



Teachers' Attitudes and Beliefs Regarding Classroom Management Practices in Private Basic Schools in Accra South Metropolis

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Abstract: This study examined the attitudes and beliefs of teachers regarding classroom management practices in private basic schools within the Accra South Metropolis. Employing an ex post facto design and a cross-sectional survey approach, data were collected from 202 Junior High School teachers across three selected schools. The majority of teachers possessed significant teaching experience and solid educational qualifications, contributing to a stable and seasoned workforce. Teachers predominantly preferred immediate and interactive assessment methods, such as exercises immediately after teaching and oral questioning during lessons. However, this reliance on external sources for test items and a lack of professional development in test construction were identified as areas needing attention. The study also revealed strong commitments by teachers to maintaining examination integrity and fairness, with most teachers ensuring good seating arrangements and avoiding biased scoring practices. Gender differences in classroom management styles were noted, with female teachers employing more nurturing strategies compared to their male counterparts. These insights underscore the need for targeted professional development programs that address both nurturing and disciplinarian approaches, enhance test construction skills, and promote consistent and fair classroom management practices. By addressing these gaps, policymakers and school administrators can enhance the quality of education and create more conducive learning environments, ultimately benefiting student outcomes in private basic schools within the Accra South Metropolis.

Keywords: Classroom management, teacher attitudes & beliefs, private basic schools, Accra South Metropolis, educational practices

1. INTRODUCTION

Classroom management practices are crucial for creating an effective learning environment, especially in private basic schools. These practices not only influence students' learning outcomes but also shape their attitudes towards education. Teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding classroom management are integral to successfully implementing these practices (GES, 2020). Classroom management encompasses a range of activities and strategies that teachers use to maintain an orderly learning environment (GES, 2020). Emmer and Sabornie (2015) stated that effective classroom management includes setting clear expectations, monitoring student behavior, appropriate assessment techniques and fostering a positive classroom climate. These practices are vital in private basic schools where diverse student backgrounds and expectations necessitate tailored management strategies (Marzano, 2013).

The attitudes and beliefs of teachers significantly influence their classroom management practices (GES, 2020). Teachers who believe in a structured and supportive environment are more likely to implement strategies that promote student engagement and minimize disruptions (Wubbels et al., 2015). Conversely, teachers with a more authoritarian belief system may rely on strict discipline and control, impacting the classroom atmosphere and student-teacher relationships (Freiberg, 2002). Gender differences also play a role in classroom management practices. Research by Martin and Yin (2017) indicates that female teachers often employ more nurturing and supportive strategies compared to their male counterparts, which may favor a more disciplinarian approach. This finding aligns with the notion that gender can influence classroom management styles, potentially affecting the overall classroom atmosphere and student-teacher relationships. This gender disparity can influence the overall effectiveness of classroom management and student outcomes.

In the context of Ghana, understanding these dynamics is essential for improving educational practices in private basic schools. The Ghana Education Service (GES) has emphasized the need for professional development programs that address classroom management skills (GES, 2020). However, there is limited research on how teachers' attitudes

and beliefs specifically impact classroom management in the Ghanaian context. The Accra South Metropolis, with its diverse population and varying educational needs, provides a unique setting for this study. According to the 2019 Population and Housing Census, the metropolis has many private basic schools, highlighting the importance of effective classroom management practices in these institutions (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013).

Classroom management is a critical aspect of teaching that significantly impacts students' learning experiences and outcomes (GES, 2020). Research has consistently shown that teachers' attitudes and beliefs about classroom management play a crucial role in shaping their practices and strategies. Teachers' beliefs about the importance of a structured and supportive environment influence their adoption of strategies that promote student engagement and minimize disruptions (Wubbels et al., 2015). Effective classroom management has been linked to improved student outcomes, including higher academic achievement and better behavioral adjustment. Marzano (2013) emphasized that research-based strategies in classroom management can significantly enhance teaching effectiveness and student learning. A well-managed classroom creates an environment conducive to learning, where students feel safe and motivated to participate actively.

