to encourage learners to follow the rules and engage in appropriate behaviour. The first, behaviour reflection, is a preventive strategy that provides learners with attention when they are engaged in ordinary activities. The last three positive descriptive feedback, planned ignoring, and redirection are ways for teachers to increase the occurrence of learners' positive behaviour or to decrease the occurrence of their negative behaviour.

1. Behaviour Reflections

Behaviour reflections are neutral, non-judgmental statements in which the teacher describes or refers to the everyday activities in which a learner engages. This type of statement demonstrates to the learner that the teacher is interested in what the child is doing. Teachers can use behaviour reflections to build rapport with learners and to establish a positive and supportive classroom environment. Teachers should use behaviour reflections when they are able to comment on something that is important to the learner or learners. This is often done when children are engaged in everyday activities that have meaning for them (e.g., drawing). For example: A teacher might observe a learner painting at the easel and say, “Fiona, you’re using many colors in your painting.” Note that the teacher is simply describing what the child is doing, rather than providing positive feedback e.g., “That’s a beautiful painting” (National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning, 2012).

1.1 Benefits of Using Behaviour Reflections

1. Provides children with teacher attention
2. Teaches children that they do not have to engage in extreme behaviours (e.g., excelling in an area, engaging in acting-out or destructive behaviours) to get attention
3. Decreases the likelihood that children will seek attention with negative behaviours
4. Helps teachers to establish a positive environment
5. Helps teachers build rapport with the children
6. Signals to children that teachers are interested in them and what they are doing
7. Provides children with opportunities to interact and engage with the teacher if they choose to.
8. Helps children build feelings of self-worth

2. Positive Descriptive Feedback

Positive descriptive feedback refers to calling attention to a child's appropriate behaviour with a brief, positive, specific description of what the child is doing. For older children, positive descriptive feedback can also include written statements. Because it is specific, this type of feedback helps children know exactly what behaviour teachers would like to see repeated.

Positive descriptive feedback should be offered when a child is engaging in appropriate behaviour or immediately after. For example, teachers often use general statements, such as "Good job" or "Nice work" to acknowledge a child's behaviour. Notice in the examples below that the teachers provide feedback that is specific and descriptive of the child's behaviour (Henderlong & Lepper, 2002; Hester et al., 2009; Gable et al, 2009).

Example 1:

When Cameron hangs his coat in his cubby, the teacher can acknowledge it by saying, "Cameron, you did a good job hanging up your coat all by yourself."

(Note: The teacher delivered positive descriptive feedback immediately after Cameron engaged in the behaviour and was specific about what he did).

Example 2:

When the teacher observes Patrick washing his hands before lunch, she can give him positive feedback with a thumbs-up and say, "Patrick, good for you. You remembered to wash your hands before lunch." (Note: The teacher delivered positive descriptive feedback while Patrick engaged in the behaviour).

Example 3:

Paige cleaned up the blocks in the center but not the toy animals. The teacher comments, "Paige, you are doing a better job cleaning up your center. You put

the blocks back on the shelf.” (Note: The teacher used specific positive descriptive feedback and highlighted improvement).

Consider the age of children when teaching them for following the rules. Positive descriptive feedback might sound different for toddlers than it does for older children. For example, a teacher might provide positive descriptive feedback to a toddler by saying, “Liam, nice walking feet.” However, a teacher might provide positive descriptive feedback to an older child engaging in the same behaviour by saying, “Rosa, thank you for using your walking feet in the hallway.” Although both statements are descriptive and provide positive attention, they are clearly geared towards children of different ages.

3. Planned Ignoring

Planned ignoring occurs when a child engages in minor inappropriate behaviour to get attention and the teacher intentionally does not attend to the behaviour. This strategy should only be used when a child engages in minor inappropriate behaviour to get adult attention and when the teacher is confident that the child will eventually stop engaging in the behaviour on his or her own. Planned ignoring should never be used when a child is engaging in unsafe behaviours (e.g., biting, hitting, climbing). This strategy is more appropriate for children aged four and older. This strategy works best when paired with positive descriptive feedback for the appropriate behaviour (Henderlong & Lepper, 2002; Gable et al, 2009; Hester et al, 2009).

Example:

When the teacher is talking to other children, Presley often interrupts. The teacher decides to use planned ignoring to eliminate this behaviour. When Presley interrupts her the first time, the teacher says, “You need to wait your turn” and ignores Presley’s behaviours after that. As soon as the teacher notices

that Presley is waiting her turn, the teacher says, “Presley, I like the way you’re waiting. Keep it up.”

2.3.3 Things to Know about Planned Ignoring

1. When the teacher starts ignoring a child’s inappropriate behaviour, the frequency and intensity of that behaviour will initially likely increase. In other words, the teacher should expect the behaviour to get worse before it gets better.
2. Planned ignoring requires that the teacher has a lot of patience and good self-control.
3. If a teacher decides to use planned ignoring to eliminate a child’s behaviour, he or she must use this strategy every time the child engages in the behaviour. Even providing the slightest amount of attention to this behaviour (e.g., a disapproving look) can reinforce it and result in the child continuing to engage in the inappropriate behaviour.
4. Consistency is key. Planned ignoring works best when all staff that interact with the child as well as with family members, when possible—ignore the problematic behaviour.
5. The teacher should immediately provide positive attention when the child stops the inappropriate behaviour and engages in an appropriate behaviour. For young children, positive attention should be provided when the child engages in as little as 3–5 seconds of appropriate behaviour.
6. The teacher should never use planned ignoring for a behaviour that is harmful to the child or to other children.
7. Before using planned ignoring, the teacher should make sure that:
 - i. The physical and social-emotional needs of the child have been met.
 - ii. The child has the skills he or she is expected to use (e.g., waiting, controlling tantrums) when the teacher is ignoring the behaviour.

4. Redirecting

Redirecting is a preventive strategy for directing a child from an inappropriate behaviour before it escalates to an alternative behaviour that is more appropriate. This strategy can be used when a young child is off task, uses materials inappropriately, talks out of turn, or becomes upset (Gable et al, 2009).

Example:

If the teacher sees a child splashing the water in the sink, he can redirect the child to an appropriate behaviour such as washing hands by saying “Ainsley, I see that you are playing in the water. The sink is for washing hands. Here’s some soap. Why don’t we wash our hands?” When the child washes her hands, the teacher can say, “Nice hand-washing.”

2.3 Setting Classroom Rules

Learners are key stakeholders and the most essential resources in education. It is absolutely necessary to direct learners to exhibit an acceptable attitude and behaviour within and outside the school. In an attempt to achieve an organized and peaceful school environment and maintain law and order, the school management specifies rules to guide the activities of members of the educational institution (Anna, 2013).

Rules define the behaviours that teachers want children to demonstrate. They should be expressed in concrete, observable, and measurable terms and might vary depending on the setting for example, classroom, lunchroom, outside (Jack & Lindeman, 2012). According to Adams (2003), school rules are among the strategies designed to instill good conduct of learners. This implies self-control, orderliness, good behaviour and obedience to school authority.

Classroom rules are set of rules and guidelines that are set by the learners through the guidance of teacher that guides the activities of the class to enhance conducive teaching

and learning environment and behaviour management. Classroom rules are important because they set boundaries that are essential to assisting the teacher in behaviour management and ensure positive environment for learning where all learners feel comfortable and safe (Jack & Lindeman, 2012).

In the study of Curwin and Mendler (1988), 15% of learners break classroom rules regularly and if sufficient structure is not put in place to arrest the situation, these misguided individuals could disrupt the learning process of other learners. In addition to this, a study of 479-teacher samples from preschools to eighth-grade established that 48% of the teachers reported to have had three or more learners in their classrooms exhibiting serious behavioural difficulties (ProTeacher, 2005); Shin and Koh (2008) also pointed out that 32% out of 116 public high school teachers have indicated that 25% - 50% of their learners have behavioural challenges and are difficult to teach.

Learners should fully participate in decision making which includes the formulation of rules (Magadla, 2007). This view is supported by Njozela (2008) who pointed out that principals and other stakeholders should not underestimate the contributions of learners especially if they are given the opportunity to develop their skills and their level of maturity. In their support, Huddleston (2007) stated that learners should be involved in all areas of school life. He added that the range of activities that make up the work of a school can be categorized in a number of different ways, but, however it is categorized, one should expect learners to have opportunities for involvement in each major area – in particular in a school's: ethos and climate including rules, rewards and sanctions.

Setting rules is the process of clearly defining the appropriate behaviours that educators want children to demonstrate (Gable et al, 2009).

More than forty years of research indicated that developing rules is an effective practice. Rules should be few in number, stated positively, age-appropriate, easy to understand, and easy to enforce (Gable et al, 2009; Hester et al, 2009). When teachers create classroom rules that are stated positively and describe expected behaviour, learners engage in less disruptive behaviour (Kerr & Nelson, 2010).

2.4.1 Considerations for Setting Classroom Rules

When developing rules, there are a few factors that teachers should keep in mind (Weinstein et al., 2004; Copple et al., 2011). They should be sure to create rules that are:

- i. **Age appropriate** — When they develop classroom rules, teachers must consider the typical behaviours of children in the age group with which they are working and what the children can understand. Rules that are appropriate for toddlers might not be appropriate for preschool children or children in the early elementary grades (Copple et al, 2011). According to Copple et al, the table below illustrates how the rules might vary for different age groups.

Behaviour Expectation	Age Group	Rule
Be Responsible	Toddler	Put toys away
	Preschool	Clean your center
	Early Elementary	Keep your work area neat

- ii. **Culturally responsive:** Teachers should make an effort to learn about the culture and customs of the children and families in their care. This knowledge can help them understand the role that culture plays in determining appropriate behaviours, which in turn can inform the rules and instructional practices that teachers choose to implement. There are occasions when teachers and children

might not have a common understanding of behaviour expectations (e.g., showing respect) and the corresponding rules. Although teachers should honor children's culture, they must think carefully about when to adjust their rules to accommodate a family's individual cultural practices and when to focus explicitly on teaching children the differences between expectations at school and in their homes or communities. Below are two examples: One in which a teacher adjusts her rules to accommodate a family's cultural practice and another in which the classroom rules are different from the family's cultural practice (Barton & Banerjee, 2013; Weinstein et al, 2004). In this case, the teacher develops a rule that accommodates a child's cultural norms and practices.

Example:

Some teachers define the behaviour expectation "Be respectful" as "Look at me when I'm talking." However, in some cultures making eye contact with adults is considered disrespectful. In such cases, when the classroom rule clashes with the children's cultural norm, the teacher can create a different rule that addresses the behaviour expectation but also takes into consideration the children's perspective (e.g., "Use listening ears").

In this case, the teacher establishes a classroom rule that differs from the children's cultural norms.

Example:

It is the common for teachers to develop the rule "Take turns talking." However, some cultures value overlapping conversation. In this case, teachers might choose to establish a classroom norm even though it conflicts with the children's cultural norms. Teachers need to make sure not to condemn any cultural values

but rather to emphasize that the rule in this classroom is that we respect others by not talking when they talk.

2.4.2 Guidelines for Setting Classroom Rules

When they create rules for early childhood settings, teachers should follow the guidelines below (Copple et al, 2011). Rules should be:

1. **Positively stated:** Rules should tell children what to do rather than what not to do. For example, a rule stating “Use walking feet” is more appropriate than one that simply says “Don’t run.”
2. **Few in number:** Teachers should create not more than five rules for each setting. This is especially important because children have to learn the rules for multiple settings (e.g., classroom, playground).
3. **Simple and specific:** Rules should be stated clearly, in as few words as possible and using language that the children can understand. For example, “Put toys away” is more appropriate for younger children than “Clean up after yourself.”
4. **Measurable and observable:** Because any adult working in the setting should be able to determine whether a child is following a rule, the rule should define a behaviour that can be seen and counted or timed. For example, “Sit on the swing” is more easily observed and measured than “Be safe.”
5. **Consistent across settings:** For example, the rule “Use quiet voices” should be applicable in a variety of settings (e.g., classroom, hallway, bathroom).
6. **Allow older children to help develop the classroom rules.** By doing so, they will more likely feel a sense of ownership and follow the rules. However, the teacher will need to guide children in this discussion because they often offer a list of rules such as “Don’t run with scissors,” “Don’t stab anyone with

scissors,” and “Don’t push.” Teachers can help children put their ideas into categories and make them positive rules about what they can do.

2.4.3 Strategies for Teaching Classroom Rules

The following strategies help teachers to teach rules appropriately to learners in the early childhood grades (Gable et al., 2009; Hester, et al., 2009):

1. **Display the Rules:** Once the rules are developed, they need to be displayed so that teachers and children can refer to them throughout the day. In early childhood settings, rules should:
 - i. Be posted at children’s eye level so they can easily see and reference them when needed
 - ii. Include a visual to illustrate each rule so that young children, who typically are not yet reading or children who speak a different language than the one used in the classroom can quickly reference the rules.
2. **Teach the Rules to the Children:** Although displaying rules is an important first step to help children understand what is expected of them in the classroom, teachers must also intentionally teach the rules. To do this they should:
 - i. Use clear, child-friendly language that is simple and concrete (e.g., “We clean up” instead of “We clean up after we make messes with paint and glue”).
 - ii. Provide examples and non-examples (e.g. “Use walking feet,” demonstrate walking and not walking).
 - iii. Discuss why the rules are important (e.g. “Why is it important to use walking feet?”).
 - iv. Tell the children what happens when they follow the rules and when they do not follow the rules. Example for following the rules: “Children, if we put our toys away quickly, we will have more time to play outside.” Example for not

following the rules: “Children, it is taking a long time for us to put away our toys. That means we are going to have less time to play outside.”

- v. Use a variety of teaching tools (e.g., discussions, role-play, puppets, books, songs, videos, and technology).
 - vi. Introduce the rules in the child’s home language if bilingual staffs are available.
 - vii. Check periodically to see whether children understand the rules. If a child cannot identify the rule being discussed or demonstrated, he or she may need additional instruction.
 - viii. Teachers and children can create a classroom rules book. Photos of the children can be used to demonstrate each rule.
 - ix. Children, along with their families, can create a list of home rules on a cutout of a house. This allows children to note the similarities and differences between home and classroom rules.
3. **Review the Rules:** Once teachers have taught the rules, they need to frequently review them throughout the day, such as:
- i. During large-group activities to provide daily reminders about the rules
 - ii. Prior to transitions when children often have difficulty remembering the rules (e.g., “Remember our hallway rule, ‘Quiet voices.’”)
 - iii. When one or more children are having difficulty following the rules (e.g. “I see running in the classroom. Remember, our rule is ‘Use walking feet.’”)

