Planning the Daily Work for Effective Classroom Management

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Abstract

The need for effective classroom management in education process cannot be over emphasised. To achieve this, there must be adequate planning, which is a continuous process for any projected course of action with the most efficient means. This paper identifies and discusses the steps involved in planning the daily work of a teacher, which is the pre-teaching phase of the curriculum. It is suggested that the classroom manager should not be rigid in following the lesson plan religiously because inevitable circumstances may interrupt the lesson. To ensure adequate planning for the daily work toward effective classroom management, conscientious, qualified and well motivated teachers should be encouraged in the school system.

Introduction

The need for effective classroom management in education process cannot be over emphasised especially nowadays when the demand on the available educational facilities far outweigh their supply.

Classroom management is the rational process by which classroom resources (i.e. human – the teacher and the learners; physical and instructional facilities; as well as time) are arranged and utilised so as to effectively and efficiently achieve the objectives in a particular lesson.

Effective classroom management is concerned with achieving desired results, and making proper decisions to avoid undesirable effects in the classroom encounter. The results desired are spelt out in the behavioural objectives of the lesson. While the undesirable effects include pupils lack of interest in the lesson and indiscipline.

It must be stressed that management functions and problems in all organisations, including the school and the classroom, are universal. Adesina (1980) pointed out that all, managers occupy critical-position, take vital decisions; and are expected to obtain results by establishing a suitable atmosphere that would ensure that the goals of the system, organisation or institution are fully met. In the classroom setting, Morrison and Melutyre (1973) are of the view that, "management and instruction are so closely interwoven that it is hard to tease out the components either chronologically or conceptually" (p. 141).

The role of management is to plan organise, integrate, and interrelate organisational activities and resources for the purpose of achieving pre-determined or identified objectives (Carlisle, 1975). Classroom may be well equipped or ill-equipped. In any case, it is the role of the teacher to ensure that the available facilities are optionally utilised to effect desired change in the behaviour of the learner. This is a complex task to perform because the teacher would have to be concerned with the complex activities of planning, organising, communicating directing, leading, co-ordinating, evaluating, and reporting.

Planning the Daily Classroom Work

Planning:

Planning is a continuous process of a projected course of action designed to lead to desired result with the most efficient means. It is the rational process of identifying objectives of an activity; identifying the needed resources and mapping out strategies for the use of the resources in performing tasks or duties to achieve the objectives.

A plan is the product of planning in written or report form for the future course of action. This considers a forecast of future circumstances and requirements in achieving set objectives.

There are three different types of plan. These are long - term plan, medium - term plan, and short - term plan. As related to the school system, the following can be examined;

(a) Long - term plan is the course syllabus, e.g., Primary School Syllabus, WAEC Syllabus, NCE Syllabus, etc;
(b) Medium - term plan is the annual or terminal or semester scheme of work broken into weekly programmes; and
(c) Short - term plan is the daily lesson plan (in lesson note form).

Planning a Lesson

Planning a lesson is the process of identifying the lesson objectives; identifying the required resources for use in the teaching/learning process, and mapping out the appropriate strategies to carry out the process (the activities for achieving) the set learning goals maximally.

Planning the lesson is the pre-teaching phase of the curriculum (Adeoye, 1988). , This enables the teacher to provide adequate answers to such questions as:

- what to teach/learn? (subject matter);
- why teaching/learning It? (lesson objectives);
- whom to teach? (the learners or the pupils/students in terms of their maturation, level of learning, and individual differences);
- where to teach/learn? (place of instruction - the classroom. the workshop or the laboratory in terms of the available physical resources);

- when to teach/learn? (the time or period of the day on the school time table): how to teach? (teaching strategies, or teaching techniques or methods);
- with what to teach/learn? (teaching/learning or instructional materials often referred to as audio-visual aids); and
- how to evaluate performance (measuring the achievement of the stated objectives and generally appraising the teaching/learning process).