The role of professional development in enhancing teachers' classroom management skills cannot be overstated. The Ghana Education Service (GES) has recognized the need for ongoing professional development programs focused on classroom management (GES, 2020). These programs aim to equip teachers with the skills necessary to create effective learning environments and address diverse student needs. However, as noted by Kuranchie (2014), there is limited research on the specific impact of such programs in the Ghanaian context, particularly within private basic schools. Teachers often face various challenges in implementing effective classroom management practices. Freiberg (2002) identified that new teachers, in particular, may struggle with establishing authority and maintaining order in the classroom. Additionally, the lack of resources and support can hinder teachers' ability to manage classrooms effectively. This is particularly relevant in the context of Ghana, where disparities in educational resources

between public and private schools can affect the implementation of classroom management strategies. The methodological approaches used in classroom management studies vary, with many employing quantitative methods to explore the relationships between teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and practices. Ary et al. (2002) advocate for the use of quantitative methods in educational research to address questions of relationships, cause and effect, and current status.

This study employs an ex post facto design and a cross-sectional survey approach to explore the relationship between classroom management practices and teachers' attitudes and beliefs. The quantitative method is chosen to comprehensively analyse numerical data collected from a significant sample of teachers. This approach aligns with Ary et al. (2002), who advocate for quantitative methods in educational research to address questions of relationships, cause and effect, and current status. The findings of this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on classroom management in Ghana. By examining teachers' specific attitudes and beliefs in private basic schools, the study aims to provide insights that can inform policy and practice. Ultimately, the goal is to enhance the quality of education and promote a positive learning environment for students in the Accra South Metropolis..

2. METHOD

Study Area

The study area was the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), which is one of the 254 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies in Ghana. It is among the 26 districts in the Greater Accra Region with a population of 1,665,086 as of 2020. The Metropolitan Assembly was established in 1898 but has gone through several changes in terms of name, size and number of sub-Metros. When Ghana returned to constitutional rule in 1993, it derived its legal basis from Local Government Act, 1993, (Act 462) which currently has been amended as the Local Governance Act, 2016 (ACT 936), and under Legislative Instrument (L.I) 2034.

According to the 2020 Population and Housing Census, the total population of the Metropolis was 1,665,086, with females constituting 51.9 percent and males 48.1 percent. The Assembly

has sixteen (16) Departments and other Units with Heads of Departments who report directly to the Metro Coordinating Director (MCD) and ultimately to the Metro Chief Executive (Mayor). The General Assembly meetings are presided over by the Presiding Member (PM). The General Assembly has a membership of 55, comprising 41 elected members, 14 government appointed members, 6 members of parliament, and the Metro Chief Executive, who also chairs the Executive Committee. In the performance of its functions, AMA works through 14 Sub-Committees. These Sub-Committees perform deliberative functions and submit recommendations to the Executive Committee for further deliberation and then to the General Assembly for final decisions and implementation. The 14 Sub-Committees include: Social Services; Finance and Administration; Development Planning; Revenue Mobilization; Justice and Security; Education; Works; Environment; Youth and Sports; Culture and Trade Tourism and Industry; Disaster Management; Food and Agriculture; Health; and Women and Children. The AMA has the vision of a smart, sustainable, resilient city with a mission to improve the quality of life of people living within the city of Accra by providing leadership and opportunities for social and economic development while maintaining a clean, attractive and secured environment. The core functions are enshrined in Section 12(3) of Local Governance Act, 2016 (ACT 936) which establishes the Assembly (ama.gov.gh). The selected schools for this study, namely, Bishop Bowers School, St. Theresa's School, and St. Bernadette School are all located in AMA.

Research Design

According to Kuranchie (2014), research design refers to the specific strategy employed for collecting, analyzing, and reporting research. This study utilized an ex post facto design and descriptive research, specifically adopting a cross-sectional survey approach. The ex post facto design was deemed suitable as it examined the cause-and-effect relationship between variables, particularly the relationship between classroom management and gender differences in teacher attitudes and beliefs. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) describe a cross-sectional study as providing a "snapshot" of a population at a specific time. This approach involves gathering data from respondents at a single moment or within a brief time frame, typically collecting data

from multiple groups or types of individuals. The cross-sectional design was chosen due to the self-reporting nature of existing beliefs and attitudes among school teachers. In terms of research approach, this study adopted a quantitative method. The quantitative approach aligns well with the research design, addressing questions of relationships, cause and effect, or current status by collecting and statistically analyzing numerical data (Ary et al., 2002).