2.4 Seating Arrangement

Seating arrangements are important classroom setting events because they have the potential to help prevent problem behaviours that decrease learner attention and diminish available instructional time. The physical arrangement of the classroom has the potential to encourage desirable behaviour or contribute to learners’ misbehaviour

(Daniels, 1998). Most of the information in literature addresses issues such as room temperature, room lighting, and acoustics (Conners, 1983; Granstrom, 1996), but fewer studies have been done on classroom seating arrangement and its effects on learners' actions and learning. It should be stressed that knowledge on classroom seating arrangement is critical for several factors concerning learners and education, particularly for practical implementation of the findings. In practical terms, a classroom must be so designed to enhance performance of the learners. It can be argued that learning environments are virtually inappropriate without proper and effective seating arrangement. Studies showed that seating arrangements directly affect learners behaviourally and academically (Wannarka & Ruhl, 2008; McCroskey & McVetta, 1978).

Wannarka and Ruhl (2008) found that the physical arrangements of seats are a critical classroom consideration because they have the potential ability to prevent problem behaviours that interfere with learner attention and diminish instructional time.

In addition, they suggested that desk configurations altered the nature of learner interaction. It is concluded that teachers should be able to eliminate disruptions and increase participation through the use of the appropriate seating arrangement.

While there are a number of ways for classroom seating arrangement, the three most commonly identified are straight-row, horseshoe, and modular (McCroskey & McVetta, 1978). The traditional straight-row arrangement has been predominate in most educational settings throughout American history. The straight-row design typically is made of rows of desks that face an area of focus in a classroom, such as a Smartboard or a teacher's desk or podium. The horseshoe design is one where desks are arranged in a U or C shape with the horseshoe opening pointed at the front of the room. The modular design includes clusters or pods. Desks are arranged together in

small groups. This design is frequently found in elementary classrooms, where learner-learner interaction is a priority for many activities and lessons.

Although much attention has been given to effective learning, little attention is given to the physical spaces where learning actually occurs. Several studies reveal that learners' classroom behaviour is influenced by various factors, including environment and their understanding of the definition of appropriate behaviour. Downer et al. (2007) and others (Canter & Canter, 1976; Curwin & Mendler, 1988; Badia-Martin, 2006) pointed out that school classroom has an important effect on the learners. Physical features of a setting can affect and adjust oneself within a given space such as form or room dimensions, furniture composition, and spaces provision in the room (Gifford, 2002). Therefore, physical setting of the classroom is extremely important for learners (Atherton, 2005). Educators often design the classroom setting with one methodology in mind and simply never change the classroom setting to be more conducive to particular assignments (Anderson, 2007). Richards (2006) discovered that location of a pupil within a classroom seating arrangement may also affect his or her performance. A poor seating arrangement can affect learners' learning by 50% when they stand or sit 20 feet (6 meters) or more away from visual aids within the classroom (Black, 2007). Modifying seating arrangements may be a method to reduce disruptive behaviour that influence on the class environment.

The traditional classroom setting is generally limited to three seating arrangements (rows, horseshoe, and clusters of four) due to space limitations (Weinstein, 1979). In fact, much of studies on seating arrangement centers around the three mentioned arrangements with some other variations including semicircle, concentric circles and fishbowl (Bonus and Riordan, 1998; Atherton, 2005; Ankney, 1974). In support to the significance of the three seating arrangements, other researchers (Michelle and Riordan,

1998) concluded that learners' attentiveness increases when the classroom seating arrangement supports the instructional goal.

Steinzor (1950) and Gump (1987) hypothesize; learners seated around tables distributed through a classroom can establish face-to-face contact more easily than those seated in rows-and-columns. The U-shaped arrangement supports social interaction among pupils and makes an enhanced sense of community. It is because; instead of merely facing the teacher, learners' confront one another (Hurt et al., 1978). Learners around tables are not always oriented toward a teacher and toward the eye-contact control that the teacher employs. Steinzor's work also suggested that pupils will ask more questions in assigned semicircular seating arrangements than in assigned row and column seating arrangements even in ordinary-sized classes. In U-shaped organization, the class involvement among pupils sitting straight across from the lecturer was the greatest (Sommer, 1969).

According to Atherton (2005), row arrangements within the classroom setting support a top-down (teacher-learner) approach to learning. The learners in this setting are meant to be seen and not heard or, stated differently, learners are passive learners. Atherton went on to point out that active learners within the classroom setting are better created through circle or cluster seating arrangements. Seating organizations assist interactions by position and contiguity. Heindselman et al. (2007) discovered from their research that there exist influences of seating organization changes on grades within an examination condition and on perception of capability. This was discovered parallel with Rennells and Chaudhari's (1988) findings that pupils in the action-zone of the class, especially on tests, regularly performed superior. As a conclusion, classroom arrangement affects pupil behaviour, and influencing their attainment as well (Pace and Price, 2005). Furthermore, as they grow older, behavioural patterns of children tend to

modify (Slavin, 2003); therefore, pupil behavioural reactions may also change with age based on seating organizations.

In a more recent study done by Patton et al. (2001), there began to show an increase in the small group clustered classroom, and the moving away from the traditional row seating arrangement. The researchers mapped and classified seating arrangements that were in actual use across 294 regular classrooms in 21 public elementary schools. They also asked 138 elementary regular classroom teachers to describe, in a survey, the rationale for the seating designs they typically employed. Their findings were in contrast to similar research done a decade before. Their results showed that small group cluster designs were used pervasively. Their study reported that 76% of observed classrooms and 94% of surveyed respondents have shifted towards the cluster arrangement. This was due to the belief of many contemporary teachers that this type of seating arrangement contributed directly to the learners' educational growth through the effects of socially facilitated learning (Patton et al., 2001).

One important aspect of classroom management is the physical design of the classroom. A classroom is an adaptable and often a flexible setting for which teachers make an arrangement for the tables, chairs, and other materials in order to stimulate active involvement in the lessons. Also, teachers decide which location is the best to stimulate an individual learner's academic and social development, while encouraging teacher-learner interaction, reducing distractions, aggression, and "downtime" (Trussell, 2008). Thus, teachers are responsible for making decisions regarding the grouping of learners and the resulting nested context within classrooms (Baines et al., 2003). They determine whom learners sit close to, whom they are exposed to, and with whom they interact during the school day. Unfortunately, this aspect of classroom management is

hardly addressed in teacher trainings, even though the physical design of the classroom has shown to be important for both the academic and social development of learners.

With regard to learners' academic functioning, a review by Wannarka and Ruhl (2008) showed that seating arrangements can increase on-task behaviour and decrease off-task behaviour. A seating arrangement in rows compared to groups can instigate such positive academic behaviours (e.g., hand-raising for assistance and complying with requests). Rows can especially support learners' on-task behaviour during independent work. In contrary, it has been shown that seating arrangements in small groups can facilitate interaction between learners due to proximity and close positions between peers. This is for example useful during brainstorming and group assignments. Wannarka and Ruhl (2008) have thus shown that seating arrangements can have consequences for learners' academic engagement and development. However, the nature of the task and consequently the type of desired behaviour dictates the most effective type of seating arrangement.

Classroom seating arrangements are not only important for learners' academic development, but also for their social functioning in the classroom (Farmer et al, 2011; Gest and Rodkin, 2011). Early childhood teachers can have two roles. On the one hand, they can have an authoritative role, meaning that teachers directly influence social processes through active attempt to manage the social network. On the other hand, they can have a facilitative or indirect role, in which they scaffold learners' social opportunities to construct their own roles, affiliative groups, and peer cultures. This can be achieved through general teaching practices such as seating arrangements (Gest and Rodkin, 2011) and the physical space of the classroom (Denton, 1992). Teachers determine where learners sit during the day and thus which learners mostly interact with and influence each other. Interpersonal contact between learners due to a low physical

distance can positively influence their social perceptions on each other. This is in line with the intergroup contact theory and the contact hypothesis, which state that contact can effectively reduce negative peer perceptions and can increase liking among peers (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998). Peer relationships are powerful sources of individual behaviours, so learners' positive and negative behaviours in the classroom can be reinforced by peers (Gest and Rodkin, 2011).

Recently, Berg et al. (2012) rearranged classroom seatings and manipulated the interpersonal distance between learners to improve negative social relationships between classmates. They found that rearrangements of seatings can influence social processes in the classroom. Other researchers also provided empirical support for the idea that seating arrangements influence learners' relationships and development (Blatchford et al., 2005; Kahn and McGaughey, 1977; Kutnick and Kington, 2005; Wannarka and Ruhl, 2008), and that peers influence individual learners at the classroom level and in small groups, when learners are placed together to solve a problem (Barth et al., 2004; Burke and Sass, 2013; Webb, 1989).

Concluding, classroom management is an important task for teachers and part of this task is their responsibility for the physical design of the classroom. In order to assess whether teachers make effective seating arrangements for learners' social, behaviour management and academic development (Berg et al., 2012; Wannarka and Ruhl, 2008) more information is needed on their practices and reasons behind specific choices.

2.5 Organization of Physical Classroom Space

Classroom spaces may not be meeting the needs of small children. The physical arrangement of the furniture, supplies, and resources in a classroom is a critical factor in promoting positive behaviour. In a well-designed classroom, the teacher can see all the learners and they can all see the teacher. The learners can also see presentations and

displays such as agendas, behavioural expectations, strategy posters, and information on the board. Everyone can move about freely. High-traffic areas run smoothly without congestion (Tanner, 2000). Planning classrooms for use by children tends to be ignored even while new curricula, testing, and accountability are being put in place (Jarman, 2008; NRC, 2000; Sommer, 1977), but that is changing. Researchers are beginning to focus on classroom environment as an important component of the education system. As Achilles (1999) stated, “One place to start observing classrooms is to consider space, space use, and the environment or context of the teaching-learning process” (p. 38). A greater amount of attention must to be paid to the arrangement of a classroom and how it evolves. (Lowe, 1990; Sargent, 1991; Weinstein, 1992). Lacking adequate instruction in teacher preparation programs, teachers copy the structural mistakes they see in other classrooms (Tanner, 2000). Open space changes classroom dynamics. Teachers who have reduced the amount of material and furniture in their classroom to open floor space have recognized the benefits. Adding just 80 square feet of open space provides benefits for learners: extra books permit learners to read for fun; learners find materials on their own; organizational improvement by the teacher is copied by learners; learners find a space to read by themselves or with a partner; and distractions lessen when distance between learners increases (Duncanson et al., 2009).

Research reported in 2012 by Achilles offered the position that, elementary classrooms typically are used as a branch of the school library. Therefore, it makes sense to design classrooms after considering the space recommendations for libraries. Using that criteria, a standard 850 square foot classroom would need to be 300 square feet larger to address the education needs of young children (Connecticut State Library, 2002; Duncanson et al., 2012). While bigger classrooms are needed, teachers are faced with a growing storage problem. Boxes of materials and bookcases full of instructions

connected to new programs are being stored in classrooms. This situation makes it more difficult for teachers to maintain space they know is important to learners.

McInerney (2012) commented, “But the classrooms are already there. Teachers can’t make them bigger. What can they do?” (Personal communication, October 10). That query became a focus for this investigation.

Classrooms start out as empty spaces but soon change. Each room is the total of the fixed architecture and the moveable furniture. Fixed items can include: windows, doors, electrical outlets, shelves and cabinets attached to the walls, computer outlets, overhead projection screens, and projectors mounted on the ceiling. Fixed architecture influences classroom arrangement. Specifically, the position of the classroom door, placement of an emergency exit window, permanent storage cabinets, a sink, computer outlets, wall-mounted smart board, and a ceiling mounted projector reduce the flexibility of furniture arrangements. Moveable furniture can include: teacher’s desk, learner desks, reading table, display or work table, map storage, book cases, soft furniture, easels, storage bins, and plant stands (Duncanson & Achilles, 2006). While moveable furniture can be arranged in a variety of patterns to accommodate different learning activities, furniture arrangement is always influenced by the position of fixed aspects of the room. Arranging desks in clusters rather than rows naturally creates wide pathways that invite learners to explore. Because every classroom is different, planning space cannot follow a cookie cutter design. Classrooms have different sizes, shapes, and include fixed structures in different locations. As part of their job, teachers become the architects of interior space to serve the needs of children.

When given the opportunity learners use classroom space to their best advantage. Space is important to teachers who employ a daily five teaching format enabling learners to use their discretion in selecting a suitable work environment (Boushey & Moser, 2006).

A variation of the daily five format uses 60 to 80 minutes blocks of time with three to five stations each with a different purpose. Learners may be asked to work on (for example): a remedial assignment, extended projects, writing skills, silent reading, or group reading with the teacher. Learners rotate through each station in 12 to 20 minute blocks of time. Learners select their own space to work based on three criteria: (1) need for a solid work surface: a desk, the floor, or a clipboard;

(2) physical comfort to match their personal need; and (3) autonomy – the need for privacy. Learners select areas in the classroom in a manner that is highly predictable: corners of the room are a prime work location; tables are used for projects; desks, clipboards and the floor may be used for writing assignments; children reading will go as far away as possible from the small group reading with the teacher; small groups will move to the largest space available; and children working alone will find a space that is equidistant from other groups. Teachers can know ahead of time where learners will select to work based on the activity and a personal knowledge of the learner. That information can be used to effectively plan the activities offered to learners so all available space is used. Moveable furniture may be rearranged to create needed spaces. In general, more than one-half the learners will select a work space on the floor (Duncanson & Achilles, 2010). Teachers can set a high priority on having an appropriate amount of space to rearrange learner furniture to match spaces needed for learner activities (Lang, 2002). Flexible environments are normally good ones for learners: flexibility allows for different kinds of learning activities (Casson, 2013).

According to Olds (2001), children have environmental needs for movement, comfort, competence, and control. An environment that encourages movement allows for children to locate themselves freely in space, create their own boundaries, access diverse territories, and explore their abilities. According to Harms et al. (1998), quality

early years' physical environment includes an indoor space, furniture for routine care, play and learning, and rooms arranged for play, space for gross motor play and gross motor equipment. If children are too restricted within the environment, they become frustrated and their attempts to learn are diverted inappropriate expression which in turn may lead to suspecting behavioural problem within the child such as hyperactivity, poor motivation and attention deficits.

Vygotsky as cited in Frimpong (2019) has stated that an interesting physical environment and classroom setting gives freedom to children to play and learn on their own and thereby progress in their learning. Roblyer (2006) advocated that early years classrooms should be divided into different learning centres (i.e. independent stations located in the classroom at which children can engage in hands-on activities, to improve on their cooperative learning, social interaction, real-life problem solving and autonomous learning. These are intended to provide opportunities for children to have meaningful learning and generate their own knowledge for holistic development (Muchtar et al., 2016).

An environment that supports comfort allows children to explore materials or events around them. Comfort levels should be reached within an environment not only through times of sleep or relaxation but also while children are moving and playing. Dramatic fluctuations in stimulation level can be frightening and disorienting. However, moderate variations in patterns of movement help maintain optimal levels of responsiveness and make us feel comfortable (Frimpong, 2019).

Comfortable settings provide neither too much contrast, nor too much sameness. There are many ways in which a center can provide children with an environment that is balanced and harmonious. Among the most important are variations in architectural elements such as scale, floor height, ceiling height, lighting, and the presence of soft

elements such as carpets, couches and pillows. Also, an environment can include a variety of places for children to engage in different activities: warm and cozy; hard and sterile; dark or light; noisy or quiet. Such variety prevents boredom, and provides children with levels of stimulation that suit their mood (Olds, 2001). In order for an environment to foster competence, children need to feel supported to fulfill their own needs, accomplish tasks easily, manage their own tools and materials, and control their own movements from place to place.

