

Research Article

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**Classroom behavioural management styles:
Predictors of students' test performance**

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Abstract: This study examined the classroom behavioural management styles adopted by Senior High School (SHS) teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis and investigated whether these styles predicted students' test performance. A cross-sectional descriptive design was employed. Using stratified random sampling, 320 SHS students were selected from seven public schools, while classroom behavioural management data were obtained from Biology and Chemistry teachers using an adapted version of the Behavioural and Instructional Management Scale (BIMS). Students' academic performance was assessed using subject-specific achievement tests. Descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression were used to analyse the data. The findings revealed that the interactionist classroom behavioural management style was the most commonly adopted approach among both Biology and Chemistry teachers, whereas none of the teachers was classified as non-interventionist. Although the interventionist classroom management style produced a slightly larger standardized

regression coefficient ($\beta = .343$) than the interactionist style ($\beta = -.336$), neither predictor was statistically significant ($p > .05$). Moreover, the regression model explained only 1.8% of the variance in students' test performance ($R^2 = .018$), indicating that classroom behavioural management style had limited predictive value for students' academic achievement. The study concludes that classroom behavioural management style alone does not significantly predict students' test performance.

Keywords: Behaviour management, Classroom management, Interactionist style, Interventionist style, Non-interventionist style

1. INTRODUCTION

The influence of the teacher is evident in research showing that teacher competence, support, and teaching performance shape students' cognitive learning, motivation, and achievement across subjects and levels (Gebre et al., 2025). Teachers also play a fundamental role in students' socio-emotional development, with supportive, inclusive, and need-supportive teaching environments linked to higher socio-emotional skills, engagement, and positive relationships (Wang et al., 2025; Gebre et al., 2025). Consequently, teacher characteristics such as knowledge of subject matter, qualifications and experience, self-efficacy and enthusiasm, gender and other background traits, as well as interest, attitudes, personality, socio-emotional competence, and motivation have all received sustained attention in educational research (Burroughs et al., 2019; Werang et al., 2022; Subedi et al., 2024).

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to identify the most common classroom management style used by Senior High School teachers in Ghana. It also looked into which classroom management style most effectively predicts students' test performance. To achieve this, the research was guided by the following questions:

Research question

1. What is the most common classroom behavioural management style among Senior High School teachers?
2. Which classroom behavioural management style best predicts students' test performance?

3. LITERATURE SURVEY

Studies consistently find that teachers' beliefs and attitudes are linked to how they teach and to student learning outcomes (Flint et al., 2024; Rodgers et al., 2022). Teacher beliefs shape expectations, instructional decisions, and classroom practices that can affect engagement and achievement (Flint et al., 2024). Research on teacher qualifications and credentials shows that measures such as licensure, certification, education level, subject-matter degrees, and cumulative exposure to highly qualified teachers are positively associated with student test scores and longer-term educational attainment (Saenz et al., 2023; Astiwi et al., 2024). Students generally learn more from teachers with stronger content expertise, appropriate certification, and higher-quality training (Saenz et al., 2023; Blömeke et al., 2022). A further body of work highlights classroom management and discipline as central teacher characteristics influencing achievement. Effective classroom management, including clear rules, well-organized instruction, and consistent discipline, is positively related to students' academic performance in diverse contexts and subjects (Reis, 2025; Arshad, 2025). Experimental and correlational studies show that improving teachers' classroom management skills can increase time-on-task, reduce concentration problems, and raise achievement in areas such as English, mathematics, and science (Paulines & Tantiado, 2024; Zubair & Qazi, 2024). Collectively, these findings indicate that among many school factors, teacher attitudes and beliefs, professional qualifications, and classroom management practices have particularly strong and direct influences on students' academic. In Ghana, the free Senior High School (SHS) education policy launched in September 2017 aimed to support sustainable development goals in education by improving access, quality, and management. This initiative has led to a significant rise in student enrolment across the country. In the Kumasi metropolis, where the demand for SHS education has soared, classrooms are now more crowded than ever. Reports indicate that there are, on average, about 45 students per SHS classroom in the area, a number that starkly contrasts with educators' recommended ideal of 25-30 students per class. Many teachers worry that this overcrowding could compromise the quality of teaching and learning, ultimately affecting student performance on tests (Lilya, 2017). When classrooms are overcrowded, teachers might be tempted to use less effective management methods, which can adversely impact student learning and test results. The Teacher Behaviour Continuum framework categorizes classroom management into interventionist, non-interventionist, and interactionalist styles (Ahmad et al., 2022). The way power is shared between the teacher and students forms the backbone of classroom management; thus, classroom management is viewed as a complex construct that includes two key elements: Behaviour Management and Instructional Management (Egeberg et al., 2020; Djigić & Stojiljković, 2011). Applying the Teacher Behaviour Continuum helps to clarify that classroom management can take on various forms, reflecting teachers' beliefs about how best to handle student behavior in class. The non-interventionist style describes teachers who trust that students can manage their behavior independently, granting students more authority in establishing rules and making decisions about acceptable conduct (Nikolić-Vesković, 2023; Ahmad et al., 2022). Such teachers act as guides, believing that students will behave appropriately without needing rigid regulations (Djigić & Stojiljković, 2011; Nikolić-Vesković, 2023). The interactionalist style is marked by shared authority, where students have a say in rule-making and consequences, fostering a sense of community and belonging in a supportive classroom environment (Egeberg et al., 2020). This allows students to flourish while teachers maintain fairness and firmness (Ahmad et al., 2022). Interventionist teachers, on the other hand, maintain