Population

Population refers to the specific group of individuals or objects that exhibit the characteristics under investigation in a study. It encompasses all potential cases that make up a recognized whole (Yount, 2006). The target population for this study included all teachers from the three selected schools. The accessible population, however, consisted of Junior High School (JHS) teachers from these schools, representing the group that was readily available for the study.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Three hundred and thirty-six teachers representing the accessible population were selected from public junior high schools for the study. A sample size of two hundred and nineteen was used for the study. This sample size was chosen using table for determining sample size from a given population provided by Krejcie and Morgarn (1970) as cited in Sarantakos (2005) which shows that for a population of 336, a sample size of 219 should be adequate. However, to cater for non-response, a sample size of 240 was used. A disproportionate stratified sampling procedure was adopted at the second stage for the selection of the respondents (teachers), with each school selected having five teachers, irrespective of the subject he or she teaches in the school. With this procedure, representative sample for both schools and teachers were obtained. The selected schools were serially coded. In each school, the special code numbers for the teachers were then written on pieces of papers and were put in an urn. Simple random sampling technique was then used to select five teachers in each public junior high school. The slips of papers were picked one after the other without looking into the pool. Once a number code representing a teacher was selected, it was recorded as a sample with the urn shaken while the chosen piece of paper put back into the urn and reshuffled.

The process was repeated in each school till the 240 teachers were obtained for the study.

Research Instruments

The tool that was used to gather data from the participants was the questionnaire that consisted of both open-ended and close-ended questions (see Appendix A). The introductory part of the questionnaire briefly explained the purpose of the study. Also, it informed respondents that their participation in the study was voluntary and that their responses would be treated as confidential. Part one of the questionnaire items dealt with respondents' demographic information: age, gender, educational qualification, and years of teaching experience. Part two of the questionnaire for teachers sought information on teachers' attitudes and beliefs about classroom management practices in schools.

Validity and Reliability Evidence

According to Fraenkel et al., (2012), the content and face validity of the research instrument must be determined by expert judgment. Therefore, to ascertain the validity of the content, the items on the questionnaire were shown to my supervisors for expert review. This was to examine whether: (a) the items were related to the research questions; (b) the items elicited the appropriate responses from the respondents; (c) the vocabulary structure was appropriate; (d) the items were properly arranged; (e) the items fitted into sections they had been placed; and (f) if any of the items were ambiguous. The suggestions the supervisors gave were used to improve the instrument and thereby helped establish the content and face validity of the instrument.

The reliability coefficients for the piloted instrument indicate acceptable levels of internal consistency across all five scales. The scale for "Teachers' assessment mode and formats," with 7 items, has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.76, suggesting good consistency among the items. Similarly, the scale for "Teachers' test construction practices," comprising 13 items, shows a reliability coefficient of 0.71, which is also acceptable. "Test administration practices," with 6 items, has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.70, indicating the minimum acceptable reliability, suggesting some potential for improvement. The "Test scoring practices" scale, consisting of 7 items, has a reliability coefficient of 0.72, reflecting a satisfactory level of consistency. Lastly, the "Grading

practices of teachers" scale, with 5 items, has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.73, demonstrating acceptable internal consistency. Overall, the Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0.70 to 0.76, indicating that the scales were reliably measuring their respective constructs, though ongoing refinement could further enhance their reliability.

Data Collection Procedure

Permission was sought from the headmistresses of the selected schools for the study before the teachers were served with the questionnaire. However, a letter of introduction was obtained from the University of Education, Winneba and sent to the headmistresses of the school for permission to undertake the research, letter of acceptance was offered to me before the research study was conducted. This was done to assure the schools that the study was for academic research purposes and to assure the respondents of confidentiality. Before administering the research instrument, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to participants. They were assured that data to be collected from them would remain anonymous and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. Thereafter, the questionnaires were personally distributed among the teachers in their respective schools. Respondents were given 30 minutes to respond to the items in the questionnaires. On the 19th to 23rd of March 2022, the researcher administered the questionnaire to circuits one, four and five with the assistance of the head teachers in the schools. The questionnaire for circuits two and three was administered on the 26th to 30th of March 2022 by the researcher with the assistance of the head teachers in the schools. In each school, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the head and the sampled teachers, and assured them of anonymity and confidentiality of their participation in the study. Questionnaires were then administered to the teachers with the assistance of the heads.