It is very necessary for children to be able to control their immediate personal environment by being able to have some privacy, to make predictions, and to orient their bodies in space. Children's opportunity for privacy is often neglected for the favor of providing adults with full view and ready access to them especially in child care settings (Olds, 2001).

Unfortunately, due to this neglect, children often suffer when they can't find a place for their retreat and individuality. Certain design strategies can maintain equilibrium between a child's privacy and the caregiver's visual and physical access. Window seats, platforms, cubby-holes, fiberboard barrels with cutouts, and small enclosures provide ideal spots for a child to get away from it all (Olds, 2001).

A well-designed child care center is legible to a child. In unpredictable settings, children enter a state of unease and loss of control. Predictability and legibility of a space can be enhanced by using interior windows or walls of glass, by keeping boundaries low and partially transparent, by well-modulated lighting and sound, and by bold graphics.

For children to experience a feeling of safety and control, they need to sit in a room's most protected places with their backs facing a wall or a solid element and their faces oriented towards the events happening around them (Olds, 2001).

French (2007) emphasized that the indoor learning environment should be spacious, well ventilated, attractive and it should encourage children to explore in order to improve their creativity. Montessori (1949) opined that the ECE environment classroom should provide learners with opportunity to work individually and in small groups. A safe, spacious, clean, warm, bright and welcoming classroom environment helps children to engage in co-operative, symbolic and dramatic play as well as to move, dance and increase their control over their bodies (Hohmann & Weikart, 1995). Thus, Gloeckler & Cassell (2012) pointed out that the arrangement of the classroom does not only ensure the proper learning of the children but also their health and safety.

The physical environment speaks to children in early childhood programs. It influences what they do, how they behave, and how successfully they achieve their goals. Increase in density within the classroom is linked to increased aggression, decreased social interaction, and noninvolvement with tasks. The arrangements and provisions in the physical environment create the context for social-emotional climate and quality of interactions among children in the classroom. The physical environment should create an inviting, inclusive community that generates its own energy and involvement (Kostelnik et al., 2011).

Physical development of children is a critical aspect of cognitive, social and emotional development. Children explore space and materials using their bodies. It is very important for both designers and educators to realize that learning is a physical activity. If we limit their activity, we limit their learning. Early childhood classrooms should provide enough places for children's active bodies to jump, run, slide and crawl within the indoor environment (Olds, 2001). Using transparent dividers to separate spaces within the classroom can offer quiet, focused time for small group or individual

activities. Since relationships are central to learning and development, then specific places where they are fostered should be part of an early childhood environment.

Furniture pieces like couches, love seats, rockers, and other pieces can help create a unifying comforting effect. The spatial complexity added to the space through the use of lofts, risers, and ramps can provide children with infinite scenarios of play and social interaction and creates more options for groupings and activities. Creating play spaces at different levels, heights and angles in the classroom creates an out-of-the-box experience for children. Looking around the room from different heights helps children see things from different points of view and experience their bodies in different dimensions (Curtis & Carter, 2003).

The organization of the physical space is a predictor of the program's quality and children's interactions in early childhood setting because the physical environment affects what children can do, determines the ease with which they can carry out their plans, and affects the ways in which they use materials (Kostelnik et al., 2011). Different kinds of spaces within the classroom have various effects on children's development. These spaces require separation by clear, physical boundaries which can be created using furniture arrangements, pathways, low dividers or even storage units. However, imaginary boundaries, such as pretend lines, are not as effective. Children naturally expect to interact with neighboring individuals. Also, pathways between areas within the classroom allow children to move easily and readily without interrupting other activities or children. These pathways should be planned to accommodate children's movement smoothly and efficiently (Kostelnik et al, 2011).

2.5.1 Guidelines for creating classroom physical space

Reorganizing a classroom is most easily achieved by first removing everything from the room. Having teachers change classrooms from time to time is a convenient way for

administrators to facilitate this important opportunity. Starting with an empty room makes planning a functional layout easier (Zike, 2005).

1. Identify classroom material that will be used in that school year.

Classrooms should contain only materials that are needed for instructional purposes that year: they should not be storage rooms for unused materials. Shelves of old texts, materials for another grade level, and stuff not used in the previous year should be discarded. Bookcases and shelves that held unneeded materials can be placed in storage. One teacher who emptied her room found boxes holding seven broken staplers, five pencil sharpeners, tests from 15 years ago, old curriculum guides in their original shrink-wrap, and dry ditto masters. Those dusty boxes were not helping the health of young learners. Computer access has changed teaching. The need to hang onto teaching tools has been reduced by the internet: new materials are readily available. It can be easier to find new ideas than to dig old ones out of storage. The internet can replace a file cabinet. Teachers in some classrooms have been able to discard 90% of their holdings when they examined everything before it was placed back in a classroom (Duncanson et al., 2009).

2. Map out the areas needed for instruction and activities.

Harlan (2000) pointed out that space needs to serve different size groups and meet different needs: direct instruction, class meeting area, small meeting areas, and space for individuals. The curriculum likely requires specialist areas: study bays, work centers, large group work area, displays and interest/discovery/learning centers (BCSE, 2007; Higgins, et. al., 2005; Locker, 2007; Nielson, 2004). Having space leads teachers to increase the number of teaching methods they use. Hands-on experiments, collaboration, learner performances, and increased learner-teacher communication begin to happen when space is available. After careful thought, spaces that match the teacher's style for teaching and learning need

to be preserved. Teachers can delineate these areas for preservation by marking the floor with masking tape or chalk.

3. Plan classroom pathways

Create a pattern that reminds people of a roadmap showings roadways in a classroom and how there must be a science behind patterns of highways. The civil engineer suggested that a parking lot was a better model for a classroom: after all teachers park learners at a desk (Duncanson, 2003). If classrooms are treated like parking lots, then a main avenue should start at the classroom door and run across the room parallel to one wall. Secondary paths should lead to special areas of the room (Federal and Signal, 1974). Pathways, wide enough to allow two learners to pass without touching each other, can be outlined on the floor (Colbert, 1997). A reasonable goal is for one-half of the classroom to be open space: space already outlined on the floor. Tanner (2000) recommended that each learner has 49 square feet of empty space. Thus a classroom of 850 square feet should hold 17 learners.

4. Arrange the furniture

Furniture that will be used on a daily basis can now be moved into the room in space not reserved for teaching or pathways. Learner seating will probably occupy one-fourth of the classroom space. A maximum of 15 additional pieces of moveable furniture can occupy the remaining one-fourth of the classroom. The open space and furniture placement should address a variety of teaching situations: group instruction to teach skills, laboratory learning for exploration and discovery, project work, practice space, and individual and group work and study. When teachers choose only furniture that contributes to educational success, more space is available for learner use (Duncanson & Achilles, 2005, p. 31). Adding additional pieces of furniture takes space away from learners. When the number of boxes, bins, and furniture totals 30 or more, rooms become overcrowded and safety is compromised (Clayton, 2001).

A target of 15 pieces of furniture reserves space for the learners while providing easy access to materials learners use. If materials are not readily available learners spend a lot of time waiting in line, waiting for help, waiting for materials so they can get to work (Shalaway, 2013). Care should be taken to not employ unused learner desks as a place to pile paper – a clear example of Flat Surface Syndrome (FSS). FSS is the habit of laying ‘stuff’ on any flat surface until the pile earns the title of clutter (Funny the World, 2009). Extra learner desks should be sent to storage. Teachers who generally only use their desk before and after regular school hours, or as a place to stack papers, should consider getting rid of their desk and using a large table as their work area. When materials teachers use are the same ones learners use, storing them in the center of a worktable serves everyone’s needs (Duncanson & Volpe, 2009). The presence of a teacher’s desk also creates a ‘teacher’s space’ that learners do not enter. Removing the desk can open 80 square feet of space that benefits the learners. If the teacher needs a desk, it should be positioned against a wall to minimize the teacher space. A teacher who got rid of his desk commented, “I don’t have a place to lay things down. I have to deal with everything immediately: toss it or put it away. There is no more clutter. It is wonderful” (Tobin, personal communication, November 6, 2008). As a final task, teachers should sit in different parts of the room to see the arrangement as learners will see it (Chan, et al, 2009; Design Council, 2005; Loughlin & Suina, 1982; Lushington, 2008), otherwise learners get stuck with the teacher’s environment.

2.6 Summary of the Literature Review

This chapter discussed in detail; literature related to classroom management practices that teachers employ in the early childhood classrooms. The key issues highlighted in this chapter included; Behavioural management with the sub-headings, (behaviour management strategies for Early Childhood classrooms and strategies for encouraging appropriate behaviour), Setting classroom rules and regulations (with the sub-headings,

considerations for setting classroom rules and regulations, guidelines setting and applying classroom rules and regulations and strategies for teaching classroom rules and regulations), Seating arrangement and Organizing classroom space. In the context of literature review, the view points and perspectives of several scholars have been used. The contributions of these scholars have provided empirical evidence to the literature available as far as classroom management practices are concerned. Few of these literatures were in the Ghanaian context while majority of these literature were not Ghanaian based. The two sources of these literatures both Ghanaian and international did not treat these four strands; Behaviour management, Setting classroom rules and regulations, Seating arrangement and Organizing classroom space at a goal and also in different Ghanaian setting which this study “Investigating teacher classroom management practices” sought to address, hence the need to conduct more studies that can describe the situation in the educational setting of public Early Childhood Education centers (KG 1 to Basic 3) in Asutifi North District of Ghana. This chapter showed that there will be positive teaching and learning outcomes when learners’ inappropriate behaviours are managed by teachers adopting appropriate classroom management practices in Early Childhood Education centers in Asutifi North District public schools.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This study aims at investigating teacher classroom management practices in early childhood education centers in Asutifi North District. The chapter deals with the research paradigm, research approach, research design, research site, the population, sampling procedure, data collection instruments, data collection procedures, data processing and analysis, trustworthiness and ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Paradigm

Bryman (2004) explained that paradigm is a conceptual framework and patterns which determines what and how a particular thing should be done and in the case of academic work, what should be studied and how researches are to be conducted and the way results should be interpreted. The researcher's ontological position is interpretivist or constructivists which mean that the social world exists independently of our subjective understanding, but that it is only comprehensible through respondents' interpretations and which may be further interpreted by the researcher. This aligns closely with what Hammersley (1992) describes as subtle realism.

Constructivists or the interpretivists trust that any knowledge is constructed and consequently can be said to be subjective. They further accept that reality as we know it is generally constructed (ontology). In constructivists' tradition, truth is not one. There are numerous truths. They believe that truth is relative and tailored to suit the individual or society. There is no objective truth, but truth discussed through dialogue (Mertens, 2005). Reality cannot be disconnected from our knowledge of it. Who we are and how we comprehend the world is a central part of how we understand ourselves, others and the world. What is important is that there is a discussion between researchers

and participants who construct truth together (Mertens 2005, p.4).

Constructivists do not generally begin with a theory (as with positivists) rather they generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meanings throughout the research process. The constructivist researcher is most likely to rely on qualitative data collection methods and analysis constructivists reason that human beings cannot separate themselves from what they know (subjectivist). The researcher cannot detach himself or herself from the object of research (epistemology). The researcher therefore acknowledges the critical importance of research participants' own interpretations of relevant research questions, which then suggest the existence of different types of understandings. Yet, the researcher believes that diverse viewpoints reflect the multifaceted nature of external reality and add richness to the ways in which reality is experienced. The researcher sees himself more as an interpretivist than as a positivist. This is because in the study, the researcher seeks to understand and interpret the meanings informing human behaviour. Interpretive paradigm argues that social reality is treated jointly through meaningful interaction between the researcher and the researched-on agreement (Garbich, 2007; Rugg & Petre, 2007) and the latter's socio-cultural context.

Interpretive research acknowledges the feelings, experiences and viewpoints of the researched as data. Therefore, if you are working within the interpretive paradigm you have to collect data verbally. The data that you collect in your qualitative study is usually richer, in a language sense, than positivist data (Bessey, 1999). As such, interpretive researchers assume that access to reality (given or socially constructed) is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments (Myers, 2008: 38). For an interpretivist, it is, therefore, important to understand motives, meanings, reasons and other subjective experiences, which are

time and context bound. Being an interpretivist therefore affords the researcher the opportunity to avoid the rigid structural frameworks, as seen in positivist research, and adopt more personal and flexible research frameworks. These flexible frameworks are amenable to capturing meanings in human interaction and making sense of what is perceived as reality (Carson et al., 2001).

More significantly, the researcher chose interpretive paradigm for the study based on the following reasons: Firstly, it allowed the researcher to access the experiences and viewpoints of the research participants. Secondly, the paradigm recognized the role of the researcher and the research participants in knowledge construction, acknowledging interpretations as socially constructed realities. The research participants of the study both the researcher and the participants acquired active roles in the knowledge construction. Lastly, the interpretive paradigm is useful in an attempt to understand the study “investigating teacher classroom management practices” in all its complexity in the socio-cultural context of the teachers in the public early childhood education centers in Asutifi North District.

3. 2 Research Approach

The qualitative research approach was suitable for the study, teacher classroom management practices in early childhood centers in Asutifi North District because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the experiences and perspectives of teachers in classroom management practices. This approach emphasized the importance of understanding the social and cultural contexts in teachers’ classroom management practices were developed, as well as the subjective experiences of teachers who were involved in the process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

The qualitative research approach involves collecting rich and descriptive data through a variety of methods, including observations, interviews, and focus groups. This

approach enabled the researcher to explore the life experiences of teachers in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of their classroom management practices.

Furthermore, the qualitative research approach allowed for the identification of emergent themes and patterns within the data, providing insights into the complex and many aspects nature of teacher's classroom management practices. This approach also enabled the researcher to explore the relationships between teachers' knowledge in behaviour management, as well as how they apply their knowledge in the classroom setting

In effect, the use of a qualitative research approach provided a rich and nuanced understanding of the state of seating arrangements that are commonly coupled with how teachers organize the physical classroom space that are being used by early childhood teachers within the Asutifi North District.

3.3 Research Design

The study adopted an exploratory case study design. An exploratory case study is a research approach primarily aimed at investigating a phenomenon or issue that has not been clearly defined or understood. This type of case study is particularly useful when researchers need to explore new areas where little prior knowledge or research exists. It helps to develop hypotheses, gather preliminary data, and identify potential variables or relationships for further, more detailed studies (Yin, 2014). This design was the appropriate design used to investigate teachers' classroom management practices in early childhood centres in the Asutifi North District in the Ahafo Region of Ghana. Case study research design provided a detailed and in-depth analysis of single or multiple cases. It is useful in understanding complex phenomena within their real-life context and in exploring different perspectives of stakeholders involved in the case (Yin, 2018).

The cases could be individual learners, specific classrooms, or entire early childhood centers. The researcher collected rich and detailed data through a variety of methods such as interviews, observations, document analysis, and focus groups.

