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Effect of Graphic Organizer and Self-Monitoring Strategies on Off-Task Behaviour Among Students with Hearing Impairment in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Off-task behaviour is an inattention in the classroom that if not checked or controlled can jeopardize learning outcomes among learners. Students with hearing impairment are not excluded from off-task behaviour as their condition makes them more susceptible or vulnerable. However, there is little or insignificant research effort on off-task behaviour among learners with hearing impairment. This study therefore, examined the effects of graphic organizer and self-monitoring strategies on the management of off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria. Pretest-posttest control group, quasi experimental design was adopted, three secondary schools for students with hearing impairment in Ibadan were purposively selected. Thirty-seven students with hearing impairment were randomly sampled for the study. The participants were randomly assigned to two experimental groups and control group, and the treatment lasted for eight weeks. Three instruments were used for data collection. Three hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics, analysis of covariance and Scheffe post-hoc. There was a significant main effect of treatment on management of off-task behaviour ($F_{(2,23)} = 8.109, p = 0.002 < 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.41$). The participants exposed to self-monitoring had the highest mean score ($x = 116.70$) followed by the Experimental I Group (EGI) score ($x = 102.50$) while Control group (CG) group had the lowest mean scores of ($x = 87.12$). Gender had no significant main effect on the management of off-task

behaviour of the participants. There was no interaction effect of treatment and gender on off-task behaviour of the participants. Graphic organizer and self-monitoring enhanced the management of off-task behaviour among the students in the study. The two strategies should be adopted to reduce the off-task behaviour of students with hearing impairment.

Keywords: *Students with hearing impairment, Graphic organizer, Self-monitoring, Off-task behaviour*

Introduction

A typical classroom environment accommodates students with diverse behavioural patterns. Some with good and promising traits and others with disturbing tendencies which often constitute off-task behaviour. Bradley (2014) states that students who wander around, interrupt work, visit socially instead of collaborating on learning projects together, and looking busy without engaging in meaningful work are exhibiting signs of off-task behaviour. This observed behaviour may be the result of students' lack of experience and knowledge in self-discipline when given freedom to move, choose work and collaborate. Students need to learn how to use their freedom responsibly in order to decrease distractions and increase learning.

Students with hearing impairment are more inattentive within the classroom setting of typically developing peers. They often struggle to sustain attention to tasks and instructions, frequently make signs to class peers at inappropriate times, and may call out and leave their seat without permission. Consequently, they are at risk of poor academic performance, underachievement, retaining grade and suspension or dropout from school. Off-task behaviour may disturb the learning process of classmates and may elicit maladaptive behaviour of class peers and the teacher, overall classroom functioning may be affected, both academically and socially. Students need to understand what on-task behaviours are in order to know how and why to apply them in using freedom responsibly. Guiding students into the necessary structure needed for a positive learning environment both individually and as a class makes learning possible.

Off-task behaviour is a symptom of disengagement from a learning experience. High levels of engagement are important for maintaining motivation and maximizing students' time-on-task. Off-task behaviour consists of the students disengaging from pedagogically relevant behaviour, that is, students can attentively interact but actually be focused on activities with little intrinsic educational value. It is exhibited when students are not taking part in classroom activities, demonstrated a lack of self-control, exhibited rude behaviour, or any other social behaviour that negatively impacted academic performance in the classroom. Rathvon (1990) views off-task behaviour as students doing anything not appropriate to the task at hand. Bonus and Riordan (1998) submit that off-task behaviour interferes with academic growth. This usually poses a challenge to class teachers and students alike in any classroom setting. One of the greatest challenges of the teacher is to maintain order in the classroom in order to achieve academic objectives (Schechtman and Leichtentritt, 2004).

Frequency of misbehaviour, including off-task behaviour, talking without permission, moving without permission, aggression, daydreaming, inattentiveness, and playing with something or someone are all common concerns of educators today.

Disruptive off-task behaviour can interfere with the continuity of an average classroom. Rathvon (1990) states that disruptive off-task behaviour can be considered verbal (excessive talking), physical, and disrespectful interruptions. A child who never stops talking, constantly interrupts, and monopolizes the conversation creates problems during classroom activities. Off-task behaviour directly affects students' ability to achieve academically. Low achieving students spend less time on task than high achieving students (Abramowitz, O'Leary and Rosen, 1987). Soleil (1999) believes that students who fail academically are more prone to giving up in school or become alienated. Many students with low academic achievement including those with hearing impairment often distract other students in the class, only master basic skills, and have seldom persevered through intellectually difficult tasks (Wazneak-Alvarez, 1999). Some students who have low academic achievement can be constantly distracted and have inadequate processing skills (Butler, 2005). According to Jolivet, Stichter and McCormick (2002), students who perform below grade level in content areas are usually noncompliant and off-task during independent working time.

Off-task behaviour occurs among students with and without disabilities (Amato-Zech, Hoff and Doepke, 2006). Shechtman and Leichtentritt (2004) state that increased misbehaviour in special education classes can be seen among those with hearing impairment. Students react with negative behaviour because of frustration, when the demand of task completion is unattainable. Also, students become uninterested during simple ordinary projects and assignments because they are easily bored or distracted when they are not involved in the learning process. Therefore, frustration levels become high for students (Jolivet, Stichter and McCormick, 2002). When projects are simple and ordinary, off-task behaviour heightens because the students recognize the teachers' lack of variety and students are not required to use higher level thinking skills on a regular basis. Student-to-teacher ratio is growing, which makes it harder on teachers and as a result, students may have needs that are not addressed (Butler, 2005). Kilmer (1998) establishes that lack of motivation causes low rate of academic productivity, disenchanting students, and students who do not always participate in class. Mueller and Fleming (2001) maintain that discontent, aggressive behaviour, lack of initiative, frustration, unfinished work and lack of productivity are products of poorly motivated students. According to Miglietti (2002), decreased motivation is directly related to low productivity, lack of ownership and satisfaction in student work, and unequal distribution of individual effort devoted to completing assignments. Students become frustrated when given a task to complete without enough time to fully understand the skill.