There was time for questions, during which respondents had the opportunity to ask questions on items that were unclear to them before responding to the questionnaire. This was because it helps to erase respondents' biases and prejudices (Trochim, 2000). This ensured good contact with the teachers to further explain the purpose of the study so that the researcher won the commitment of the teachers towards responding to items on the questionnaire and submitting them in good time. For the sake of anonymity and confidentiality of the results, participants were instructed not to write either their names or the name of their school on the questionnaire. The researcher used two weeks to collect the data for the study.

Data Analysis

The data collected were coded, described, analyzed and interpreted. Since the study was descriptive and most of the items were categorical, the normal scale was considered appropriate. Quantitative analysis involving frequency and percentage was used in the analysis of the data. Numerical measures used in this study were few and included simple percentages used to describe quantities in some situations.

3. RESULTS

The study aimed to examine teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding classroom management practices in private basic schools within the Accra South Metropolis. A total of 219 questionnaires were distributed, and 202 were fully completed and returned, resulting in a response rate of 92%.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the teachers included age, gender, years of teaching, and educational qualifications. Table 1 presents detailed information on the distribution.

Table 1: Teachers' demographics characteristics

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	92	45.5
Female	110	54.5
Years of Teaching		
From1-3yrs	25	12.4
4-7years	47	23.3
8-11years	59	29.2

12years and above	71	35.1
Educational Qualification		
Cert A	10	2
Diploma in education	37	18.3
Bachelor in education	133	65.8
BA/B.Sc without education	15	7.4
Master's in education	9	4.5
MA/M.Sc	4	2.0
M.Phil	2	1.0
Age range		
20-29	39	19.3
30-39	115	56.9
40-49	41	20.3
50-59	7	3.5

The demographic data of teachers reveals a diverse workforce with notable trends in gender, teaching experience, educational qualifications, and age distribution. In terms of gender distribution, female teachers constitute a slight majority, representing 54.5% of the sample, while male teachers account for 45.5%. This gender disparity highlights a trend often observed in the teaching profession, where female educators frequently outnumber their male counterparts, potentially influencing teaching styles and school dynamics. Examining the years of teaching experience, the data shows a broad range of experience levels among the teachers. A significant portion of the teaching staff (35.1%) has over 12 years of experience, indicating a seasoned and potentially stable workforce. Meanwhile, teachers with 8-11 years of experience make up 29.2% of the sample, and those with 4-7 years constitute 23.3%. Only 12.4% of the teachers have less than four years of experience, suggesting that the majority of the teachers are well-versed in their profession and likely bring a wealth of practical knowledge and classroom management skills. The educational qualifications of the teachers further underscore their preparedness and expertise. The majority of the teachers (65.8%) hold a Bachelor's degree in Education, reflecting the standard qualification for many teaching positions. Additionally, 18.3% of teachers possess a Diploma in Education, which signifies a solid educational theory

and practice foundation. However, fewer teachers have pursued advanced degrees, with only 4.5% holding a Master's in Education, 2% with an MA or M.Sc., and a mere 1% with an M.Phil. This distribution may indicate potential professional development and growth areas, particularly in encouraging further academic advancement among the teaching staff.

The age distribution of the teachers indicates a relatively youthful to middle-aged workforce. The largest age group comprises teachers aged 30-39, who comprise 56.9% of the sample (Table 1). This age range suggests a vibrant and dynamic teaching staff, likely to be in the peak years of their professional careers. Teachers aged 20-29 years account for 19.3%, highlighting the presence of newer entrants to the profession. Meanwhile, those in the 40-49 years age range represent 20.3%, and only a small fraction (3.5%) are aged 50-59 years, approaching retirement. The demographic profile of the teachers illustrates a predominantly female workforce with substantial teaching experience and solid educational backgrounds. Most teachers are in the 30-39 age range, suggesting a balance of youthful energy and experienced maturity within the teaching staff. This demographic information can be instrumental in workforce planning, identifying professional development needs, and fostering teacher leadership potential.