Moreover, a case study design would allow the researcher to explore the interactions and relationships between different classroom management practices that are being used by early childhood teachers in the Asutifi North District. This design enabled the researcher to identify the unique characteristics and context of the cases, and how those characteristics and contexts interact with various classroom management practices of teachers. Case studies allow researchers to gain a comprehensive and deep understanding of a particular case, subject, or phenomenon. They provide a detailed view of the complexities and nuances that might be missed in broader research methods (Neuman, 2014).

Again, by using a case study design, the researcher was able to generate detailed findings that can be applied to the specific context of early childhood centers in the Asutifi North District in the Ahafo Region. These findings could provide insights and recommendations to stakeholders such as policymakers, educators, and caregivers to support classroom management practices used by early childhood teachers in their classrooms.

Clearly, the case study design provided an opportunity to investigate the complex nature of the challenges teachers face in early childhood classrooms in their quest to manage learners in their classrooms.

3.4 Study Area

The study was carried out in Asutifi North District, which is located in the eastern part of the Ahafo Region of Ghana. In 1989 the Asutifi District was established and it was split into two districts namely, Asutifi North and South

in 2012. Thus, the Asutifi North District with Kenyasi as the capital was carved out of the former Asutifi District by Legislative Instrument 2093 of 2012 (Population and Housing Census-District Analytical Report, 2010). The Asutifi North District is one of the seven (7) districts in the Ahafo Region of Ghana. The Administrative capital of the District is Kenyasi. The District shares boundaries with Sunyani Municipal on the North, Tano North and Tano South Municipals on the North East, Asutifi South District in the West, Ahafo Ano North District in the South East to, Asunafo North Municipal to South West and Dormaa East to North-East. The communities in the district are made up of urban, peri-urban and rural areas. The District has a total land surface area of 936 kilometers square with a total of over 139 settlements with major towns as Kenyasi No. 1, Kenyasi No. 2, Ntotroso, Wamahinso, Gyedu and Gambia No. 2.

The 2021 National Population and Housing Census put the District's population at 73,556 with a growth rate of about 5.2%. The growth of the population is mainly due to the influence of migration inflows. On the side of literacy and education, of the population 11 years and above, 76.3 percent are literate and 23.7 percent are illiterate. The proportion of literate males is lesser (41.8 %) than that of females (58.2%). Seven out of ten people (75.0%) indicated they could speak and write both English and Ghanaian languages. Of the population aged 3 years and above currently attending school in the district account for 51.1 percent with those who attended in the past being 49.9 percent.

The District economy is mostly agrarian with most of them being peasant farmers who largely depend on rudimentary methods of farming. Cocoa, Coffee, Oil palm, and Cashew are the major cash crops in the District with plantain, cassava cocoyam and

maize being the food crops. There are a number of financial institutions in the District which basically help the citizenry to mobilize funds through savings and investment packages and also deal with their financial needs in times of difficulty by making loan facilities accessible. With the presence of these financial institutions, notably; EcoBank, Agricultural Development Bank (ADB), Tano Rural Bank, Asutifi Rural Bank, and Ahafo Community Bank, traders and tourists alike do not have to carry large sums of money when travelling to the District. The operations of Newmont Gold Ghana in the district do not only provide employment but also offer persons who would like to know about gold exploration, the opportunity to visit the District.

With respect to health care facilities, the Asutifi North District has a Hospital and a private maternity home located at Kenyasi No 2 and four private hospitals. There are also three Community-based Health Planning and Services (CHPS) compounds in Biaso, Goamu, Yawusukrom and Koforidua. There are one hundred basic schools in the district comprising of 31 private basic schools and 69 public basic schools. Early Childhood Education (ECE) Centers in the public basic schools are 55 while the private schools are 31. The teacher enrollment in the public schools is 736 of which 275 teachers teach at the early childhood education centers or grades (thus, from KG 1 to Basic 3). The District has one College of Nursing, Police Training School and three second cycle institutions namely OLA Girls' Senior High School, Gyamfi Kumanini Senior High Technical School and Gyedu situated at Kenyasi and Wamahinso respectively.

The researcher chose the Asutifi North District because of accessibility and familiarity, having served in the district as a teacher for ten years now. In addition to familiarity, the researcher was trained as a facilitator to train the kindergarten teachers on the kindergarten standards-based curriculum in 2017 and the

knowledge acquired helped the researcher to properly handle the challenges encountered during the research and utilized elements that contributed to achieving the objective of the study. To undertake a qualitative study, which is time bound, one has to be abreast with the socio-cultural, economic and political environment of the study area. Being a teacher in the district, the researcher has a fair understanding of this environment. More significantly, there are numerous public early childhood education centers available in the district but no research has been undertaken on this study “investigating teacher classroom management practices in early childhood centers in Asutifi North District”.

3.5 Population

The term "population" is used in the field of research to refer to a group of individuals or people who share the same traits and in whom the researcher is interested (Kusi, 2012). According to the Asutifi North Education Directorate Educational Management Information System (EMIS), 2022), there are 275 teachers who teach in the public Early Childhood Education centers that is, from kindergarten 1 to Basic 3 grades in the 55 primary and basic schools in the district. So, in this study, the total population was 275.

3.6 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study being qualitative, it was necessary to select a sample that would enable the phenomenon under study to be explored for better understanding. Creswell (2012) argued that selecting a large number of interviewees in a qualitative case study could result in a superficial perspective and the overall ability of a researcher to provide an in-depth picture diminishes with the addition of each new individual or site. Creswell (2013) contended that the sample size for phenomenological research should range anywhere from three to ten individuals.

The researcher adopted the maximal variation purposive sampling to select eight

(8) early childhood teachers for the study. The eight (8) teachers were selected based on their years of teaching experience. Maximal variation purposive sampling is a qualitative research sampling technique aimed at capturing the broadest possible range of variation within a population (Patton, 2002). It involves deliberately selecting participants or cases that represent diverse perspectives, experiences, or characteristics related to the research topic.

Moreover, maximal variation sampling enhances the validity of the findings by reducing the risk of bias associated with a narrow or homogeneous sample, thus increasing the credibility and trustworthiness of the research outcomes (Maxwell, 2013).

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

Cohen and Manion (1991) defined instruments as the different techniques a researcher can use to fish out information for the study. The researcher used a semi-structured interview (face-to-face) guide and an observation (non-participant) guide. These instruments were developed using the purpose, the objectives, the research questions and the conceptual framework of the study to investigate teacher classroom management practices in early childhood education centers in Asutifi North District. The two instruments used for data collection by the researcher have been explained below:

3.7.1 Interview (Semi-structured) Guide

To gather data in the subjects' own words and uncover the participants' perspectives on a phenomenon, qualitative researchers depend to a large extent on in-depth interviewing (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Accordingly, the data were collected through semi-structured face-to-face interview guide. According to Anthony-Krueger and Sokpe (2006), interview is

a structured interaction that is used in an interrogative setting that produces vital data for study. The primary advantage of interviewing is that it focuses on the deep meanings assuming that they guide the actions (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Newman (2018) reported that interviews are carefully formulated to ferret for data from a relatively small group of people and which reveals facts attributes, behaviour, preferences, feelings attitudes, opinions and knowledge. Newman explained that interviews are most effective for qualitative research. They said the researcher for better comprehension, and discover research participants' knowledge, behaviour, and skills about a phenomenon. Interview questions are usually open-ended questions so that detailed information will be collected.

The researcher crafted semi-structured interview questions in relation to the purpose, the objectives, research questions, the theories underpinning the research and studies in the literature. The item pool was created, expert views were taken. The interview questions were semi- structured where topics to be covered were outlined and asked in a sequence based on the responses from respondents and carried out in a relaxed manner. The researcher used semi-structured interview procedure to be able to ask further, probe questions to analyse the issue in-depth and to understand the motives behind participants' answers. The researcher conducted the interview on one-on-one basis and wrote field notes during the interviews. All participants had their interviews recorded electronically through an application on my cell phone. After their responses were transcribed, afterwards the audio files were replayed to the respondents. The researcher gave participants pseudonyms such as respondent Teacher A "TA", Teacher B "TB", Teacher C "TC", Teacher D "TD" etc., so that their real

identities would be concealed.

The researcher used this instrument because of the following reasons:

It provides out in-depth information, useful for investigation as well as collaboration, good for measuring attitudes and most other content of interest.

Relatively high response rates are often attainable and open-ended interviews provide useful information needed by the researcher.

Its limitation is that in-person interviews usually are expensive and time consuming. However, it was useful because it helped researcher to understand issues from the interviewees' point of view. Because the interview period was long, the researcher provided motivation through incentives such as gift vouchers and ice breakers to encourage participation.

The themes in this study were generated through a systematic and rigorous process of qualitative data analysis. The researcher employed thematic analysis, a widely used method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (themes) within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The following steps were taken to ensure that the themes accurately represented the data:

Familiarization with Data

The researcher began by thoroughly reading and re-reading the transcribed interviews and observation notes to become deeply familiar with the content. Initial thoughts and ideas were noted in the margins to guide subsequent analysis.

Initial Coding

Using an open coding technique, the researcher assigned labels to significant statements, phrases, and actions that appeared relevant to the research questions. These

codes reflected key aspects of teachers' classroom management practices in early childhood centres.

Searching for Themes

The codes were then grouped into categories based on similarities and relationships. Patterns that emerged from these groupings formed the basis of preliminary themes. At this stage, care was taken to ensure that the themes were grounded in the actual words and experiences of the participants.

Reviewing Themes

The initial themes were reviewed against the dataset to verify their consistency and relevance. Some themes were merged, refined, or discarded to ensure clarity and accuracy. This iterative process helped to strengthen the connection between the data and the themes.

Defining and Naming Themes

Each theme was clearly defined and given a descriptive name that reflected its central idea. The final themes captured the essential elements of teachers' classroom management strategies, challenges, and support systems in early childhood centres within the Asutifi North District.

Validation of Themes

To enhance trustworthiness, peer debriefing was conducted with fellow researchers, and participant feedback was sought where necessary. This helped confirm that the themes were representative of the participants' views and experiences.

3.7.2 Observational Guide (Checklist)

The researcher carried out classroom observations for the eight (8) selected participants on behaviour management, setting of classroom rules, seating arrangement, and organization of physical classroom space to obtain first-hand information on how classroom management practices were exhibited by the teachers in early childhood education centers and subsequently compared that to the statements made by the participants in the interviews. The researcher observed each participant two times at different days to produce credible, detailed, and reliable data leading to a more robust and well-supported analysis. According to Sarantakos (1997), observation is the time-tested process of data collection techniques that is solely based on what is seen by the researcher as the main procedure of data collection. In observation, the researcher sees participants in their natural mood and elements about their own as a given environment. The researcher observed the participants on two different occasions to ascertain in-depth information about the on behaviour management, setting of rules and regulations, seating arrangement, and organization of physical classroom space. It is significant to collect observational data in addition to attitudinal data because what people say is not always what they do (Asamoah-Gyimah, 2015). Qualitative observation according to Asamoah-Gyimah is investigative and open-ended, and the researcher takes extensive field notes.

During the observation, particular attention was paid to behaviour management, setting of classroom rules, seating arrangement, and organization of physical classroom space. Each research question had its own set of indicators to be observed during the teaching and learning activity in the form of a checklist. The presence of the indicator was given a 'Yes' tick while the absence of the indicator

was given a 'No' tick.

The researcher's mission in the classes was strictly as an observer and had no participation in the classes (non-participant observer). The researcher observed sampled teachers in early childhood education centers closely whiles completing the observation guide.

The researcher used observation (non-participant) because it permitted him to directly see what the teachers did without having to trust what they said during the interview. It also provided first-hand familiarity as well as a relatively objective measurement of view (especially for standardized observations).

It has been critiqued on the ground that people may behave artificially when respondents know they are being observed (e.g., people being observed may behave in typical ways). Also, the researcher could not observe large or detached populations. However, with these limitations, observation can be one of the effective instruments to collect qualitative data when few participants are involved which the researcher did (Asamoah-Gyimah, 2015).

3.8 Trustworthiness

The criteria for analyzing the rigour in both qualitative and quantitative studies have, traditionally, been internal and external validity, reliability (Punch, as cited in Kusi, 2012) and objectivity. To ensure rigor in qualitative research, trustworthiness can be assessed through the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, all of which can be satisfied through several strategies (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

However, Bush (2002) contended that:

The concerns of validity and reliability within research are as relevant within qualitative as within quantitative methodologies

albeit they may have to be approached somewhat differently. The frequently believed belief that qualitative approaches pay attention to validity and not reliability is erroneous. (p. 60).

However, Merriam et al., (2002) contended that ‘reliability is particularly troublesome in the Social Sciences simply because human activity is never static, nor is what many experience necessarily more trustworthy than what one-person experiences’ (p.27). Guba, (1992) was able to employ ‘trustworthiness criteria’ to rate the quality of a study located in an interpretive paradigm.

3.8.1 Credibility

In order to address trustworthiness in this study, firstly, credibility was assured. The credibility of qualitative research corresponds to the validity of quantitative investigation. This is depending on the researcher’s ability and effort. The quality of the research is related to the trustworthiness and integrity of the research study. Validation is also contingent on the caliber of the job performed by the researcher during the investigation. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), fairness is an important factor, and is described as the deliberate attempts to prevent marginalization, and act affirmatively with respect to inclusion so that all participants’ voice is heard and their stories treated with fairness and balance.

In this study, credibility was assured through the following strategies: consulting experts after developing the interview schedules and making necessary revisions, pre-testing the interview and the observation schedules before the actual data collection, in-depth and thorough data collection with the use of open-ended interview questions, member checks through checking both the data and the interpretations with the selected participants, prolonged engagement with data through spending sufficient time for each interview and also having an iterative data coding process, persistent observation by a

thorough data collection, detailed transcriptions, and peer debriefing by having conceptual discussions with another researcher who has expertise in qualitative research.

More significantly, to check credibility of this study, the researcher used triangulation which is cross-checking information and results obtained from multiple sources. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) stated that triangulation in qualitative research means that the use of many sources to collect information or facts for a research work is better than a single source because the different sources result in an in-depth understanding of the theory. Bush (2002) identified various types of triangulations which include methodological triangulation, researcher triangulation, data triangulation, theoretical triangulation and environmental triangulation. Under this study, the researcher used methodological triangulation because different sources (semi-structured interview guide and observational guide) were used to collect data from the teachers.

Additionally, by way of ensuring credibility in the study, the researcher followed this procedure:

1. The interviews were conducted using language that could be understood by both the researcher and participants to avoid misunderstanding.
2. The researcher tried to ensure that no distortion took place while the participants were interviewed, by allowing for free flow of information.
3. The supervisor for this study's regular inspections helped the researcher to check for flaws and problems in the study.
4. Participation of the participants in the interviews were voluntary and their privacy and confidentiality were maintained at all time.

3.8.2 Transferability

The second element used to assure trustworthiness was transferability. In qualitative research, transferability is equal to generalizability of findings (Merriam et al., 2002).