Preparing the Daily Lesson Plan

There is no "specific way or form" of planning a lesson or writing lesson notes. Lesson plan and lesson notes are synonymously used in this paper, even though a lesson note is a more detailed form of a lesson plan.

The main features of a lesson plan are:

i.   Preamble (General Information)/Introduction
ii. Development
iii. Conclusion

The Preamble

The preamble section of a lesson plan forms the introductory part of it, and this contains general but basic or essential information about the lesson such as:

i.   The Subject
ii.   Lesson Topic
iii. Class
iv.   Number of Pupils in Class and Average Age
v.   Sex of Pupils and Number
vi.   Date and Time (Duration of the Lesson)
vii. Behavioural Objectives
viii. Instructional Materials
ix.   Teaching Methods
x.   Reference Materials
xi.   Entering (Entry) Behaviour (i.e. Previous Knowledge).

Items i - iv are stated as they manifest in a particular lesson without any influence by the teacher. But items vii - xi are determined by the teacher in relation to the lesson. Here, the teacher's knowledge, skills, experience and competency play prominent role in writing an appropriate lesson note.

Behavioural Objectives

These are clear and specific statements of expected learning outcomes in terms of learners' behaviour. The objective of a lesson is to bring about specific change in the behaviour of the learner, according to a nation's broad aims of education. Behavioural objective is directed toward, the attainment of a nation's educational aims within the specific learning situations in the classroom.

Behavioural objective, as advised by Orukotan (1190), should focus on the subject matter to be learnt and the behaviour to be demonstrated by the learner to show mastery or competency, It makes the teacher's intent to be clear, and tells people what the learners should be able to do after going through an instruction or planning experiences, This described the terminal behaviour in specific, clear, and measurable terms.

A good behavioural objective, according to Orukotan (1990), should consist of three aspects:

   i.   It should be stated as learning products and not as learning process;
   ii. It must state condition under which the learner will exhibit what he has achieved. The objective must state whether the learner will be given paper and pencil to write, or whether he will be given some instructional aids to manipulate, and
   iii. It must indicate level of acceptable performance. This states, for example, whether the students should be able to "list any fifteen states in Nigeria".

Behavioural objectives could be:

   i.   *Cognitive*: emphasising intellectual outcomes. The objectives in the cognitive domain of learning outcomes emphasise remembering or reproducing things that have presumably been learnt, and the solving of intellectual problems.
   ii. *Affective*: emphasising interest, attitudes, emotions, feelings, appreciation, tones, moods and values.
   iii. *Psychomotor*: emphasising motor or muscular skills, as well as manipulation of objects and materials. Objectives in the psychomotor domain of learning outcomes should relate mental activities with the physical movements of the learners.

An appropriate behavioural objective is the one that starts with appropriate phrases that can be observed and evaluated clearly. Many scholars have distinguished between acceptable and unacceptable phrases used for stating behavioural objectives (see, for example, Onwuegbu, 1979; Omotoso, 1981; Adesina, Daramola and Talabi, 1989; Orukotan, 1990).

Phrases cannot be observed nor evaluated, identified by Onwuegbu (1979), include:

   to appreciate; to know; to understand; to love; to like;
   to believe in; to have faith in; to have mastery of;
   to acquire; to grasp the significance of.

It is observed that these phrases do not state clearly *what* and *how* the learners will demonstrate the behaviour they acquire during the course of their study. They are not precise and not possible evaluate.

Some of the phrases that are observable and measurable in terms of learner's behaviour include:

> to mention; to list; to name; to state; to compare;
> to contrast; to construct; to solve: to write; to draw;
> to group; to define; to distinguish; to select; to tell;
> to demonstrate: to describe; to identify; to locate;
> to calculate; to measure; to weigh,

Each of these phrases stresses the learners' activities which are easy to observe and evaluate. The learner is the focus of attention in each of these learner-centred phrases.

Teachers are advised to be careful for choosing wrong phrases in staling behavioural objectives, because badly worded objectives may mislead them in their teaching efforts. Thus, behavioural objectives must be clearly and precisely stated in appropriate terms for effective teaching and learning to achieve effective classroom management.