Teachers Assessment Modes and Formats

The assessment modes and formats of the teachers are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Teachers assessment modes and formats

Statements	More often	Often	Not used
I give exercise to assess my students immediately after teaching	139(68.8)	50(24.8)	13(6.4)
I give homework to assess my students	79(39.1)	103(51.0)	20(9.9)
I ask oral questions to assess my students during lesson periods	138(68.3)	56(27.7)	8(4.0)
I give exams to assess my students at the end of the term	145(71.8)	50(24.8)	7(3.5)
I give essay items to assess my students	42(20.8)	117(57.9)	43(21.3)
I construct multiple-choice items to assess my students	58(28.7)	104(51.5)	40(19.8)
I use true/false items to assess my students	16(7.9)	45(22.3)	141(69.8)

The data from Table 2 on teachers' assessment modes and formats reveal that the most frequently employed methods include giving exercises immediately after teaching (68.8%), asking oral questions during lesson periods (68.3%), and conducting exams at the end of the term (71.8%). A significant majority of teachers commonly use these methods to assess their students. In contrast, true/false items are the least utilized assessment format, with 69.8% of teachers indicating they do not use them. Homework and multiple-choice items are

also popular, with over half of the teachers (51.0% and 51.5%, respectively) using these methods often. This indicates a preference for immediate and interactive assessment methods and a reliance on traditional end-of-term exams. The lower usage of true/false items suggests a possible perception of their limited capacity to evaluate more profound understanding. In contrast, the frequent use of homework and multiple-choice items reflects their effectiveness in regular assessment practices.

Teachers Test Construction Practices

Table 3: Teachers test construction practices

Statement	More often	Often	Not used
I write individual test items at least two weeks before the date	34(16.8)	92(45.5)	76(37.6)
I prepare a marking scheme immediately after constructing my items	113(55.9)	68(33.7)	21(10.4)
I copy questions from B.E.C.E. examinations questions	39(19.3)	91(45.0)	72(35.6)
I develop test items only when it is time to assess students.	22(10.9)	63(31.2)	117(57.9)
I use a test specification table when writing test items	35(17.3)	80(39.6)	87(43.1)
I copy test question from textbooks	46(22.8)	90(44.6)	66(32.7)
I match instructional objectives with test Items	98(48.5)	83(41.6)	21(10.4)
I write items based on information that students know	71(35.1)	90(44.6)	41(20.3)

I arrange objectives test answers in a pattern to make scoring easy	36(17.8)	55(27.2)	111(55.0)
I consider the purpose of the test before developing test items	111(55.0)	71(35.1)	20(9.9)
My school conducts in-service training in test construction for teachers	21(10.4)	54(26.7)	127(62.9)
I prepare more items than needed before I review and select some for the test	42(20.8)	91(45.0)	69(34.2)
I evaluate the test as a whole before I make the final copy	98(48.5)	78(38.6)	26(12.9)

The data on teachers' test construction practices reveal several key trends (Table 3). Most teachers demonstrate proactive behaviors, such as preparing marking schemes immediately after constructing items, with 55.9% doing this frequently. Similarly, 55.0% of teachers consistently consider the purpose of the test before developing test items, indicating a thoughtful approach to test creation. Matching instructional objectives with test items is also a common practice, with 48.5% of teachers doing this regularly. However, there are areas where teachers rely heavily on external sources. For instance, 45.0% often copy questions from B.E.C.E. examinations, and 44.6% frequently use textbook questions. This suggests a reliance on pre-existing materials rather than developing unique test items.

Additionally, 57.9% of teachers do not develop test items in advance; instead, they create them only when it is time to assess students. A significant concern highlighted by the data is the lack of professional development in test construction, with 62.9% of teachers reporting that their schools do not conduct in-service training in this area. This gap indicates a need for improved training and support for teachers to enhance their test construction skills. While many teachers show proactive and thoughtful test construction practices, there is a noticeable dependence on external sources and a lack of professional development opportunities, pointing to areas for potential improvement in educational support and resources.