In this study, transferability was addressed through purposive selection of the participants with the use of maximum variation sampling and also through thick description by describing the context, relevant characteristics of the participants, data collection, analysis, and results.

As the research is Case Study, which is an example of qualitative research, the findings are very difficult to generalize since it largely focuses on one incident (Mallick, 1999). For example, the instance investigated can be similar to other districts or regions in Ghana. The purpose of performing this study was not to generalize the findings, but to investigate teacher classroom management practices in early childhood education centers in Asutifi North District. But, if readers identify similarities between their circumstances and the context of the study, then they can translate the findings to their unique contexts.

3.8.3 Dependability

Dependability or consistency of qualitative research findings corresponds to reliability of findings in quantitative research (Merriam et al., 2002). They further asserted that, dependability of the conclusion was ensured by asking clear question; triangulating the data; reduction of bias and subjectivity during the data collection and explanation of the position as a researcher. From the above explanation by Merriam et al., the researcher was able to resolve to their components to help assess the dependability of the research findings. Audit trail was employed to check the consistency and objectivity of the results through the constant feedback provided by a qualitative researcher in the research process and at the end.

3.8.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivations, or perspectives. In essence, confirmability ensures that the results are reflective of the participants' experiences and viewpoints rather than the researcher's interpretations or predispositions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This was done when the researcher playback the audio recording to the participants to confirm that whatever information captured was their viewpoint regarding the questions that were asked during the interview.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

In order to get to the teachers in the public early childhood education centers in Asutifi North District, the researcher negotiated access with gatekeepers who were Faculty Head, Departmental Head, Supervisor, District Director, School Improvement Support Officers (SISOs), Heads of the Basic schools and teachers. The researcher collected introductory letter from the University of Education, Winneba Early Childhood Education Department which was signed by my supervisor as well as the Head of Department.

The letter of introduction from the Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Education, Winneba, enabled the researcher to proceed to introduce himself to the District Director of Education, Asutifi North. The Director wrote a covering letter which enabled the researcher seek assistance from public Basic headteachers and ECE centers teachers in order to collect data on investigating teacher classroom management practices in Early Childhood Education centers in Asutifi North District. The researcher gave out the consent agreement form which was signed by the headteachers and the teachers on my mission which enabled the researcher to have access to the teachers and the classrooms.

The researcher booked appointment with the teachers for the interview and the classroom observation.

The semi-structured interview guide was used. The researcher started each interview with an icebreaker or a discussion of any topical event to ensure relaxed atmosphere for the discussions. Open-ended questions were used so as to explore variety of perspectives of the participants (Bauer, 1996; Bryman, 2004). The interview was on one-on-one basis to explore each participant's view on the phenomenon. This interview enclosed, the knowledge teachers have in behaviour management in early childhood centers, the state of teachers' classroom seating arrangement in early childhood centres, how teachers set and apply rules and regulations in early childhood centres and how teachers organize the physical classroom space in early childhood centres. Each interview session lasted for about one hour. The researcher mostly used probing questions so that more information about a particular issue or event or person could be obtained. The researcher recorded the interview with a device on his mobile phone. Permission was sought from the participants before recording the interviews. The interview data was transcribed and was given back to the interviewees for cross-checking (member-check). Participants were given pseudonyms so that their identity would be safe. Any identifying information provided in the interview was deleted.

The observation was the next task executed by the researcher. During the observation of classroom management practices exhibited by the teachers in the early childhood education centers, the researcher went strictly by the observation guide. The researcher was a non-participant observer who sat at the back of the class and watched the classroom seating arrangement, organization of physical space, setting rules and regulations and behaviour management through interaction between the teacher and the learners during teaching and learning. Data was collected on the areas observed and

wrote field notes.

3.10 Data Processing and Analysis

Glesne (2016) defined data analysis as the effort of researchers to manage and make sense of their data to transform it from its acquired form into a form that communicates the promise of a study's findings.

The analytical framework chosen for a study depends on the theoretical and philosophical perspectives which inform it, the goal of the study, the questions addressed and the methodological approach (Walliman, 2019). This study is informed by the ontological assumption that knowledge is acquired, subjective in nature and the results of human cognition (Cohen et al., 2000; Sikes, 2004). It is further informed by the interpretive paradigm, which argues that knowledge is created through the interaction between the researcher and the researched. The instruments used for data collection will produce mainly qualitative data. This data from the interview was analysed thematically (Creswell, 2005; Grbich, 2007).

Content analysis was used to analyse the observational data. Content analysis involves the process of categorizing verbal or behavioural data to classify, summarize, and tabulate the data. By transforming qualitative data into a quantitative form, researchers can identify patterns, themes, or biases within the content (Krippendorff, 2004). This method is widely used across various disciplines, including communication, psychology, sociology, and marketing, to analyze the presence, meanings, and relationships of certain words, themes, or concepts within the data.

The data from the semi-structured interview and the observation schedules were presented in separately. This strategy is chosen for several reasons: firstly, the researcher does not possess adequate knowledge about qualitative computer soft-

wares; secondly, the volume of data collected was manageable, making it less difficult to identify relevant text passages; and thirdly, the researcher's desire was to interact and have a hands-on feel of the data (Creswell, 2005). The problem associated with analyzing data manually is that it is laborious (Creswell, 2005; Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Since both instruments generated mainly qualitative data, the presentation went through the same stages. The first stage was the preparatory stage, where the data collected with the observation guide was written on separate sheets to make reading through them easy. The responses of each of the respondents (eight teachers) were collated, written down and word processes each in the observation guide. This approach facilitated the management of the observation data and meaningful comparisons.

The presentation of the interview data for begun with the organization and transcription of the audio-tape recordings. The transcription involved listening to each tape repeatedly to facilitate to familiarization with the conversations and carefully writing them down in the words of each interviewee. The interview data was then categorized like the observation data for effective management and comparisons.

The next stage involved intensive and repeated reading of the data with the aim of immersing myself in it. The aim of this activity was to determine analytical categories or themes (Creswell, 2005; Schmidt, 2004) using my professional judgment (Denscombe, 2003); these are often referred to as 'analyst-constructed typologies' (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The development of the themes was guided by the research questions and the literature review.

The coding process began after determining the themes. The codes consisted of

short phrases expressed by the participants in their words (in vivo codes) (Creswell, 2005) and others self-generated based on text passages. The codes were assigned to each manuscript, but they were further reduced when they overlapped. Then related codes were aggregated under each of the dominant themes to form a framework.

In the next stage, the researcher provided a detailed description of each of the major themes. Brief quotations from the data used to add realism (Creswell, 2005) to the description.

In the data analysis and discussion stage, which contained in a separate chapter, the findings of the interviews and the observations were re-categorized to develop new themes. In the discussion, the researcher made reference to the interview and the observation findings for detailed explanation and validation. Also, the researcher compared and contrasted issues and ideas with the existing body of knowledge, especially those in the literature review chapter of this particular study.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues in research are generally related to the consequence of the research, the obtaining of informed consent, the protection of confidentiality of the participants, and the effect of both the participants and researcher's role in the research study (Patton, 1990). Any social research study raises ethical considerations. This is because the research involves collecting data from people, and about people. There are numerous issues of ethical consideration in social research which the researcher needs to discuss with the participants. Morrow (2008) summarized the main ones: access, informed consent, deception, privacy, and confidentiality of data. It is unethical to collect information without the acknowledgement of participants, their informed willingness, and expressed consent.

3.11.1 Access

After deciding on the setting of the study, the next important decision relates to how to obtain permission to access the place for the research. With this, the researcher first sought the consent of District Director, School Improvement Support Officers (SISOs) Head teachers and teachers of the public schools (Early Childhood Education Centers) in the Asutifi North District. The purpose of the study was stated to them, the procedure for the data collection and the type of research participants needed were also stated to them. In research, it is unethical to enter into a community to collect data without permission from the authorities.

3.11.2 Consent

After the researcher had sought permission from the school authorities, it was important for the researcher to gain informed consent of the participants of the study. Informed consent is an agreement of the relevant individual and organizations on the basis of appropriate information. It involves giving information about the study, how the study was carried out, the nature of their participation, the time requirement, the kind of data to be collected, and how it will be used and reported. This enabled the participants to decide to participate in the study or not. People make decision to participate in the study depending on the quality of information they receive from the researcher. Anonymity and confidentiality of all participants were ensured. Participants did participate voluntarily, and participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time, if they wished to do so.

3.11.3 Anonymity

The researcher promised the anonymity of the research participants by ensuring that the names and addresses of the participants were not indicated in the study. These were replaced with codes. It was ensured that recorded information, instruments for the data

collection, and dissemination of research findings did not contain the names of the research participants.

3.11.4 Confidentiality

The research information gathered from the participants were not passed on to the department. All audio-recorded information were protectively stored in a personal recorder and later transferred to a personal password-protected laptop. The researcher transcribed all the interviews and for each participant, created a file which was identified using assigned pseudonym.

3.12 Researcher's Positionality

Moustakas (1994) places an emphasis on the idea that when conducting research, scientists should try to distance themselves as far as possible from their own personal experiences in order to maintain an objective perspective on the topic that is being investigated. In addition, Creswell (2013) asserts that the qualitative researcher as the primary data collection tool demands the identification of personal beliefs, assumptions, and biases from the very beginning of the investigation. By doing so, the researcher strove to separate his own experiences from those of the participants and to maintain an objective stance toward their experiences.

When it comes to the task of gathering information, the researcher's primary responsibility is to act as an interviewer. Creswell (2013) suggests some procedures that can be followed in order to conduct an appropriate interview. These procedures include sticking to the questions that are being asked during the interview, not going over the allotted amount of time, showing the participant respect and kindness, and not asking too many questions or making too many suggestions. During the interview protocol, the researcher made an effort to stick to those guidelines.

In this particular study, the researcher was also responsible for performing the task of data analysis. In this function, one of the most complicated responsibilities was to perform the data analysis task that was described earlier. As a result, the researcher compartmentalized his own experiences so that he could sympathize with the participants and approach the data from the point of view of the participants as much as possible while still maintaining the broadest possible scope. As the researcher, I acknowledge that my background as a teacher in the same region where the study is conducted may influence my views and interpretations. I have made efforts to ensure objectivity by maintaining a reflexive journal, using member checking, and seeking peer feedback during the data analysis phase.

3.13 Limitation of the Study

Limitations in research refer to factors that may affect the validity, reliability, or generalizability of the study's findings but are beyond the researcher's control (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). These limitations help contextualize the results and provide guidance for future research.

Some participants were reluctant to give out information for fear of being penalized which prolonged the data collection. Also, the study needed a lot of resources such as Human Resources, financial and time resources for its accomplishments in a valid and reliable manner.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Overview

This chapter presents the results of the analysis of the data based on the purpose of the study. The purpose of the study was to investigate teacher's classroom management practices in early childhood education centres in the Asutifi North District. The analysis and interpretation of data were carried out based on the results of the four (4) research questions. The data were analysed using thematic and content analysis and were analysed from the research questions 1 to 4.

Research Question One: What are the views of teachers in behaviour management in early childhood education centres in Asutifi North District?

Understanding the knowledge and expertise of teachers in behaviour management is critical in ensuring the development of a nurturing and effective learning environment for young children. This research question seeks to explore the depth and breadth of knowledge that educators in early childhood education centers within the Asutifi North District possess regarding behaviour management. By examining their knowledge, the researcher identified areas of strength and areas that may require further support or training, ultimately contributing to enhanced early childhood education practices.

Theme 1: Child Development

This theme explores teachers' understanding of child development and how it influences their behaviour management strategies. The knowledge of child development is fundamental to effective behaviour management in early childhood education.

Teacher A: *Child development is a critical factor in behaviour management. Knowing the typical milestones for each age helps us set appropriate expectations. For example, we understand that a two-year-old may have limited impulse control, so we don't expect them to sit still for long periods.*

Teacher B: *Understanding the stages of cognitive, social, and emotional development in young children is fundamental. It informs our approach to handling challenging behaviours. When we know that a child is going through a period of heightened egocentrism, we can be more patient and empathetic when they display self-centered behaviour.*

The above narrative implies that respondents have knowledge and understanding of child development and their influence on their classroom management. The implications of these statements underscore the importance of integrating knowledge of child development into classroom management practices. By doing so, teachers can create a more supportive, understanding, and effective learning environment that meets the diverse needs of learners at different developmental stages.

Theme 2: Strategies and Techniques

In this theme, teachers discuss the specific strategies and techniques they use to manage behaviour in the classroom. Effective strategies and techniques are the cornerstone of maintaining a harmonious learning environment.

Teacher C: *Positive reinforcement is a key technique. We use praise and rewards to encourage positive behaviour. When a child shares toys or helps a friend, we make sure to acknowledge it with specific compliments like ‘You did a great job sharing!’*

Teacher D: *Time-out is sometimes necessary for disruptive behaviour. It gives children a chance to calm down and think about their actions. We always explain why the time-out is happening and ensure it’s a brief break focused on reflection, not punishment.*

These statements imply a combination of positive reinforcement and corrective measures in early childhood centre classrooms. Teachers aim to create a positive learning environment by reinforcing desirable behaviours while also providing structured opportunities for reflection and self-regulation when addressing disruptive behaviour. Effective communication and a balanced approach to behaviour management are key aspects of these strategies.

Theme 3: Positive Relationships

Building positive relationships with children is essential for effective behaviour management. This theme explores how teachers establish these connections, which are the foundation of trust and cooperation.

Teacher E: *We try to create a nurturing and supportive environment.*

Kids are more likely to listen to us when they trust and feel connected to us. We greet them with a smile every morning, and we often engage in conversations that go beyond academics, like asking about their weekend or their favorite games.

Teacher F: *Active listening and showing empathy help us understand the underlying reasons for certain behaviours. It's about addressing the root cause, not just the behaviour itself. When a child is upset, we talk to them and ask questions to understand their feelings. This helps us guide them towards more constructive responses.*

These statements imply that effective classroom management in early childhood centers requires teachers to have knowledge and skills related to building positive relationships, understanding the holistic development of children, addressing the root causes of behaviour, promoting emotional intelligence, and guiding constructive responses to emotions and behaviours.

Theme 4: Communication with Parents and Caregivers

Effective behaviour management often involves collaboration with parents and caregivers. This theme focuses on teachers' communication strategies with families, recognizing the importance of a united approach to managing behaviour.

Teacher G: *We maintain an open line of communication with parents.*

Sharing insights about their child's behaviour at school helps us work together to address issues. We send home weekly updates, and parents are encouraged to reach out to us if they have any concerns or observations.

Teacher H: *Regular parent-teacher meetings and providing resources for behaviour management at home are essential. Consistency is key.*

We offer tips and suggestions for parents to reinforce the same strategies we use in the classroom, ensuring that the child experiences continuity between school and home.

These aforementioned underscore the importance of a collaborative and communicative approach between teachers and parents in early childhood classroom management. Open communication, regular meetings, and consistent strategies between school and home contribute to a holistic and supportive environment for the child's behavioural development.

