

## TEACHERS' DISCIPLINARY STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EKITI STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

This study explores the use of disciplinary strategies by teachers in public secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria, and the resulting impact on students' educational experiences and overall outcomes. Effective management of the classroom is one of the most important components of creating an effective learning environment for all students. However, the inability to effectively manage the behaviour of students can obstruct their academic success; thus, this study provides information on the importance of communication, the development of positive relationships, the establishment of clear expectations between teachers and students, and urgent attention to demonstrate acceptance of student behavior when applied in its appropriate context. In order to meet the objective of this study, the authors identified existing strategies that can be applied in classroom management; however, future empirical-based research must be conducted on the long-term effects of these current strategies and their contextual application in Ekiti State. There is evidence to support the need for continued professional development to better equip teachers with skills necessary to assist them in successfully managing classroom issues. Future studies should also examine any identified gaps through empirical studies to gain the perspective of students and to address any cultural issues affecting discipline in this Ekiti State, Nigeria. Improving disciplinary strategies will increase student achievement and create an environment of respect and academic excellence within public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

**Keywords:** Disciplinary Strategies, Teachers, Effective Teaching, Learning, Public Secondary Schools

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Discipline is a cornerstone for establishing a successful educational environment for public secondary school students. For public secondary school teachers to create a learning climate conducive to educational accomplishment and the full development of each student across all aspects of their lives, it is imperative that teachers have effective classroom behaviour management systems in place. Failure to utilise an effective disciplinary system can lead to excessive classroom interruptions due to disruptive behaviour and a lack of student participation in the educational process (Yonas et al., 2023; Zulfqar et al., 2025).

Strategies for managing discipline in a classroom environment have been shown to positively impact students' ability to focus, level of independence, responsibility for their own actions, development of a moral compass, and academic success. Positive classroom management strategies reduce classroom disruptions and are associated with increased student engagement and lower levels of classroom disruption (Yonas et al., 2023). By properly managing their classrooms and establishing relationships with students, teachers have been able to support children's success, involvement in activities, and positive relationships with peers while reducing off-task and disruptive behaviours (YILDIZ et al., 2021). Conversely, an undisciplined classroom negatively impacts the quality of instruction and student performance, leading to examination failures and the inability to develop moral character (Aymelo, 2022). There is also a strong correlation between the amount of discipline in a learning environment and the economic outcomes of learning (Karno et al., 2023). Furthermore, students' perceptions of authority in the school and their relationships with their teachers affect the amount of classroom disruption, with positive perceptions leading to less disruption (Way, 2011).

## 2.0 TYPES AND APPLICATIONS OF DISCIPLINARY STRATEGIES

Educators can apply an array of disciplinary measures for various situations. Corrective, assertive & preventative (Prasetyarini et al., 2020). The preventative approach of creating clear rules and a positive teacher/student relationship, as well as assigning student engagement in classroom activity, is also consistently recognised as effective (Afriadi and Fitri, 2025; Özdere & Karacabey, 2020; Shala et al., 2025). Contributing to positive behaviour is noted in several studies as a strategy to support it, along with examining the cause(s) of the behaviour by talking with students, their classmates, and their families (Shala et al., 2025). Others may also utilise direct or indirect disciplinary methods, such as verbal warnings, physical intervention, or referral to a specialist (Atıcı & Çekici, 2009; KORKUT & Karataş, 2019; Şahin & Tabak, 2023). Contrarily, punitive action can have negative effects on student mental health and the overall conduct of a class. Students may not be able to realise their full potential when they are in an environment that does not support them (Holt et al., 2022; Ijaz et al., 2023).

### 2.1 Context of Public Secondary Schools in Nigeria and Ekiti State

Classroom management is an area of neglect in Nigeria's public secondary schools, contributing significantly to indiscipline among students during the teaching/learning process

(Yonas et al., 2023). The specific lack of proper management in a Nigerian public secondary school gives rise to a web of challenges, including absenteeism, noise-making, rude behaviour, disobedience, truancy, restlessness, lack of attention, boredom, fighting, and the refusal to complete assignments (Francis & Oluwatoyin, 2019). The significance of implementing a strong, effective disciplinary strategy is vital to prevent these behaviours from impacting on students' academic progress (Francis & Oluwatoyin, 2019).