Administration Practices

Table 4: Test on administration practices

Statement	More often	Often	Not used
I ensure good seating arrangements to prevent students from copying from each other	152(75.2)	42(20.8)	8(4.0)
During examinations, I tell students that if they do not write fast, they will fail.	30(14.9)	38(18.8)	134(66.3)
During examinations, I prepare for and expect emergencies.	32(15.8)	87(43.1)	83(41.1)
I give hints to students when they ask about individual test items during examination.	10(5.0)	17(8.4)	175(86.6)
I read novels, newspaper or “whatsApp” friends when I invigilate tests/exams	11(5.4)	13(6.4)	178(88.1)
content/topics that the tests/examination cover	37(18.3)	64(31.7)	101(50.0)

Based on the data provided in Table 4 regarding test administration practices, it is evident that there are varied approaches among educators. The practice of ensuring good seating arrangements to prevent students from copying is prevalent, with a significant majority of 75.2% of respondents

frequently employing this strategy and an additional 20.8% using it often. This underscores a strong commitment to maintaining the integrity of examinations and minimizing cheating opportunities. Conversely, only a small percentage, 4.0%, do not engage in this practice, highlighting its general

acceptance as a necessary measure. When it comes to warning students about writing speed during examinations, a different trend emerges. A substantial 66.3% of respondents do not use the tactic of telling students they will fail if they do not write quickly. This suggests that most educators prioritize comprehension and accuracy over speed, recognizing that undue pressure could negatively impact students' performance. Only 14.9% use this warning more often, indicating that it is not a widely adopted practice.

The data also reveal a balanced approach to preparing for and expecting emergencies during examinations. While 43.1% of respondents often prepare for emergencies, a close 41.1% do not consider this a significant concern. This suggests a split in perception regarding the likelihood and importance of unforeseen events during exams, with some educators being proactive while others might rely on the inherent stability of the exam environment. Interestingly, the practice of giving hints to students during examinations is largely avoided, with 86.6% of respondents not engaging in this behavior. This high percentage reflects a strong adherence to ethical standards and fairness in testing, ensuring that all students are assessed equally without undue advantage. Similarly, the majority of educators

(88.1%) do not indulge in distractions such as reading novels newspapers, or using WhatsApp while invigilating exams. This indicates high professionalism and attentiveness, which are crucial for maintaining a controlled and disciplined examination environment.

Lastly, the approach to covering specific content or topics in tests and examinations shows variability. Half of the respondents (50.0%) do not consistently align test content with the topics covered, suggesting a potential gap in ensuring comprehensive assessment. Meanwhile, 18.3% often and 31.7% more often make an effort to cover relevant content, indicating a mixed adherence to curricular alignment in test preparation. The data highlight a strong commitment among educators to maintain examination integrity and fairness through good seating arrangements and avoiding hints. However, practices such as warning students about writing speed and preparing for emergencies vary widely. Additionally, most educators remain vigilant during invigilation, avoiding distractions to ensure a fair testing environment. The mixed approach to covering test content points to potential differences in teaching and assessment strategies, reflecting a broader range of practices and priorities in test administration.

Scoring of Tests

Table 5: Test Scoring Practices

Statement	More often	Often	Not used
I score essay tests, question by question	71(35.1)	79(39.1)	52(25.7)
I prepare marking schemes for essay tests after students have taken the test.	64(31.7)	54(26.7)	84(41.6)
I periodically re-score previously scored papers to check consistency in scoring	28(13.9)	69(34.2)	105(52.0)
I score answer scripts with the names of the students known to me	13(6.4)	12(5.9)	177(87.6)
I keep previously scored items out of sight when scoring the rest of the items	34(16.8)	61(30.2)	107(53.0)
The first few essays I score influence the rest of the scores I give	12(5.9)	26(12.9)	164(81.2)
I give a separate mark for the mechanics of writing such as correct grammar, flow of expression etc. when scoring essays	64(31.7)	64(31.7)	74(36.6)

In table 5, the findings reveal a significant number of teachers (74.2%) score essay tests question by question, indicating a preference for this method to ensure consistency and fairness.