strict control, believing that students are unable to manage their behavior and thus enforce rules and consequences solely on their own (Nikolić-Vesković, 2023; Ahmad et al., 2022). Over the years, various studies have highlighted common classroom management styles employed by teachers. Research across Europe, Asia, and other regions often indicates that teachers tend to adopt mainly interventionist strategies, with some hybrids of interactionalist approaches (Esplana, 2024; Özsezer & Saban, 2021; Hasanah et al., 2024; Ahmad et al., 2022). More recent research has pointed to a shift towards a greater interactionalist focus in classroom management, especially where teachers collaborate with students in decision-making (Nikolić-Vesković, 2023; Özsezer & Saban, 2021; Hasanah et al., 2024). However, numerous studies still show many teachers primarily adopting interventionist methods, with non-interventionist approaches being quite rare (Djigić & Stojiljković, 2011). Thus, the literature indicates that while some teachers in American, European, and Middle Eastern contexts take an interventionist stance, others lean towards interactionalist styles. However, there's a noticeable lack of research on the behavioral management approaches of African teachers (Owusu-Addo et al., 2018). This gap highlights the need to examine classroom management styles among teachers in Ghana, especially regarding how these styles influence students' academic performance. It's critical for teachers to implement effective behavioral management strategies to maintain student discipline and engagement during lessons. Studies suggest that proper classroom management is essential for achieving positive learning outcomes (Putra & Yanto, 2025; Kausar et al., 2024). Research consistently shows that effective management correlates with improved student test scores (Owusu et al., 2021; Turtura et al., 2024; Kausar et al., 2024). Nonetheless, many studies do not explore how each aspect of classroom management—behaviour and instruction affects student test performance (Khuntia & Sahoo, 2025; Owusu et al., 2021). For instance, Moradi's (2020) research focused on how classroom management influences students' communication skills in English, noting that an interactionalist approach developed these skills but didn't specify which management dimension (behavior or instruction) was at play (Khuntia & Sahoo, 2025). Other studies have found a strong, positive link between behavior management and student performance but often fail to identify the specific management style that most effectively predicts success (Owusu et al., 2021; Turtura et al., 2024; Safiullah et al., 2023). A study by Sowell (2013) noted a significant difference in the success rates of students on standardized tests based on classroom management styles; the interactionalist or authoritative styles tended to yield higher achievement compared to interventionist styles. The lack of research on which classroom management styles most effectively predict student performance in SHS within the Kumasi Metropolis highlights the importance of this study.

4. METHODS

This study employed a cross-sectional descriptive design to examine classroom behavioural management styles among Senior High School (SHS) teachers and their relationship with students' test performance in the Kumasi Metropolis, the second-largest city in Ghana. The target student population comprised 1,340 SHS science students (568 females and 772 males) enrolled in seven public senior high schools. Using the sample size determination table developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), 320 students were selected through stratified random sampling to ensure adequate representation across the participating schools. The study examined teachers' classroom behavioural management styles using an adapted version of the Behavioural and Instructional Management Scale (BIMS) developed by Martin and Sass (2010). The behavioural management (BM) subscale measures teachers' approaches to maintaining classroom order and discipline. Based on the mean scores obtained, teachers were classified as non-interventionist (1.00–2.65), interactionalist (2.70–4.33), or interventionist (above 4.33). Classroom behavioural management data were collected from 26 subject teachers (15 Biology teachers and 11 Chemistry teachers) whose classes participated in the study. Students' academic performance was assessed using researcher-developed achievement tests in Biology and Chemistry.

Although 320 students participated in the study, the regression analysis was conducted using 72 students whose achievement scores could be matched with teachers who had complete classroom behavioural management data.