Instructional Materials

These teaching/learning aids (materials) that could enhance teaching-learning effectiveness. These range from real objects, models, pictures to audio-tapes, f lrns video 'tapes (Fakornogbon, 1988).

Most teachers rely on the use of chalkboard and textbooks so much that they do not believe in the use of any other instructional materials; whereas these may be boring and could create learners' inattention. They may also not enhance the achievement of all the behavioural objectives set for the lesson.

The need to learn through the use of eyes, ears, nose, tongue and hands appropriately demands the use of appropriate instructional materials that should be stated as part of the lesson note.

It should, however, be noted that teachers are not to list facade instructional materials that would never be brought to the class, talk less of using them either appropriately or inappropriately. Furthermore, the instructional materials for use should be:

(i)	Accurate	(iv)	Bold	(vii)	Clear
(ii)	Appropriate	(v)	Brief	(viii)	Clean
(iii)	Artistic	(vi)	Bright	(ix)	Carefully finished
	(Farrant, 1980)				

Teaching Methods

These refer to the techniques or strategies the teacher could use to impart knowledge or influence the behaviour of the learners in specific situation.

There are numerous teaching methods available for the teacher's use. For a recall, these include lecture method, questioning technique, group teaching, individual instructions, project method, activity

method, story telling technique, play way method, and demonstration. There is no rule of the thumb guiding the choice of methods of teaching.

As commented by Olasehinde (19'88, p. 12), the choice of teaching methods by most teachers are often based on their own interests and conveniences rather than considering the learning needs and interests of the students. But if learning should be learner-centred, I the teaching methods for use should consider the learners' characteristics such as age level of intelligence, interest, previous knowledge and aptitude. Similarly, the subject matter, learning outcomes envisaged, time, space and the available resources should determine the choice of teaching methods. It is also salient to stress that the competence should also be a determining factor for choosing teaching methods.

It should be noted that no particular method is most suitable to teach a subject; rather a combination of methods would be appropriate for use. Whichever methods are chosen for use in a lesson should be well slated in the lesson note as part of the preliminary phase of the note.

Reference Materials

These are the sources from which teachers could derive their knowledge and the experience they want to share with the pupils in the classroom encounter. The materials include textbooks, journals, newspapers, periodicals, encyclopaedia, dictionary, monographs, and research reports.

Reference materials are stated as part of the preliminary section of a lesson note for possible reference. They expose the teacher to works related to the subject matter.

Entering or Entry Behaviour

This is the pupil's assumed previous knowledge that is related to the new lesson. This has been described as "the learner's background or readiness which enables him to follow and master a current lesson" (Onwuegbu, 1979, p. 64).

It is erroneous to think and write entry behaviour as though it must originate from the previous lesson, or that it must have some connection with it. For example, the entry behaviour of pupils to learn multiplication of simple numerals may be stated as:

(i)   the pupils could count numbers;
(ii)   the pupils could add simple numerals; rather than:
   i.   the pupils could measure distances between two points or
   ii.   the pupils could distinguish between a point and a line which may be the learning outcomes from the previous lesson.

The learner's entry behaviour is the result of his interaction with his total environment (Onwuegbu, 1979). Learner's environment is wider in scope than the classroom; because this include the home, the school, the market, the radio, the television set, the stadium, etc. Hence, the teacher should consider these in relating to the subject matter in writing the lesson note to ensure that the new lesson is built upon the pupils' previous learning experience.

To get cautioned from misconceiving entering behaviour, there is the need to note Olaitan's (1986) list of "Common Mistakes to Avoid About Entering Behaviour". These mistakes include:

i.   assuming entering behaviour to mean only thle previous knowledge of a pupil In a previous lesson;
ii.   assuming entering behaviour to me~ the introduction to topic;
iii. taking entering behaviour as a revision or summary of the previous lesson;
iv.   believing that the purpose of entering behaviour is to assess the pupil's intelligence rather than helping the teacher to start the lesson on the basis of the pupils' experience; and
v.   assuming that entering behaviour should exclusively be tested orally through questions rather than either through written tests or activities.