Additionally, 58.4% of teachers prepare marking schemes after students have taken the test, while 52.0% do not re-score previously scored papers to check for consistency, highlighting a potential area

for improvement. An overwhelming 87.6% of teachers score answer scripts without knowing the students' names, suggesting a strong preference for maintaining anonymity to avoid bias. However, more than half (53.0%) do not keep previously scored items out of sight, which could introduce bias in scoring. Interestingly, 81.2% of teachers report that the first few essays they score do not influence the rest, indicating efforts to maintain objectivity. Finally, teachers are nearly evenly split on giving separate marks for writing mechanics, with 63.4% practising it. These findings suggest that while many teachers adhere to consistent scoring methods, there are significant variations and opportunities for standardization and professional development to enhance the fairness and reliability of test-scoring practices.

4. DISCUSSION

The study examined teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding classroom management practices in private basic schools within the Accra South Metropolis. The findings reveal several key insights into classroom management practices and the factors influencing these practices among teachers. The majority of teachers have significant teaching experience, with 35.1% having over 12 years of experience and 29.2% having 8-11 years. This extensive experience is likely to contribute to a stable and seasoned workforce capable of implementing effective classroom management strategies. Experienced teachers are often better equipped to establish authority and maintain order, which is crucial for creating a conducive learning environment (Freiberg, 2002). The educational qualifications of the teachers indicate a well-prepared workforce, with 65.8% holding a Bachelor's degree in Education. This high level of qualification is essential for effective classroom management, as teachers with solid educational backgrounds are more likely to implement research-based strategies that enhance student learning and engagement (Marzano, 2013). However, the relatively low percentage of teachers with advanced degrees suggests potential areas for professional development. The data on teachers' assessment and test construction practices highlight a preference for immediate and interactive methods, such as giving exercises immediately after teaching (68.8%) and asking oral questions during lesson periods (68.3%). These practices align with the principles of formative assessment, which are crucial

for providing ongoing feedback and promoting student engagement (Wubbels et al., 2015). However, there is a noticeable reliance on external sources for test items, with 45.0% of teachers often copying questions from B.E.C.E. examinations and 44.6% from textbooks. This reliance on pre-existing materials could indicate a lack of confidence or resources in developing unique test items. Additionally, the lack of professional development in test construction, reported by 62.9% of teachers, underscores the need for targeted training programs to enhance teachers' skills in this area (GES, 2020).

The study also revealed strong commitments to maintaining examination integrity, with 75.2% of teachers ensuring good seating arrangements to prevent cheating. This practice is critical for upholding the fairness and validity of assessments. Conversely, most teachers (66.3%) do not tell students they will fail if they do not write quickly, reflecting a focus on comprehension and accuracy over speed, which is essential for reducing anxiety and improving performance (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015). Interestingly, most teachers (87.6%) prefer to score answer scripts without knowing the students' names, which helps minimize bias and maintain objectivity. However, the lack of consistency checks, with 52.0% not re-scoring previously scored papers, highlights a potential improvement in ensuring scoring practices' reliability.

The findings of this study have important implications for policy and practice. The gender differences in classroom management styles suggest that professional development programs should address these differences and promote a balanced approach that incorporates both nurturing and disciplinarian strategies. Additionally, the reliance on external sources for test items and the lack of professional development in test construction highlights the need for ongoing training and support for teachers in these areas. The study also underscores the importance of maintaining examination integrity and ensuring fair and consistent scoring practices. Policymakers and school administrators should prioritize resources and training to support teachers in implementing effective classroom management and assessment practices. By addressing these areas, the quality of education in private basic schools within the Accra South Metropolis can be enhanced, ultimately

benefiting student learning outcomes and overall educational experiences.

5. CONCLUSION

The study investigated teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding classroom management practices in private basic schools within the Accra South Metropolis. The findings provide significant insights into the teachers' demographic characteristics, classroom management strategies, assessment practices, and test construction methods. These insights are crucial for understanding the factors influencing effective classroom management and developing targeted interventions to enhance educational outcomes. The demographic data reveal a diverse teaching workforce, with a majority of teachers possessing substantial experience and solid educational backgrounds. The high percentage of teachers with over 12 years of experience and those holding Bachelor's degrees in Education underscores the presence of a seasoned and well-prepared teaching staff. This experienced workforce is likely to contribute positively to the implementation of effective classroom management strategies, which are essential for creating conducive learning environments.