Consequently, different analyses were based on different units of analysis. Descriptive statistics describing classroom behavioural management styles were based on the participating teachers ($n = 26$), whereas the regression analysis was based on the matched teacher–student dataset ($N = 72$). Prior to data collection, the adapted BIMS was subjected to expert review to establish content validity. A pilot study yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.70, indicating acceptable internal consistency. Examination of Normal Q–Q plots indicated that both the behavioural management scores and students' achievement scores were approximately normally distributed.

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of the University of Cape Coast before data collection commenced. Permission was subsequently obtained from the Kumasi Metropolitan Directorate of Education and the heads of the participating schools. The purpose of the study was explained to both teachers and students, and informed consent was obtained prior to participation. Participation was voluntary, anonymity was guaranteed by excluding personally identifiable information from the questionnaires, and respondents were assured that the information provided would be used solely for research purposes. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) to identify the predominant classroom behavioural management style among teachers. Multiple linear regression analysis was subsequently employed to examine whether interventionist and interactionalist classroom behavioural management styles predicted students' test performance. Statistical significance was assessed at the 0.05 level.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

All 320 respondents completed and returned their questionnaires, giving a response rate of 100%. Although 320 students participated in the study, classroom behavioural management styles were assessed among 26 subject teachers (15 Biology and 11 Chemistry teachers). For the regression analysis, only students whose test scores could be matched with teachers who had complete classroom management data were included, resulting in an analytic sample of 72 students.

Research question: What is the most common classroom Behavioural management style among Senior High School teachers?

This research set out to find out which classroom behavioral management styles are most frequently used by senior high school teachers in Kumasi Metropolis. To break down the data, a frequency table was put together, pinpointing the management style that was most often mentioned. The data in Table 1 make it clear that the interactionalist style is the most widely used among teachers, regardless of the subject being taught at the selected senior high school in Kumasi. Statistically, 73.33% of biology teachers and 63.63% of chemistry teachers identified as interactionalists when it comes to their classroom management strategies.

Table 1: Commonest Classroom Behaviour Management Style

Variable	Subject	Category	Frequency	Percent
Classroom behavioural management style	Biology teachers	Non-interventionist	0	0%
		Interactionalist	11	73.33%
		Interventionist	4	26.67%
	Chemistry teachers	Non-interventionist	0	0%
		Interactionalist	7	63.63%
		Interventionist	4	36.37%

1.2. Which classroom behavioural management style best predicts students' test performance?

This research focused on figuring out which classroom management style has the strongest link to students' test scores in SHS across the Kumasi Metropolis. To analyze the data, we used multiple linear regression. This model

helps us understand how much of the changes in test performance can be attributed to the interactionist and interventionist management styles. The results can be found in Table 2. According to the data, the interventionist classroom management style produced the larger standardized regression coefficient ($\beta = .343$) compared with the interactionist style ($\beta = -.336$). However, the overall model explained only 1.8% of the variance in students' test performance ($R^2 = .018$)."

Table 2: Classroom Behavioral Management Styles: Which One Best Predicts Student Test Performance in Selected Senior High Schools?

Model variables	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficient	X	SD	T	Sig	Collinearity Statistics	
	β	Std. error	B					Tol.	VIF
1 Constant	14.8	10.9		5.5	1.7	1.3	.18		
Interventionist	2.9	2.6	.343			1.1	.27	.15	6.6
Interactionist	-5.5	5.1	-.336			1.1	.28	.15	6.6
R			.34						
R Square			.018						
Adjusted R Square			-.011						

Dependent variable: Test performance, N=72, $p > 0.05$

Although the interventionist style produced the larger standardized regression coefficient, its effect was not statistically significant ($\beta = .343$, $p = .27$). Therefore, the findings do not provide sufficient evidence that this classroom management style predicts students' test performance.

6. DISCUSSION

This study found that teachers in the selected Senior High Schools (SHSs) within the Kumasi Metropolis predominantly adopted two classroom behavioural management styles: interactionist and interventionist. The interactionist approach emerged as the most common style among both Biology (73.3%) and Chemistry (63.6%) teachers, indicating that most teachers preferred a classroom management approach that promotes shared responsibility between teachers and students. Notably, none of the participating teachers was classified as non-interventionist. This finding suggests that teachers in the study context generally favour structured classroom management approaches rather than allowing students complete autonomy in regulating classroom behaviour. Similar findings have been reported by Djigić and Stojiljković (2011), who found that the interactionist style was the dominant classroom management approach among Serbian primary school teachers, while the non-interventionist style was the least frequently adopted. Likewise, Moghtadaie and Hoveida (2015) reported that interactionist classroom management was the predominant style among Iranian teachers, with relatively few teachers exhibiting non-interventionist tendencies. Moradi (2020) similarly observed widespread use of the interactionist style among secondary school teachers because of its emphasis on collaboration, participation, and supportive teacher–student relationships.