In Ekiti State, various factors affecting teaching quality and student performance in public secondary education have been studied. These include, but are not limited to, teachers' attitudes toward their jobs (Leonard, 2025) and principal support for teachers in developing effective classroom management practices and achieving desired academic success (Francis & Oluwatoyin, 2019). As noted by other researchers (Francis & Oluwatoyin, 2019; Hassan et al., 2023; Obiagu, 2020; Ugwu, 2019), a lack of teacher preparation, inadequate knowledge of subject(s) being taught, and poor teacher-student communication can result in ineffective classroom management and subsequent negative effects on students' academic achievement.

As a result of these factors, teacher training and continued development concerning discipline strategies are imperative to enhance education across Nigeria (Olakulehin, 2007; "Rethinking New Models for Teacher Development," 2018; Ssenyonga et al., 2018). Providing teachers with multiple options for teaching, as well as tools to manage a classroom effectively, creates a high-quality learning environment for students (Francis & Oluwatoyin, 2019; Idika, 2020).

Examining existing research has highlighted the need for strategies that promote effective teaching and learning in the secondary education environment- specifically in Ekiti State, Nigeria. That said, there are many areas where further study is needed on this subject:

The lack of detailed research into the contextual effectiveness of disciplinary strategies (preventive, corrective, or punitive) in Ekiti State's Public Secondary Schools. Most previous research has studied the overall challenges in Nigerian schools or have focused on Nigerian Schools as a Region, leaving an information gap of which the best methods for Teaching and Learning are best suited to the unique socio-cultural and educational context of Ekiti State, Ogwu (2016), and Yonas et al., (2023) all state that Teacher-Elder Guidance has been shown to be important in Ado Ekiti but it is lacking research on its systematic use or evaluated success across Ekiti State, Onaolapo & Makhasane (2024).

Second, while challenges faced during the implementation of effective classroom management techniques have been highlighted as some of the main barriers to successful classroom management (eg., teacher training, resource availability, and teacher workload), there has not yet been any substantive empirical work undertaken that establishes whether or not the challenges of the implementation of the classroom management has any correlation with the discipline practices employed by teachers in Ekiti State. Furthermore, it remains unclear how

these challenges affect their ability to communicate effectively with students in the class, thus limiting the ultimate goal of the classroom—improving student achievement in the classroom.

Additionally, the discussion about the future effect(s) of the various types of disciplinary measures (i.e., suspension) is current (Nkarichia et al. 2020; Nyang'ara 2025). Unfortunately, Ekiti State has limited longitudinal studies that examine the long-lasting impact(s) of disciplinary tactics on student academic performance, mental wellness, and sustained behaviour modification. Additionally, the comparison of the efficacy of the positive behaviour interventions and traditional punitive methods has not been studied in Ekiti State (Nkarichia et al., 2020).

Teacher views on how they discipline students have been studied (Odebode, 2020), but there is limited knowledge about how students view and experience the fairness, consistency, and effectiveness of those same strategies in Ekiti State. Understanding what students think about and how they feel toward disciplinary actions may help us understand how they respond to the treatment they receive, as well as how disciplinary actions affect their learning engagement and academic success. It is based on the above research gaps that the study is set to contextually explore teachers' disciplinary strategies for effective teaching and learning in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

### **3.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Teachers' disciplinary strategies have a direct effect on the quality of education in public secondary schools. Educational outcomes in Ekiti State are vital to students' growth and future opportunities. Understanding how teachers discipline students is of great importance. Although effective disciplinary practices help create a positive learning environment, there is little comprehensive research available about what specific strategies teachers use to accomplish this. Challenges such as increasing student indiscipline, differing cultural contexts, and insufficient training may prevent teachers from implementing effective disciplinary practices. Therefore, this research will investigate the various disciplinary strategies that teachers use in public secondary school systems within Ekiti State, evaluate the effectiveness of those strategies, and analyse their effect on teachers and students while providing information and suggestions to improve the teaching methods of teachers in the state, influence the formulation of education policy, and subsequently improve student education outcomes in the area.