The study highlights a strong preference among teachers for immediate and interactive assessment methods, such as giving exercises immediately after teaching and asking oral questions during lesson periods. These formative assessment practices are crucial for providing ongoing feedback and promoting student engagement. However, the reliance on external sources for test items and the lack of professional development in test construction indicate areas that require attention. The data suggest a need for targeted training programs to enhance teachers' skills in developing unique test items and improving their overall assessment practices. Teachers' test administration practices demonstrate a strong commitment to maintaining examination integrity and fairness. The majority of teachers ensure good seating arrangements to prevent cheating and avoid giving hints during examinations. These practices are vital for upholding the validity and reliability of assessments. However, the mixed adherence to preparing for emergencies and the low percentage of teachers who re-score previously scored papers indicate areas for potential

improvement in ensuring consistent and reliable scoring practices.

The findings also reveal notable gender differences in classroom management styles, with female teachers tending to employ more nurturing and supportive strategies compared to their male counterparts. This gender disparity underscores the need for professional development programs that address these differences and promote a balanced classroom management approach, incorporating nurturing and disciplinarian strategies. The study underscores the importance of ongoing professional development and support for teachers in private basic schools within the Accra South Metropolis. By addressing the identified gaps in test construction and assessment practices and promoting consistent and fair classroom management strategies, policymakers and school administrators can enhance the quality of education. This, in turn, will contribute to improved student learning outcomes and overall educational experiences. The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on classroom management in Ghana and provides valuable insights that can inform policy and practice. Future research should explore the impact of professional development programs on teachers' classroom management skills and examine the long-term effects of improved management practices on student outcomes. By continuing to investigate and address the factors influencing classroom management, educators and policymakers can work towards creating more effective and equitable learning environments for all students.

6. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made to enhance classroom management practices in private basic schools within the Accra South Metropolis. First, it is essential to implement regular professional development programs focusing on effective classroom management strategies. These programs should address both nurturing and disciplinarian approaches, catering to the diverse management styles of male and female teachers. Additionally, specialized training sessions on test construction and assessment methods should be developed to reduce reliance on external sources and enhance teachers' confidence in creating unique test items, ensuring

that assessments are tailored to the specific learning needs of students.

Providing adequate resources and materials that support effective classroom management is also crucial. This includes access to up-to-date teaching aids, reference materials, and technological tools facilitating interactive and engaging teaching methods. Ensuring teachers have comprehensive curricular guides to align test content with instructional objectives will promote a holistic approach to student assessment. Encouraging the adoption of standardized scoring methods will ensure fairness and consistency in test administration. This includes using marking schemes prepared prior to examinations and periodic re-scoring of papers to check for consistency. Maintaining the practice of scoring answer scripts without knowing the students' names will minimize bias and uphold objectivity in assessment.

Ensuring good seating arrangements during examinations will help prevent cheating and maintain the integrity of the assessment process. Developing guidelines for teachers to prepare for and handle emergencies during examinations will ensure a smooth and uninterrupted testing environment. Encouraging further research on the impact of classroom management practices on student outcomes, particularly in the context of private basic schools in Ghana, will provide deeper insights and inform future policy decisions. Based on research findings, policies promoting best classroom management and assessment practices should be formulated and regularly reviewed to reflect the evolving educational landscape.

Establishing mentorship programs for new teachers to help them navigate classroom management challenges and providing comprehensive orientation sessions will enhance the confidence and effectiveness of novice educators. Gender-sensitive training that acknowledges and addresses the different classroom management styles of male and female teachers should promote a balanced approach, encouraging the adoption of both nurturing and disciplinarian strategies as appropriate. By implementing these recommendations, private basic schools within the Accra South Metropolis can improve the quality of education and create a more conducive learning environment for students, ultimately contributing to

better educational outcomes and a more effective and equitable educational system.

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