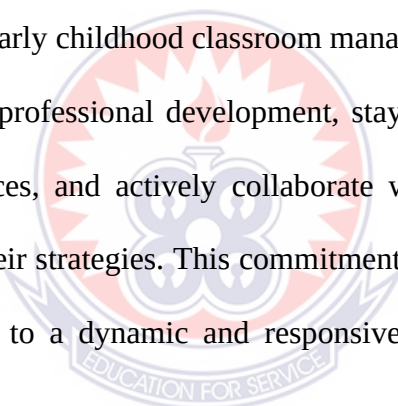
Theme 5: Professional Development and Training

Teachers' knowledge of behaviour management often evolves through professional development and training. This theme examines their experiences in this regard, emphasizing the importance of ongoing learning in the field of early childhood education.

Teacher I: *Continuous training is crucial. Workshops and seminars help us stay updated on the latest research and best practices in behaviour management. For instance, we recently attended a seminar on trauma-informed teaching, which has greatly enriched our understanding of children's behaviour in certain situations.*

Teacher J: *Collaboration with fellow educators is also part of our learning process. Sharing experiences and strategies is immensely beneficial in improving our classroom management skills. We meet regularly with colleagues in our district to discuss what's working and what can be improved.*

Here, it means effective early childhood classroom management requires teachers to engage in continuous professional development, stay informed about current research and best practices, and actively collaborate with colleagues to share experiences and refine their strategies. This commitment to ongoing learning and collaboration contributes to a dynamic and responsive approach to classroom management.



Research Question Two: What type of classroom seating arrangement does teachers use in early childhood education centres in the Asutifi North District?

The physical organization of classroom spaces significantly impacts the learning experience of young children. This research question was designed to assess the current state of classroom seating arrangements in early childhood education centers in the Asutifi North District. By examining the existing arrangements, we can gain insights into how these environments are structured to promote engagement, collaboration, and learner comfort. Understanding the state of classroom seating arrangements is essential for creating a conducive and supportive learning atmosphere.

Theme 1: Classroom Layout and Organization

This theme delves into how teachers set up and organize their classroom spaces and how the physical layout impacts the learning environment.

Teacher A: *The classroom layout is crucial. We aim to create a welcoming and interactive space. For instance, we arrange the desks in small groups to encourage collaboration and group activities. We also ensure that there's ample space for movement and exploration.*

Teacher B: *Furniture and equipment placement are well thought out. We have learning centers clearly defined in the room, each equipped with materials relevant to the curriculum. For example, our reading corner has cozy seating, and art supplies are easily accessible for creative activities.*

These statements collectively imply that effective classroom design and organization involve thoughtful consideration of the physical environment. Creating a welcoming, interactive, and purposeful space that supports collaboration, exploration, and specific

learning activities contributes to a positive and conducive learning environment for learners.

Theme 2: Flexibility and Adaptability

In this theme, teachers discuss the flexibility and adaptability of their classroom seating arrangements to cater to different learning activities and learner needs.

Teacher C: *Our seating arrangement is designed to be flexible. We have movable tables and chairs so that we can quickly adapt the space for different activities. This allows us to transition from circle time to individual work or group projects seamlessly.*

Teacher D: *We have a mix of seating options, from traditional desks to soft seating areas with cushions and rugs. This variety allows us to accommodate different learning styles and learner preferences. Some children may prefer to sit at a desk, while others like to work on the floor.*

From the above narrative, it implies collectively that effective classroom seating arrangements involve a balance of flexibility, variety, and consideration for individual preferences. A classroom designed to accommodate different activities and learning styles contributes to a dynamic and inclusive learning environment.

Theme 3: Engagement and Interaction

This theme explores how classroom seating arrangements influence learner engagement and interaction within the learning environment.

Teacher E: *Seating arrangements are intentionally designed to promote interaction. We use a U-shaped arrangement for circle time, which*

fosters eye contact and participation. Small group tables are strategically placed to encourage peer-to-peer discussion.

Teacher F: *We rotate seating arrangements periodically to encourage learners to work with different peers. This helps in developing social skills and keeps the classroom dynamic.*

These statements collectively imply that seating arrangements in early childhood centers are purposefully designed to encourage social interaction, peer-to-peer discussion, and the development of social skills. The intentional use of seating configurations contributes to a dynamic and engaging learning environment that supports the overall growth and well-being of young learners.

Theme 4: Personalization and Individual Needs

In this theme, teachers discuss how they cater to the individual needs of learners through personalized seating arrangements.

Teacher G: *We take individual needs into account. For instance, if a child needs extra support or a quieter environment, we provide a designated space with less distraction. Personalized seating also helps us accommodate any physical or sensory challenges.*

Teacher H: *We encourage learners to have a say in where they sit, within certain parameters. This autonomy empowers them and can have a positive impact on their motivation and sense of ownership.*

Teachers are attentive to individual needs, provide personalized support, and empower learners by allowing them to have a say in their seating choices. This approach contributes to a positive and supportive learning environment that recognizes and values the uniqueness of each learner.

Theme 5: Alignment with Educational Goals

This theme explores how the classroom seating arrangement aligns with the educational goals and objectives of the early childhood education center.

Teacher I: *Our seating arrangement is designed to support our curriculum. For example, we have a 'science corner' with tables and magnifying glasses for hands-on exploration. This arrangement ensures that the physical space reinforces our educational goals.*

Teacher J: *We continually assess and adjust our seating arrangement to ensure it reflects the learning priorities of our program. It's not just about aesthetics; it's about supporting the educational journey of our young learners.*

These statements collectively imply that a strategic and purposeful approach to classroom seating arrangements, with a focus on integrating the physical environment with the curriculum and continuously adapting it to support evolving learning priorities. This approach ensures that the classroom space serves as an effective tool in enhancing the educational experience for young learners.

Research Question Three: How do teachers set classroom rules in early childhood education centres in the Asutifi North District?

Effective classroom management is foundational to a successful educational experience, particularly in early childhood education. This research question aimed to investigate the methods and approaches used by the teachers in setting, communicating, and applying rules within early childhood education centers in the Asutifi North District. Understanding these practices would provide valuable insights into the creation of structured and respectful learning environments for young learners.

Theme 1: Setting Classroom Rules

This section explores how teachers establish rules in early childhood education centers.

Teacher A: *Setting classroom rules and regulations involves a collaborative process. We consider the unique characteristics of our learners, the educational goals, and community expectations. We aim to create a set of clear, age-appropriate rules that foster a safe and respectful environment.*

Teacher B: *Before the school year begins, we gather input from both teachers and, where possible, the learners themselves. This ensures that the rules are understood, relevant, and accepted by everyone in the classroom.*

Here, teachers' commitment to collaborative, inclusive, and proactive processes in setting classroom rules. Teachers aim to create rules that are not only clear and age-appropriate but also reflect the unique characteristics of learners and are accepted by the entire learning community. This approach contributes to the establishment of a positive, respectful, and cooperative classroom environment.

Theme 2: Applying Classroom Rules:

This section delves into the strategies and approaches teachers use to apply and enforce rules and regulations effectively.

Teacher C: *Consistency is essential when applying rules. We ensure that rules are enforced consistently so that learners understand the consequences of their actions. However, we also maintain flexibility, allowing for discussions and teaching moments when a rule is broken.*

Teacher D: *Positive reinforcement is a significant part of rule enforcement. We emphasize recognizing and praising good behaviour. This not only motivates children to follow the rules but also creates a positive learning environment.*

These statements collectively imply that effective rule enforcement involves a balance of consistency, flexibility, and positive reinforcement. Teachers should enforce rules consistently to establish expectations, be flexible in response to individual situations, and use positive reinforcement to motivate and create a positive learning environment.

Teaching Classroom Rules to Learners:

This section explores the methods and strategies the teachers employ to teach young learners about classroom rules.

Teacher E: *Visual aids are an effective way to teach rules. We have posters with illustrations and simple language that explain each rule. Children can easily refer to them and understand the expectations.*

Teacher F: *Role-playing is a powerful tool. We act out real-life scenarios, allowing children to practice how to apply the rules. This interactive approach helps them internalize the rules and understand the 'why' behind them.*

These mean that effective rule teaching involves a combination of visual aids and interactive role-playing. Visual aids with illustrations simplify rule communication, while role-playing activities allow children to actively practice and internalize the rules, fostering a deeper understanding of their purpose and application in real-life scenarios.

Research Question Four: How do teachers organize the physical classroom space in early childhood education centres in the Asutifi North District?

The organization of the physical classroom space plays a pivotal role in shaping the learning experience for young children. This research question sought to explore the strategies and principles employed by teachers in the Asutifi North District to organize their classroom spaces. Understanding how the environment is arranged and adapted to facilitate various learning activities and meet individual learner needs is vital in creating dynamic, engaging, and developmentally appropriate early childhood education settings.

Theme 1: Classroom Layout and Organization

This theme explores how the teachers arrange and organize the physical space within the classroom to create an optimal learning environment for young children.

Teacher E: *Classroom layout and organization are crucial. We create zones within the classroom, such as reading corners and art areas, to facilitate specific activities. The layout is designed to ensure children have access to materials and spaces that support their learning.*

Teacher C: *Furniture placement is strategic. We use a combination of tables and chairs, soft seating areas, and learning centers to encourage exploration and interaction. This flexible layout allows children to move around and engage in various activities.*

These narratives imply that classroom layout and organization are critical considerations in creating an effective learning environment. Teachers should intentionally design the layout to include purposeful zones, facilitate access to

materials, support various activities, and encourage flexibility and movement, contributing to a dynamic and engaging classroom atmosphere.

Theme 2: Flexibility and Adaptability

In this theme, the teachers discuss the adaptability of the classroom space to cater to different learning activities and individual learner needs.

Teacher C: *Flexibility is a key consideration. We use movable furniture to quickly reconfigure the space for various activities. This flexibility allows us to transition from group activities to individual workspaces seamlessly.*

Teacher D: *Our classroom includes a mix of seating options, from traditional desks to cushions on the floor. This variety caters to different learning styles and preferences. It's about creating an adaptable environment that supports diverse needs.*

Here the emphasis is placed on the significance of flexibility, adaptability, and variety in the classroom environment. Teachers should use movable furniture, create diverse seating options, and design the space to accommodate different learning needs, ultimately fostering a dynamic and learner-centered learning environment.

Theme 3: Engagement and Interaction

This theme explores how classroom organization and layout influence learner engagement and interaction within the learning environment.

Teacher E: *The classroom layout is designed to promote interaction. We use circular seating arrangements for group discussions and circle*

time, encouraging eye contact and active participation. Small group tables are placed strategically for peer-to-peer engagement.

Teacher F: *To encourage interaction, we rearrange seating periodically, allowing learners to work with different peers. This fosters social development and keeps the classroom dynamic and engaging.*

These statements imply a purposeful approach to designing classroom layouts that promote interaction, eye contact, and peer engagement. The intentional use of circular seating arrangements, small group tables, and periodic seating rearrangement contributes to the creation of a dynamic, engaging, and socially enriching learning environment.

Theme 4: Personalization and Individual Needs

In this theme, the teachers discuss how they personalize the classroom space to accommodate individual learner needs.

Teacher G: *We consider individual needs when organizing the classroom space. For instance, we have designated quiet corners for children who need a less stimulating environment. Personalization helps us address diverse physical, sensory, and learning needs.*

Teacher H: *Learner autonomy is encouraged in choosing where they sit, within certain guidelines. This sense of ownership over their space can be empowering and motivating for children.*

The above statements highlight learner-centered and inclusive approach to organizing the classroom space. By considering individual needs, providing designated spaces,

and encouraging learner autonomy, teachers create an environment that caters to diverse requirements and empowers learners to take ownership of their learning space.

Theme 5: Alignment with Educational Goals

This theme explores how the classroom organization aligns with the educational objectives and goals of early childhood education.

Teacher I: *The classroom organization directly supports our curriculum. We have different areas designated for specific learning activities, such as science or reading corners. This ensures that the physical space reinforces our educational goals.*

Teacher J: *Our classroom layout is continuously evaluated to ensure it aligns with the learning priorities of our program. It's not just about aesthetics; it's about creating a space that enhances the educational journey of our young learners.*

The above statement implies that teachers should strategically design the layout to support specific learning activities, continuously evaluate its effectiveness, prioritize functionality over aesthetics, and create an environment that actively enhances the educational journey of learners.

Observational Results

Teachers' view in Behaviour Management

In the observed classroom setting, it was of concern to note that certain negative trends related to behaviour management have become apparent. The following behaviours were observed:

1. **Inconsistent Routine Management:** It was observed that the teachers' approach to managing learners' behaviour appeared inconsistent, with a lack of clear routines. This lack of structure may contribute to an unpredictable learning environment.
2. **Limited Use of Non-Verbal Cues:** It was observed that the teachers rarely used non-verbal cues, such as hand gestures, to remind learners of what they should be doing. This limited use of non-verbal cues might result in difficulties in maintaining learner focus and discipline.
3. **Limited Collaboration in Rule-Setting:** It was observed that the teachers did not actively involve learners in rule-setting. The absence of a collaborative approach may lead to a lack of learner ownership of behaviour and reduced shared responsibility.
4. **Unstimulating Lessons:** It was observed that lessons lacked elements of stimulation, such as games, teaching and learning materials, or practical activities. This less dynamic approach might result in decreased learner engagement and potentially contribute to problem behaviours.
5. **Lack of Positive Language and Modeling:** It was observed that the teacher rarely employed positive language or modeled desired behaviours for learners. This deficiency in reinforcing positive behaviour could affect the creation of a safe learning environment, self-discipline, and motivation.

6. **Limited Reflection on Learners' Behaviour:** It was observed that the teachers did not really engage in reflective practices regarding learners' behaviour to build rapport or establish a positive classroom environment. This lack of reflection might hinder the development of a positive teacher-learner relationship.
7. **Limited Use of Descriptive Feedback:** The teacher rarely provided learners with positive, brief, and specific descriptive feedback. This lack of reinforcement for appropriate behaviour may impact learner motivation and positive reinforcement.
8. **Ineffectively Managed Minor Inappropriate Behaviours:** It was observed that the teachers did not have a clear strategy for managing minor inappropriate behaviours, sometimes failing to address them effectively. This lack of intervention could result in disruptions during lesson delivery.
9. **Lack of Timely Redirection:** It was observed that inappropriate behaviours often escalated without timely redirection. This delay in intervention might allow negative behaviours to persist and create a disruptive classroom atmosphere.

These observations suggest a negative trend in the teachers' behaviour management strategies, which may lead to an ineffective and less nurturing learning environment. Addressing these concerns and implementing more proactive behaviour management practices is crucial to creating a positive and supportive classroom atmosphere.