### **4.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

Disciplinary Strategies for Effective Teaching and Learning in Public Secondary Schools in Ekiti State

The establishment and management of a disciplined and orderly teaching and learning environment within the Public Secondary Schools is the key to Successful Teaching, Learning

and a well-run School System. Effective use of robust disciplinary strategies by Teachers creates a positive climate for Learning, growth and success by ensuring that Students receive the educational services they require to be productive Members of Society, within the current environment in Nigeria, particularly within Ekiti State. The following literature reviews the Different Types of Disciplinary Strategies utilised by Teachers within the public secondary school system, highlighting and evaluating their effects and the Contextual Issues affecting their use to ensure optimal outcomes in teaching and Learning.

## 4.1 The Challenge of Indiscipline in Nigerian Secondary Schools

Indiscipline continues to be a significant problem in Nigerian secondary schools, significantly disrupting the teaching and learning process (Ehiane, 2014). Indiscipline is manifested in different forms and at different levels, including (but not limited to) the following: bullying, lateness, vandalism, drug and alcohol use, absenteeism, disrespect for teachers, not completing assignments, disruptive behavior, rudeness, noncompliance with authority, restlessness, disinterest in class, boredom, and fighting (Benewaa, 20020; Ehiane, 2014; Francis & Oluwatoyin, 2019). Indiscipline disrupts the teaching process, preventing teachers from delivering instruction and preventing students from actively participating in their learning (Yonas et al., 2023; Zulfqar et al., 2025). Because of the seriousness of these problems, teachers must develop effective discipline strategies to prevent negative behaviours from interfering with students' academic performance (Francis & Oluwatoyin, 2019). Current research suggests that current educational policies disempower secondary school personnel. This lack of empowerment contributes to the prevalence of student indiscipline and ultimately to stagnant academic performance (Ogwu, 2016).

## 4.2 Categories and Application of Disciplinary Strategies

The strategies utilised by teachers to maintain discipline can be categorised into three broad areas: preventive, corrective, and assertive (Prasetyarini et al., 2020). The most effective of these strategies are those that promote the development of self-control, good behaviour, and respect for authority within the school setting (Ehiane, 2014).

## 4.3 Preventive Strategies

Disciplinary strategies are a proactive approach to fostering a positive classroom environment and managing disruptive students. This is accomplished by creating clear guidelines for student expectations, which should be communicated to students in writing (Ehiane, 2014). Strong teacher-student relationships help to create a supportive learning environment where students are more likely to follow classroom policies (Zdere & Karacabey, 2020). Making learning tasks relevant to students helps to alleviate boredom, creating fewer occasions for students to be distracting or disruptive (Afriadi & Fitri, 2025). Teachers are role models for students, and students will imitate their behaviour if the teachers model positive behaviour. The teaching of

ethics and morality creates an environment in which students are encouraged to behave appropriately and be responsible for their actions (Odebode, 2020).

#### **4.4 Corrective and Intervention Strategies**

Teachers will sometimes implement corrective or intervention techniques to correct students' behaviours when preventive measures have been ineffective. Corrective techniques used include direct communication of verbal warnings and reprimands (Shala et al., 2025) and establishing parent partnerships with disciplinary committees, teachers, and parents to enforce discipline (Ehiane, 2014). Additionally, counselling services are offered to help children address the causes of their behaviour problems (Ayegbusi & Lucas, 2020; Ndlovu et al., 2023). Involving students by delegating responsibility to an agent, such as prefects or a disciplinary committee, may also foster a sense of personal accountability for their behaviour (Ehiane, 2014; George et al., 2017). More commonly, punishment, detention, or suspension is used as a tool to correct or intervene with a behaviour, and while there are proponents of the idea that the imposition of punitive measures teaches personal accountability (Ehiane, 2014), the appropriateness and effectiveness of this method remain in contention. Studies have determined that severe consequences like the use of corporal punishment may adversely affect students' psychological well-being, classroom behaviour and the management of classrooms efficiently, and may even create physical harm or create an increased absence from school (Ehiane, 2014; Holt et al., 2022; Ijaz et al., 2023).