The Development of the Lesson

This is the main body or the core part of the lesson note. This is a stage at which the teaching-learning activities are stated. As related to the development of the lesson,

Adeniyi (1988, p. 19) stated that:

> This is the body of the lesson where ground is prepared for the attainment of the stated behavioural objectives of the lesson. This aspect of the daily lesson plan should describe; step by step activities of both the teacher and the students from the beginning of the lesson to the end. The diagram(s) and other illustrations should be recorded at the appropriate step, and the questions designed to ascertain the progress of the lesson should be clearly written down.

The main body of the lesson note which is the development stage may be written in essay (vertical) form or tabular (horizontal) form (Adeoye, 1998). The former is the traditional form while the latter is the modern form of writing the lesson note. Whether essay type or tabular type is chosen, the important thing to emphasise in the development of a lesson is that it should progress from the simplest to the most complex facts, concepts or knowledge to impart. This should neither be scanty nor too detailed.

The development phase of the lesson may include the introduction to the lesson, which among other things:

(i)   sets the stage for the lesson;
(ii)   charges the classroom learning atmosphere for the new lesson to commence;
(iii) establishes links between past and present lessons;
(iv)   concentrates the attention and arouses the interest of the learners.

Introduction of the lesson may be separated from the development of the lesson, in which case this is treated as an entity of its own in the lesson plan. The most important thing is to write the introduction in precise and clear statements that are relevant to the new lesson.

Conclusion of the Lesson

The conclusion is the climax of the lesson where the output (outcome) of the teaching-learning process is measured. The basic activities at this stage include:

(i)   revision of what has been taught/learnt;
(ii)   summary of the salient points of the lesson;
(iii)   evaluation of the lesson; and
(iv)   giving assignments to the learners for further learning.

Some teachers always mix up the conclusion with the evaluation or summary. What is important, however, is to ensure that the pupils are evaluated after the teaching/learning process, are relevant assignment (home-work) should be given to the pupils to enhance remembering or to avoid forgetting.

Revision of what has been taught/learnt during the lesson does not, and should not mean "re-teaching the whole lesson". Rather, it is a way of recapitulating facts in the lesson which may be in summary form.

Summary of the lesson may be drawn from the pupils' responses to teacher's questions. It may be built from the evaluation of the teaching-learning outcomes. This should be precise, logical and relevant to the lesson. Pupils often over rely on this at the expense of the teaching. If care is not taken, this may lead to memorisation of facts and regurgitation of such facts subsequently.

There should be assignment at the end of each lesson to keep the learners busy and to enhance continuity of the subject matter. The assignment should not be vague; rather it should be stated in observable and measurable terms. Phrases used for behavioural objectives are considered appropriate for use in giving assignment to the learners.

Conclusion

Every teacher should always plan and write out lesson note for teaching the lesson because it enables the teacher to manage the teaching-learning process efficiently and effectively. However, the teacher should not be rigid in following the lesson note, because inevitable circumstances may interrupt the lesson. The teacher should therefore, be flexible in the use of the lesson note, no matter well prepared such plan may be.

No civil engineer would embark on building construction without a plan; no lawyer would go to court without properly planning for the case at hand; no business man would engage in a business transaction without a plan, etc. In essence, planning is the starting point of any management activity. But it is unfortunate that many teachers hate planning for their lessons before teaching, because such people believe that it is time and energy consuming. The fact is that teaching is very delicate and demanding. Thus, it is expected that dedicated and intelligent people are to handle teaching matters.

Majority of the teachers at all levels of the Nigerian educational system are either unqualified, not interested, or distressed. This has a lot of effects on their attitudes to the job as well as their performance of the job. Whoever has chosen to remain on the job as a teacher and not "a cheater" should, involve in planning the daily work for effective teaching and learning in the school system.

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