How Teachers Set Classroom Rules

In the observed classroom setting, negative trends related to classroom rules and regulations have become apparent. The following behaviours were observed:

1. **Allows Older Learners to Help Develop Classroom Rules:** It was observed that the teachers allowed older learners to help develop classroom rules. While involving learners in rule-setting can be positive, it appeared to be negatively implemented in this case, potentially leading to an imbalance in rule enforcement and a lack of clear expectations for younger learners.
2. **Set Classroom Rules without Considering Learners' Age and Culture:** It was observed that classroom rules were set without considering the learners' age and cultural background. This lack of consideration may result in rules that are not developmentally appropriate or culturally sensitive, potentially leading to learner confusion or resistance.
3. **Sets and Applies Classroom Rules Positively, Few in Number:** The observed teachers failed to establish and apply classroom rules positively. The rules were numerous, complex, and not consistently enforced. This approach might lead to confusion among learners and inconsistent behaviour management.
4. **Teaches Classroom Rules Ineffectively:** It was observed that the teachers' method of teaching classroom rules was ineffective. Rules were not displayed clearly, and the process of teaching and reviewing the rules was lacking. This lack of clarity and reinforcement may result in learners not fully understanding or adhering to the established rules.

These observations reveal a negative trend in the implementation of classroom rules, potentially leading to an environment of confusion, inconsistency, and inadequate consideration of learners' needs. Addressing these concerns is essential to creating a more effective and supportive classroom environment that fosters positive behaviour management.

The types of Classroom Seating Arrangement used by teachers

In the observed classroom setting, negative trends related to seating arrangements were noted. The following behaviours were observed:

1. **Arranges Classroom Seats in a Straight-Row Form:** It was observed that the teachers arranged classroom seats in a straight-row form. This traditional seating arrangement might limit interaction and engagement among learners, potentially leading to disengagement and disruptive behaviours.
2. **Arranges Classroom Seats in a Horseshoe or U or C Shape:** It was observed that there was a lack of variety in seating arrangements, as the teachers did not utilize horseshoe, U, or C-shaped seating. A limited seating arrangement can restrict learner interaction and engagement, hindering the creation of dynamic learning environments.
3. **Arranges Classroom Seats without Modular Design:** It was observed that the classroom seats were not arranged with a modular design, such as small groups or clusters. This lack of flexibility in seating may limit the adaptability of the learning environment and hinder diverse teaching approaches.
4. **Does not Provide Spaces or Pathways to Reach Learners and Address Their Needs:** The observed seating arrangement did not offer clear pathways or spaces to reach learners and address their individual needs. This lack of accessibility may impede the teacher's ability to provide support when required.

5. **Doesn't Modify Classroom Seating Arrangement to Reduce Disruptive**

Behaviours: It was observed that the teachers did not make modifications to the seating arrangement to reduce disruptive behaviours. This lack of proactive adjustment might result in persistent disruptions.

6. **Seating Arrangement Doesn't Always Match Instructional Goals:**

It was observed that the seating arrangement did not consistently match the instructional goals. A mismatch between seating and instructional goals may hinder the teacher's ability to maintain learner attention and engagement.

7. **Doesn't Arrange Learners to Foster Face-to-Face Contact:**

It was observed that there was a lack of effort to arrange learners to sit around round tables to foster face-to-face contact and social interaction more easily. This limited social interaction might impact learners' engagement and collaborative learning.

These observations suggest that the seating arrangements in the observed classroom setting might not fully support learner engagement, interaction, and adaptability. Addressing these negative trends is crucial to creating a more dynamic and conducive learning environment.

How Teachers Organize the Classroom Physical Space

In the observed classroom setting, there were mixed trends related to classroom physical space. The following behaviours were noted:

1. **Teacher Creates Classroom Physical Space Thoughtfully:** It was observed that the teachers displayed positive behaviour by creating the classroom physical space thoughtfully. This included identifying classroom materials, mapping out areas for

instruction and activities, planning pathways, and arranging furniture with care and intention.

2. Ensures Visibility for Both Teacher and Learners: It was observed that the teachers set up the classroom in a way that ensured the teacher could see all the learners, and all learners could see the teacher. This arrangement promotes a conducive learning environment.
3. Ensures Visibility of Presentations and Displays: It was observed that classroom space was designed to allow all learners to see presentations and displays, such as behavioural expectations, wall charts, and information on the board. This supports effective communication and engagement.
4. Provides Freedom for Learners to Move About Freely: It was observed that the classroom space allowed every learner to move about freely. This freedom of movement can contribute to an interactive and engaging learning atmosphere.
5. Pays Attention to Classroom Space Arrangement: It was observed that the teachers paid greater attention to the arrangement of classroom space, indicating a proactive approach to creating an optimal learning environment.
6. Arranges Desks in Clusters for Wide Pathways: It was observed that desks were arranged in clusters rather than rows, creating wide pathways for learners to explore. This arrangement encourages collaboration and exploration.
7. Sets Up Learning Centers or Stations: It was observed that the classroom physical spaces were designed to set up learning centers, corners, or stations. These designated areas support diverse learning activities.

8. Creates Indoor Space for Learning Activities: Indoor space was allocated for indoor learning activities, providing learners with a variety of learning environments.
9. Creates an Interesting Classroom Environment: The classroom space was designed to be interesting, providing learners with the freedom to play and learn independently. This type of environment encourages creativity and exploration.
10. Supports Comfort and Exploration: The classroom physical space supported comfort and allowed learners to explore materials or events around them. This promotes a dynamic learning experience.
11. Well-Equipped Classroom Space: The classroom space was equipped with features such as floor height, ceiling height, good lighting, ventilation, carpets, couches, and pillows. These amenities contribute to a comfortable and engaging learning environment.

4.1

Discussion

Teachers view in behaviour management in early childhood education centers in Asutifi North District

In the Asutifi North District, the level of knowledge that the teachers possess in behaviour management varies considerably. Some of the educators exhibit a profound understanding of child development and the principles of effective behaviour management, allowing them to employ successful strategies for creating a conducive learning environment. These teachers have demonstrated the ability to adapt to the diverse needs and developmental stages of their learners. On the other hand, there are teachers who may benefit from additional training and support in this area. Their knowledge of behaviour management may not be as

comprehensive, which can impact their ability to create a nurturing and productive learning environment for young children.

Empirical support for the significance of teacher knowledge in behaviour management comes from a study conducted by Wilson et al. (2017). This research found that teachers with a comprehensive understanding of child development and behaviour management principles tend to employ more effective strategies in their classrooms. They are better equipped to anticipate and address behaviour challenges, create age-appropriate learning activities, and foster a positive and structured learning environment. The study suggests that the depth of knowledge among teachers in behaviour management is a critical factor in the success of their classroom management practices.

Furthermore, Wilson et al. (2017) underscores the importance of continuous professional development for teachers. Providing ongoing training and resources to educators can enhance their knowledge and skills in behaviour management, ultimately benefiting the educational experiences of young children in early childhood education centers within the Asutifi North District. This investment in teacher knowledge can lead to more effective classroom management practices and improved outcomes for learners.

The state of teachers' classroom seating arrangement in early childhood education centers in the Asutifi North District

The research provides insights into the diversity of classroom seating arrangements in early childhood education centers within the Asutifi North District. These arrangements significantly impact the learning experiences, behaviour, and overall atmosphere within the classrooms. The findings indicate that there is variation in the quality and organization of classroom seating arrangements. While some

classrooms boast of well-organized seating layouts that positively impact learner engagement and behaviour, others may benefit from improvements in their physical layout.

In classrooms with well-organized seating arrangements, learners experience a positive learning environment that supports engagement, interaction, and a structured approach to education. These seating arrangements are strategically designed to cater to diverse learning styles and preferences. As a result, learners in these classrooms tend to exhibit better behaviour and higher levels of engagement, contributing to a more conducive learning atmosphere.

Conversely, classrooms that lack well-organized seating arrangements may encounter challenges related to learner behaviour and engagement. These arrangements may not fully support the diverse needs of learners, which can result in distractions and difficulties in maintaining an orderly classroom environment. The empirical support for the impact of well-organized classroom seating on learner engagement comes from a study by Anderson et al., (2020). This research emphasized that the quality of classroom seating arrangements significantly influences the learning experience and behaviour of learners. When classrooms are well-organized, learners have access to comfortable and effective learning spaces, which, in turn, positively affects their engagement and behaviour.

Anderson et al., (2020) further suggests that efforts to improve the physical layout of classrooms can lead to a more conducive learning environment, positively impacting learner engagement and behaviour. Therefore, the findings emphasize the importance of evaluating and enhancing classroom seating arrangements to promote an optimal learning experience for young children in early childhood education centers in the Asutifi North District.

How teachers set classroom rules in early childhood education centers in the Asutifi North District

In the Asutifi North District, teachers employ a variety of strategies when setting and applying rules and regulations in their classrooms. These strategies are geared towards creating a structured and respectful learning environment for young children. The research shows that a common approach involves the establishment of clear, consistent, and positively framed rules. These rules aim to set expectations for learner behaviour and academic performance, promoting a positive and respectful classroom atmosphere.

Teachers in the Asutifi North District prioritize communication and clarity when introducing rules and regulations. By effectively communicating these expectations to learners, they create a shared understanding of what is required for a successful and harmonious learning environment. Additionally, the teachers studied employed a combination of reinforcement and consequences to enforce these rules. This means they not only set clear expectations but also provide positive reinforcement for learners who adhere to the rules, which can include praise and small rewards. Conversely, they implement consequences for rule violations to maintain consistency in rule enforcement.

A study conducted by Jones and Jones (2016) provides empirical support for the strategies used by teachers in the Asutifi North District. This research emphasizes the importance of clear, consistent, and positively framed rules. It suggests that these practices, when effectively communicated and applied, lead to improved learner behaviour and academic performance. The study underscores the positive impact of this approach on classroom management and the creation of a respectful learning environment.

Moreover, a study by Marzano (2003) emphasized the significance of a structured approach to classroom management, including clear rules and consequences, as it enhances learner achievement. The empirical findings from Marzano's research support the alignment of the strategies used by teachers in Asutifi North District with best practices in behaviour management.

The collective empirical evidence supports the effectiveness of setting and applying rules and regulations in early childhood education centers, emphasizing the importance of clear, positively framed rules and consistent enforcement for promoting improved learner behaviour and academic performance. These strategies contribute to the creation of a nurturing and productive learning environment for young children in the Asutifi North District.

How teachers organize the physical classroom space in early childhood education centres in the Asutifi North District

The research findings revealed that the teachers in the Asutifi North District adopt a diverse range of strategies to effectively organize the physical classroom space. The primary goal of these strategies is to create a learning environment characterized by flexibility, adaptability, and alignment with educational goals. The physical layout is thoughtfully designed to accommodate the unique needs and developmental stages of young learners.

Flexibility is a cornerstone of classroom organization, and teachers use movable furniture and modular designs to ensure adaptability. This enables them to quickly reconfigure the space for various learning activities, from group interactions to individual workspaces. These dynamic arrangements support a variety of teaching approaches and provide learners with opportunities to explore and engage in diverse activities.

Interaction and engagement are also prioritized in the physical layout. Circular seating arrangements, group discussion areas, and strategically placed small group tables encourage peer-to-peer interaction and collaborative learning. The design fosters positive learner-learner relationships and effective communication among young learners.

Moreover, the teachers pay special attention to accommodating individual learner needs. They create designated quiet corners for learners who require a less stimulating environment, and they offer choice in seating arrangements when possible. This personalization allows learners to feel more comfortable and supported in their learning environment.

Ultimately, the organization of the physical classroom space is carefully aligned with educational goals and objectives. Different areas are designated for specific learning activities, such as science or reading corners, to ensure that the physical environment complements and enhances the educational journey of young learners.

A study conducted by Pianta et al. (2019) provided empirical support for the strategies employed by the teachers in the Asutifi North District. This research underscores the significance of a well-organized classroom in supporting positive learner-teacher relationships and enhancing learning experiences. It emphasizes that the arrangement of the physical environment is pivotal in creating dynamic, engaging, and developmentally appropriate early childhood education settings.

Additionally, a study by Karaduman and Tuncer (2014) highlighted the positive impact of classroom design on learner engagement and learning outcomes. The research emphasized that a well-organized and learner-centered physical space can significantly contribute to learner achievement and positive learning experiences.

The collective empirical evidence supports the importance of the strategies used by teachers in organizing the physical classroom space in early childhood education centers, highlighting the role of flexibility, interaction, personalization, and alignment with educational goals in creating a dynamic and engaging learning environment for young children in the Asutifi North District.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview

This final chapter comprises a summary of the study, emphasizing on the major findings. It discusses the summary, conclusion, key findings, recommendations as well as suggestions for future research.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate teacher classroom management practices in early childhood education centres in the Asutifi North District. The following objectives guided the study; find out teachers' knowledge in behaviour management in early childhood education centres in Asutifi North District, teachers' classroom seating arrangement in early childhood education centres in Asutifi North District, how teachers' set classroom rules in early childhood education centres in Asutifi North District, and how teachers organize the physical classroom space in early childhood education centres in the Asutifi North District. The sample for the study was eight (8) early childhood teachers in Asutifi North District which maximal variation purposive sampling technique was used to select the eight (8) teachers based on ten years and above teaching experience and qualification in early childhood education. The study adopted the qualitative approach with semi-structured interview guide and observational checklist as data collection instruments. Again, the study was analysed using thematic approach as well as content analysis.

5.1 Key Findings

The findings from the study revealed that the level of knowledge that teachers possess in behaviour management in the Asutifi North District varies considerably. Most educators

exhibit a profound understanding of child development and the principles of effective behaviour management. Teachers who possess in-depth knowledge can create a conducive learning environment and adapt to the diverse needs of their learners. Again, most of the teachers demonstrated understanding of management measures in handling disruptive behaviours of learners in their classrooms. These include setting of classroom rules with learners, development of good relations with learners, use of positive language, use of positive feedbacks.

The findings also revealed that the organization of classroom seating arrangements positively impact learners' engagement and behaviour management. Classrooms with flexible and adaptable seating arrangements tend to create a positive learning environment. However, inappropriate classroom seating arrangements may lead to challenges related to learners' behaviour and engagement.

The study also revealed that early childhood teachers employed clear, consistent, and positively formed rules and expectations is a priority in creating a structured and respectful learning environment. A combination of reinforcement and consequences were used to enforce rules, maintaining consistency in rule enforcement. Best practices in behaviour management emphasize the importance of clear, positively framed rules and consistent enforcement.

Finally, the study revealed that teachers employed variety of strategies to organize the physical classroom space, focusing on flexibility and adaptability. The physical layout is designed to promote interaction, accommodate individual learner needs, and align with educational goals. Movable furniture and modular designs support flexibility and various learning activities. Well-organized seating arrangements, group discussion areas, and personalized spaces enhance learner interaction and engagement.

What knowledge do teachers have in behaviour management in early childhood education centers in Asutifi North District?

1. The level of knowledge that teachers possess in behaviour management in the Asutifi North District varies considerably.
2. Some educators exhibit a profound understanding of child development and the principles of effective behaviour management.
3. Teachers who possess in-depth knowledge can create a conducive learning environment and adapt to the diverse needs of their learners.
4. Additional training and support may be needed for teachers with less comprehensive knowledge of behaviour management.

What is the state of teachers' classroom seating arrangement in early childhood education centers in the Asutifi North District?