#### **4.5 Cultural and Community-Based Approaches**

Cultural considerations may also influence discipline management in Nigeria. In Ado Ekiti, guidance from elders (teacher-elder culture) has been recognised as an important part of student discipline management. That is, an indigenous approach is used to manage student indiscipline (Onaolapo & Makhasane, 2024).

#### **4.6 Impact on Teaching and Learning**

There is considerable consensus among researchers that effective classroom management and disciplinary strategies contribute significantly to students' ability to remain focused on their studies, act responsibly, become independent thinkers, grow morally, and ultimately experience academic success (Yonas et al., 2023). The evidence supports the claim that effective classroom management strategies tend to lead to fewer instances of disruptive behaviour in the classroom, which in turn tends to increase the level of student engagement and, therefore, improve the success and participation of students in their courses (Afriadi & Fitri, 2025; Oliver et al., 2011; Salama et al., 2025; YILDIZ et al., 2021). Thus, a persistent lack of discipline in the classroom will result in poor academic performance, failure to pass examinations, and the hindrance of the development of positive character traits (Aymelo, 2022). Further, the degree to which a student learns discipline has been found to be strongly

correlated with a student's economic level of learning (Karno et al., 2023). Finally, the classroom management techniques employed by teachers have a direct effect on the academic performance a student achieves (ABBA & Awodoyin, 2024; Francis & Oluwatoyin, 2019).

## 4.7 Contextual Factors in Ekiti State

Numerous factors interact to determine how effective and widely used teacher discipline techniques are in Ekiti State. One way principals contribute to teachers' capacity to manage their classrooms successfully and meet the educational objectives set for them is by improving their skills (Francis & Oluwatoyin, 2019). Teachers' attitudes toward their students also play a role in how well students will perform academically (Leonard, 2025), demonstrating that training and developing teachers' disciplinary techniques can enhance the quality of education in the school (Tilije & Victoria, 2024). Studies indicate that when teachers are involved in decisions about academic issues, including disciplinary practices, they experience greater job satisfaction, increased willingness to accept added responsibility, and, thus, greater chances of maintaining effective classroom discipline (Ayegbusi & Lucas, 2020). There is still a barrier preventing many teachers from implementing effective discipline techniques, as many teachers struggle with the knowledge of the topic, proper preparation, effective communication skills, and socioeconomic barriers, among others, which exacerbate the challenge of properly managing their classrooms (Francis & Oluwatoyin, 2019; Hassan et al., 2023; Obiagu, 2020; Ugwu, 2019).

The Discipline Methods Used to Build Successful Conditions for Teaching and Learning in Public Secondary Schools in Ekiti State: The Importance of Using Effective Discipline Methods. The discipline methods used to build successful teaching and learning environments are among the most critical factors in creating them in Public Secondary Schools in Ekiti State. Effective discipline methods can include both preventive and corrective measures, among other things.

Students are still facing issues with indiscipline; however, it is evident that there is a positive relationship between using effective discipline methods to improve the academic performance of students. Additionally, within Ekiti State, the success or failure of any given discipline strategy will depend greatly upon the school administration, teacher attitudes, and the availability of professional development opportunities for all teachers. Future research on this topic may provide valuable insight by providing more detailed empirical data on the various research studies conducted in Ekiti State and comparing the effectiveness of a variety of specialised discipline approaches, as well as incorporating teacher decision-making authority and cultural awareness into 21st-century classroom management to foster student success and promote learning.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