The predominance of the interactionist classroom management style is consistent with the principles underpinning the Positive Discipline Toolkit of the Ghana Education Service (GES, 2016), which encourages teachers to involve students in establishing classroom expectations, behavioural norms, and disciplinary procedures. Such an approach promotes mutual respect, student participation, and shared responsibility for maintaining classroom order. Consequently, it is not surprising that most teachers in the present study demonstrated characteristics consistent

with the interactionist orientation, reflecting recent educational reforms that advocate positive discipline rather than authoritarian control.

With respect to the second research question, the multiple regression analysis showed that the interventionist classroom management style produced a slightly larger standardized regression coefficient ($\beta = .343$) than the interactionist style ($\beta = -.336$). However, neither predictor reached statistical significance ($p > .05$), and the overall regression model explained only 1.8% of the variance in students' test performance ($R^2 = .018$). These findings indicate that classroom behavioural management style, as measured in this study, did not significantly predict students' academic performance. Consequently, the results do not provide sufficient empirical evidence to conclude that any particular classroom behavioural management style is associated with superior student achievement within the study context. The absence of statistically significant relationships contrasts with previous studies that reported positive associations between effective classroom management and students' academic achievement (Owusu et al., 2021; Kausar et al., 2024; Putra & Yanto, 2025; Turtura et al., 2024). It also differs from the findings of Bibi et al. (2017), who suggested that classroom management approaches contributed meaningfully to students' academic outcomes. The discrepancy may be attributable to contextual differences between educational settings, variations in classroom management measures, differences in sample characteristics, or the influence of other variables affecting students' achievement that were not included in the present model. Academic performance is a multidimensional outcome influenced by numerous teacher-, student-, family-, and school-related factors, and classroom behavioural management alone may account for only a small proportion of variation in students' performance.

Furthermore, the regression diagnostics revealed evidence of substantial multicollinearity between the interventionist and interactionist variables, as indicated by the low tolerance values (.15) and relatively high Variance Inflation Factor ($VIF = 6.6$). This suggests that the predictor variables shared considerable variance, thereby reducing the precision and stability of the estimated regression coefficients. Consequently, the regression results should be interpreted with caution because multicollinearity can obscure the unique contribution of individual predictors and reduce the likelihood of detecting statistically significant effects even when relationships exist.

The findings demonstrate that interactionist classroom management remains the predominant behavioural management approach among SHS teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis. The present study did not find statistically significant evidence that either the interactionist or interventionist classroom management style predicts students' test performance. Future studies should employ larger matched teacher–student samples, incorporate additional teacher and student characteristics, and examine both behavioural and instructional dimensions of classroom management to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing students' academic achievement.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made: Since the interactionist classroom behavioural management style was the most commonly practised among teachers, school administrators and educational policymakers should continue to promote professional development programmes that strengthen teachers' capacity to implement positive, collaborative, and student-centred classroom management practices consistent with the Ghana Education Service's Positive Discipline framework. Because the regression analysis did not establish a statistically significant relationship between classroom behavioural management styles and students' test performance, educational stakeholders should avoid relying solely on classroom behavioural management approaches as a means of improving academic achievement. Rather, efforts to enhance students' performance should also address other important determinants such as instructional quality, teacher competence, student motivation, school resources, parental involvement, and learning support systems. Finally, future researchers should replicate this study using larger matched teacher–student samples and include additional teacher, classroom, and student characteristics in the regression model. Future studies should also examine both behavioural and instructional

dimensions of classroom management while addressing potential multicollinearity among predictor variables to provide more robust evidence regarding the relationship between classroom management and students' academic performance.

8. CONCLUSION

This study examined the classroom behavioural management styles adopted by Senior High School teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis and explored whether these management styles predicted students' test performance. The findings showed that the interactionalist classroom behavioural management style was the predominant approach among the participating Biology and Chemistry teachers, whereas none of the teachers was classified as adopting a non-interventionist style. Although the interventionist classroom management style produced a slightly larger standardized regression coefficient than the interactionalist style, neither classroom management style significantly predicted students' academic performance. Moreover, the regression model explained only a very small proportion of the variance in students' test performance, indicating that classroom behavioural management style alone is insufficient to explain differences in students' academic achievement. These findings suggest that students' academic performance is likely influenced by a broader range of teacher-, student-, and school-related factors beyond classroom behavioural management. Consequently, further research employing larger samples and more comprehensive analytical models is needed to better understand the contribution of classroom management to students' academic success.

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