1. The quality and organization of classroom seating arrangements in the Asutifi North District vary.
2. Well-organized seating layouts positively impact learner engagement and behaviour.
3. Classrooms with flexible and adaptable seating arrangements tend to create a positive learning environment.
4. Inadequate seating arrangements may lead to challenges related to learner behaviour and engagement.

How do teachers set classroom rules in early childhood education centers in the Asutifi North District?

1. Teachers employ clear, consistent, and positively framed rules to set expectations for learner behaviour and academic performance.
2. Effective communication of rules and expectations is a priority in creating a structured and respectful learning environment.
3. A combination of reinforcement and consequences is used to enforce rules, maintaining consistency in rule enforcement.
4. Best practices in behaviour management emphasize the importance of clear, positively framed rules and consistent enforcement.

How do teachers organize the physical classroom space in early childhood education centers in the Asutifi North District?

1. Teachers employ a variety of strategies to organize the physical classroom space, focusing on flexibility and adaptability.
2. The physical layout is designed to promote interaction, accommodate individual learner needs, and align with educational goals.
3. Movable furniture and modular designs support flexibility and various learning activities.
4. Well-organized seating arrangements, group discussion areas, and personalized spaces enhance learner interaction and engagement.

5.2 Conclusions

Knowledge teachers have in behaviour management in early childhood education centers in Asutifi North District

1. The knowledge of teachers in behaviour management in the Asutifi North District is diverse. While some educators demonstrate a profound understanding of child development and behaviour management principles, others may require additional training and support.
2. Teachers with a comprehensive understanding of child development and behaviour management tend to employ more effective strategies. This highlights the critical role of teacher knowledge in shaping classroom management practices.
3. Continuous professional development is essential to enhance teacher knowledge and skills in behaviour management, ultimately benefiting the educational experiences of young children in the district.

The state of teachers' classroom seating arrangement in early childhood education centers in the Asutifi North District

1. Classroom seating arrangements in the Asutifi North District exhibit variation in quality and organization. Well-organized seating layouts positively impact learner engagement and behaviour, while inadequate arrangements may hinder classroom management.
2. Flexible and adaptable seating arrangements are conducive to creating a positive learning environment that supports diverse learning styles and preferences.

3. Evaluating and enhancing classroom seating arrangements is critical to promoting an optimal learning experience for young children in early childhood education centers within the district.

How do teachers set classroom rules in early childhood education centers in the Asutifi North District?

1. Teachers employ a variety of strategies for setting and applying rules and regulations, emphasizing clear, consistent, and positively framed rules to establish expectations for learner behaviour and academic performance.
2. Effective communication of rules is pivotal in creating a structured and respectful learning environment, and a combination of reinforcement and consequences maintains consistency in rule enforcement.
3. The alignment of these strategies with best practices in behaviour management underscores their significance in creating a nurturing and productive learning environment.

How do teachers organize the physical classroom space in early childhood education centers in the Asutifi North District?

1. Teachers in the Asutifi North District employ diverse strategies to organize the physical classroom space, emphasizing flexibility, adaptability, and alignment with educational goals.
2. Flexible seating arrangements, interactive designs, and personalization cater to the unique needs of young learners, promoting engagement, interaction, and positive learner-learner relationships.
3. Well-organized classroom environments are pivotal in creating dynamic, engaging, and developmentally appropriate early childhood education settings.

In the main, the study has provided valuable insights into early childhood education practices within the Asutifi North District. These findings underscore the significance of teacher knowledge, classroom seating arrangements, rules and regulations, and physical classroom organization in shaping the educational experiences of young children. By recognizing these factors and their impact, I hope to contribute to the improvement of early childhood education practices in the district and foster a nurturing and productive learning environment for its learners.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, following recommendations are put forth

Educational authorities in the Asutifi North District should prioritize teacher knowledge and professional development in behaviour management. This can be achieved through regular training programs and workshops that focus on child development and effective behaviour management strategies. Enhancing teacher knowledge will lead to more effective classroom management practices, ultimately benefiting the educational experiences of young children. Authorities should invest in ongoing professional development to ensure teachers are well-equipped to meet the diverse needs of their learners.

Educational authorities in Asutifi North District should encourage early childhood education centers to assess and enhance classroom seating arrangements. This can include providing guidance and resources to create flexible and well-organized seating layouts that support learner engagement. Well-organized seating arrangements positively impact learner engagement and behaviour. Authorities can play a role in promoting the

evaluation and improvement of classroom seating arrangements, ensuring they cater to diverse learning styles and preferences.

Authorities in the Asutifi North Education Directorate should advocate for the adoption of best practices in setting and enforcing classroom rules in early childhood education centers. This includes emphasizing clear, consistent, and positively framed rules and providing guidance on effective communication and enforcement. Clear and positively framed rules, when effectively communicated and enforced, lead to improved learner behaviour and academic performance. Authorities can provide resources and training to support teachers in implementing these practices.

Educational authorities in the Asutifi North District should encourage teachers to employ thoughtful classroom organization strategies that focus on flexibility, adaptability, and alignment with educational goals. Providing guidance and resources on creating dynamic and engaging learning environments is essential. Thoughtful classroom organization supports positive learner-teacher relationships, enhances learning experiences, and accommodates the unique needs of young learners. Authorities in the Asutifi North Education Directorate can support teachers in designing physical environments that promote engagement and interaction.

Teachers within Asutifi North District should conduct regular assessments of classroom management practices within early childhood education centers. These assessments can identify areas for improvement and allow for tailored support and guidance. Regular assessments provide valuable feedback to teachers and authorities, enabling them to address specific needs and challenges. By identifying areas for improvement, authorities can take targeted actions to enhance classroom management.

Authorities within Asutifi North District should set up resource centers that provide educational materials and resources related to classroom management, including books,

guides, and online platforms. Teachers can access these resources to continually enhance their knowledge and skills. Resource centers offer teachers the opportunity to access up-to-date information, research, and teaching materials to improve their classroom management practices. These centers can serve as hubs for ongoing professional development.

Educational authorities within Asutifi North District should establish mentorship programs in which experienced teachers can guide and support their less-experienced counterparts. This mentorship will focus on behaviour management techniques and best practices. Mentorship programs can facilitate the transfer of knowledge and best practices from experienced educators to those who may require additional support. This can lead to a more consistent and effective approach to behaviour management across early childhood education centers.

Educational authorities within Asutifi North District encourage a culture of collaboration and peer learning among teachers. Regular meetings, workshops, and forums for sharing experiences and strategies can help teachers learn from one another. Peer learning promotes the exchange of effective classroom management strategies and encourages professional growth. It fosters a sense of community among educators and can lead to collective improvement.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

Further researchers can conduct a longitudinal study to assess the long-term impact of behaviour management training on teachers and learners in early childhood education centers. This study can track the professional development of educators who have undergone training and measure its influence on classroom practices, learner outcomes, and retention rates. The goal is to provide insights into the sustained benefits of such training programs.

Further researchers can undertake a comparative analysis of classroom layouts in early childhood education centers in the Asutifi North District. This study should investigate the relationship between different physical classroom arrangements and learner outcomes,

including academic performance, engagement, and social development. The research can shed light on the most effective layouts for enhancing the overall learning experience.

Further researchers can explore the role of parental involvement in early childhood education and its influence on classroom management practices. This study can examine the degree of parental engagement in behaviour management, rule enforcement, and classroom organization. Investigate how collaboration between parents and teachers impacts learner behaviour and academic performance.



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APPENDIX A

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

SECTION A : BIO-DATA

This section talks about your bio-data. So kindly provide the appropriate data.

Participant's Code:

Place of Interview: Date:

Class/Grade: Position:

Sex: Age:

Number of years taught: Rank:

Professional Qualification:

Start Time: End Time: Duration:

SECTION B : TEACHER KNOWLEDGE IN BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

This section focuses on teacher knowledge in behaviour management. You are expected to please carefully listen to the questions under this section well and answer them to the best of your knowledge.

1. How do you understand the term Behaviour Management?

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1. How is behaviour management different from discipline?

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2. What areas will you focus on when managing learners' behaviour?

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3. What is the importance of behaviour management of learners in the classroom?

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4. What happens to the classroom when learners with problem behaviours are not properly managed?

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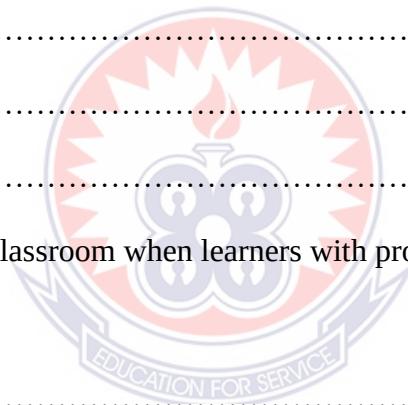
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5. What are the most common problem behaviours of children in your classroom?

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6. Why do children put up problem behaviours in your classroom?

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7. What behaviour management strategies do you use in your classroom?

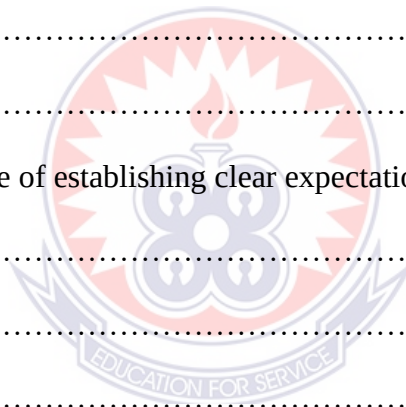
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8. What is the importance of establishing clear expectations and rules in the classroom?

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9. What strategies can you use to encourage appropriate behaviour among learners in your classroom?

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SECTION C: SETTING CLASSROOM RULES AND REGULATIONS

This section focuses on setting classroom rules and regulations. You are expected to please carefully listen to the questions under this section well and answer them to the best of your knowledge.

10. What are classroom rules and regulations?

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11. What factors do you consider when setting classroom rules regulations?

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12. Explain the guidelines for setting and applying classroom rules and regulations.

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13. What strategies do you use to teach your learners classroom rules?

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SECTION D: SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

This section focuses on seating arrangements. You are expected to please carefully listen to the questions under this section well and answer them to the best of your knowledge.

14. Explain the expression 'seating arrangement'

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15. How can seating arrangement prevent problem behaviour?

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16. Explain the types of seating arrangements done in your classroom?

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17. What are the effects of poor seating arrangement on learners' performance in your classroom?

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18. What are the importance of good seating arrangement?

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SECTION E: ORGANIZATION OF CLASSROOM PHYSICAL SPACE

This section focuses on organization of classroom physical space. You are expected to please carefully listen to the questions under this section well and answer them to the best of your knowledge.

19. How does the organization of physical classroom space prevent problem behaviours?

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20. What guidelines help you to create physical classroom space?

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21. What are the importance of organizing physical classroom space?

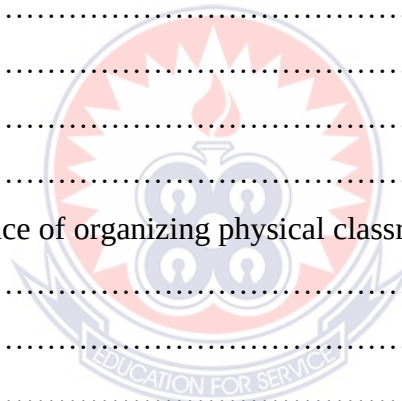
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APPNDIX B**OBESERVATIONAL GUIDE (CHECKLIST)****SECTION A : BIO-DATA**

This section talks about your bio-data. So kindly provide the appropriate data.

Participant's Code:.....

Place of Interview: Date:

Class/Grade:..... Position:.....

Sex:..... Age:.....

Number of years taught:..... Rank:

Professional Qualification:.....

Start Time: End Time: Duration:

SECTION B : TEACHER KNOWLEDGE IN BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

This section focuses on teacher knowledge in behaviour management. Please tick

Yes or No against the presence or absence for each statement.

S/N	Behaviour Management	YES	NO
1	Sets and maintain routine to manage learners' behaviour		
2	Uses non-verbal cues like hand gesture to remind learners of what they should be doing		
3	Sets rules together with learners for positive enforcement to improve behaviour management		

4	Creates stimulating lessons by incorporating games, using teaching and learning materials, and practical activities to get rid of problem behaviours		
5	Uses positive language and model behaviours teacher wants to see in learners to ensure safe learning environment, self-discipline, sense of responsibility and self-motivation		
6	Reflects on learners' behaviour to build rapport and to establish positive and supportive classroom environment		
7	Gives positive, brief and specific descriptive feedback by calling the attention of learners' appropriate behaviour		
8	Plans ignoring of learners' minor inappropriate behaviours to avoid distraction of lesson delivery		
9	Redirects learners' inappropriate behaviours before it escalates to an alternative behaviour that is more appropriate		

SECTION C: SETTING CLASSROOM RULES AND REGULATIONS

This section focuses on setting classroom rules and regulations. Please tick Yes or

No against the presence or absence for each statement.

S/N	Classroom Rules and Regulations	YES	NO
1	Allows older learners to help develop classroom rules		
2	Set rules and regulations by considering the learners' age and culture		

3	Sets and applies classroom rules and regulations positively, few in number, simple and specific, measurable and observable and consistent across settings		
4	Teaches rules and regulations by displaying the rules, teaching the rules to the learners, review the rules		

SECTION D: SEATING ARRANGEMENT

This section focuses on seating arrangements. Please tick Yes or No against the presence or absence for each statement.

S/N	Seating Arrangement	YES	NO
1	Arranges classroom seats in a straight-row form		
2	Arranges classroom seats in a horseshoe or U or C shape		
3	Arranges classroom seats in modular design (small groups or cluster)		
4	Provides spaces or pathways to reach learners and address their needs		
5	Modifies classroom seating arrange to reduce disruptive behaviours		
6	Set the classroom seating arrangement to increase learners' attention by meet the instructional goals		
7	Arranges learners to sit around round tables to foster face-to-face contact and social interaction more easily		

SECTION E: ORGANIZATION OF CLASSROOM PHYSICAL SPACE

This section focuses on organization of classroom physical space. Please tick Yes or

No against the presence or absence for each statement.

S/N	Classroom Physical Space	YES	NO
1	Teacher creates classroom physical space by identifying classroom materials that will be used in the school for the year, map out the areas needed for instruction and activities, plan classroom pathways and arrange the classroom furniture		
2	Set a classroom that the teacher can see all the learners and all the learners can as well see the teacher		
3	Sets classroom space that the learners can see presentations and displays such as behavioural expectations, wall charts and information on the board		
4	Set classroom space that every learner can move about freely		
5	Teacher pays greater attention to the arrangement of classroom space		
6	Arranges desks in clusters rather than rows to create wide pathways for learners to explore		
7	Create classroom physical spaces to set up learning centers or corners or stations		
8	Creates indoor space for indoor learning activities		
9	Sets interesting classroom to provide learners with the freedom to play and learn on their own		
10	Classroom physical space supports comfort and allows learners to explore materials or events around them		
11	Classroom space has floor height, ceiling height, lighting, good ventilation, carpets, and couches and pillows		

APPENDIX C