Teachers at public secondary schools in Ekiti State use various strategies to influence students' educational experience and outcomes; therefore, emphasising the importance of effective Classroom Management as a preventive strategy for creating an environment conducive to learning. The results of the research indicate that, to reduce disruptive behaviour and increase engagement, teachers must clearly define their expectations, develop good relationships, and use prevention strategies. Throughout this research, the need for continual professional development has also been stressed, so that teachers can have both the theoretical knowledge and hands-on skills to effectively manage classroom dynamics and respond to student indiscipline. There are, however, limited studies regarding the long-term impact of these approaches in the unique Ekiti State context. Future research should focus on students' behaviour, performance, and well-being, while considering students' perspectives. In conclusion, implementing structured disciplinary approaches can improve educational outcomes and foster a positive school climate by involving teachers, school administrators, parents, and the community in a collaborative effort to promote discipline, respect, and academic excellence.

## 5.1 Recommendations

The following suggestions emanated from the conclusions of the study:

1. Clear expectations for student conduct should be developed and communicated by the school administration so that teachers and students both understand how their behaviour will be evaluated. This can be accomplished through an orientation programme that informs all staff and students about school expectations, and through ongoing reinforcement of these expectations in classrooms throughout the school year.
2. Teachers should be encouraged to establish strong, trusting relationships with their students as a means of providing support to create a positive learning environment. This can include increased check-ins with students, the creation of mentoring programmes, and the provision of activities that promote social-emotional learning.
3. Schools should implement proactive techniques for managing classroom behaviour (e.g., positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviours, implementing preventive strategies to address potential behaviour issues before they occur).
4. The Ministry of Education should consider funding future research to examine the long-term impact of discipline strategies on student behaviours, grades, and overall well-being in Ekiti State, in order to provide guidance on best practices for the unique context of education in the area.
5. The government should support collaboration among teachers, school administrators, parents and the community in developing a culture of discipline, respect and academic excellence within schools (e.g., community workshops and involvement within the school community).

6. The School Board should develop a procedure to periodically evaluate and assess the seemingly outdated disciplinary strategy.

## **5.2 Implications of the Findings**

The conclusions drawn about the disciplinary techniques used by public secondary schools in Ekiti State have multiple ramifications for stakeholders, including policymakers, educational researchers, education managers, teachers, parents, and society as a whole. Below are the ramifications of these findings.

### **5.3 Implication for Policymakers:**

Policymakers must develop, implement, and monitor formalised strategies for school discipline, including clear expectations for students and teachers, positive relationships among all stakeholders, and preventive measures in conjunction with a full-scope school discipline policy. Additionally, adequate funding must be provided to develop professional development programs for teachers to improve their classroom management skills and provide them with appropriate resources and training. Finally, school discipline policies should promote a team-based, collaborative approach among all stakeholders (teachers, school administrators, parents, and the community) to produce a school culture that supports respect and discipline.

### **5.4 Implications for Educational Researchers:**

It is essential that future research on this topic include longitudinal studies to track how disciplinary strategies impact student behaviours, academic achievement, and overall well-being over time. Future studies must include students' perspectives on the impact of disciplinary strategies to help researchers understand what it means to have a positive or negative experience with a disciplinary strategy and how this has affected students' learning and behaviour. It is important that researchers conduct an analysis of the cultural, social, and economic factors evidentially present in Ekiti State to see how these factors shape the effectiveness of current discipline strategies in use within Ekiti State.

### **5.5 Implications for Educational Managers and School Administrators:**

Establishing clear expectations and proactive initiatives that promote positive relationships between students/staff, while providing ongoing professional development opportunities to prepare educators for modern classroom management practices and sharing best practices, is the primary responsibility of school leadership. It is equally important to establish ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes to assess the effectiveness of disciplinary practices and make timely adjustments based on feedback and results.

### **5.6 Implications for Teachers:**

Effective classroom management is a key component of effective teaching for all teachers. By providing effective classroom management and monitoring student engagement, teachers can maximise students' ability to learn. Building a positive and productive working relationship with students is also essential. This positive relationship will improve student behaviour, creating a better learning environment. In addition, a teacher should participate in ongoing professional development to remain abreast of new strategies and research in classroom management and discipline.

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