Managing behaviours while teaching is a problem that teachers need to tackle quickly and fairly without disrupting the learning that is going on in the classroom (Keating, 2000). According to Rosenberg *et al.* (1985), off-task behaviour in the classroom negatively affects both the lower level and the higher-level students. Inattention or off-task behaviour is a serious challenge that teachers face, which makes it to be identified as one of the most common reasons for student referrals (Roberts, 2001). Classroom management can become

difficult, activities in the classroom can be interrupted, and certain objectives might not be attained, if there is high rate of off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment. This indicates that the lack of on-task behaviours by students with hearing impairment negatively affects classroom teachers and typically developing peers. For this reason, reducing the off-task behaviours of students with hearing impairment would be beneficial. To increase on-task behaviours among learners, traditional behaviour modification techniques might be useful; however, these techniques are criticized because they are dependent on the presence of external stimuli (Otten, 2003). In educational settings, it is impossible for teachers to always prompt children or to reinforce them continuously (Agran, King-Sears, Wehmeyer, and Copeland, 2003). Students with hearing impairment need to learn to control their own behaviours so as to take part in their education and benefit maximally. Strategies such as graphic organizer and self-monitoring could be of immense benefit in managing of off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment.

Graphic organizers are visual representations of information from a text that depict the relationships between concepts, the text structure, and/or key concepts of the text (Tang, 1992; Griffin and Tulbert, 1995; Kim, Vaughn, Wanzek and Wei, 2004; Jiang and Grabe, 2007). The research on graphic organizers is often based on the assumption that all texts have organizational patterns and there are a small number of patterns that are frequently found in texts, including cause-effect, problem-solution, comparison-contrast, classification, definition, process, argument-reasoning, for-against, time sequence, and description. Graphic organizers provide a means of teaching students how to recognize text structures. "Students are expected to comprehend texts better when shown visually how information in the text is organized (Jiang and Grabe, 2007). This can help them to form appropriate behaviour.

Self-management strategies that have been developed to enable individuals to control their own behaviours can be used to reduce off-task behaviour (Baer, Fowler and Carden-Smith, 1984). Self-management is the process used by individuals to control their own behaviour. Self-monitoring (SM) refers to an individual determining whether he or she performed a target behaviour (Agran, King-Sears, Wehmeyer and Copeland, 2003). Moore and Sweeney (2005) state that many studies show that self-monitoring has been instituted to reduce off-task behaviour. Results indicate that self-monitoring leads to increase in targeted appropriate social skills. They further reported a decrease in off-task behaviour when self-monitoring is used. In a separate study by Peterson, Young, Salzberg, West and Hill (2006), it was found that self-monitoring can take the pressure off the teacher and put it on the student and therefore increase on-task behaviour (Bonus and Riordan, 1998). Self-monitoring has been proved to dramatically increase on-task behaviour (Dalton, 1999). In Dalton's study, after self-monitoring was implemented in a variety of classrooms, students went from spending 33% of their time on-task to spending 86% of their time on task. Emmer and Gerwels (2005) believe that introducing a self-management programme with three components – a checklist, a behaviour rating scale and a self-monitoring form – will be helpful to decrease off-task behaviour. Teacher ratings of positive student behaviour were found to increase when the self-management programme was implemented in the study.

Scholars over the years believe that gender has a way of influencing classroom behaviour. Girls are more attentive than boys during classroom instructions. According to Davies (2005) on the average girls are more motivated than boys to perform well in school, at least during elementary school. Physically boys tend to be more active than girls and by same token, more restless if they have to sit for long period. (Espelage & Swearer, 2004)

In most of the studies concerning graphic organizer and self-monitoring strategies, the interventions have been carried out in different settings such as a resource room, therapy room, or an empty classroom (Coyle and Cole, 2004; Wolfe, Heron and Goddard, 2000). However, students with hearing impairment also need to learn using these strategies in their usual educational settings. Against this background, the present study examined the effects of graphic organizer and Self-monitoring strategies on/off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant main effect of treatment on off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in secondary schools in Ibadan.
2. There is no significant main effect of gender on off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in secondary schools in Ibadan.
3. There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in secondary schools in Ibadan.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted a pretest-posttest control group quasi-experimental design with a 3x2 factorial matrix. The population comprised all students with hearing impairment in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Three integrated special schools for students with hearing impairment were purposively selected for the study. Thirty (37) students with hearing impairment in the Senior Secondary School II were randomly selected. Descriptive statistics of frequency count and percentage were used to analyse the participants' demographic data while inferential statistics of Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) and Scheffe post hoc analysis were used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Scheffe post hoc analysis was used to find out the sources of mean differences.

Results

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Table 1: Frequency distribution of participants by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	18	48.6
Male	19	51.4
Total	37	100.0%

Table1 reveals frequency distribution according to gender with high percentage of males which is 19 (51.4%) and females 18 with (48.6%). This implies that males have higher percentage of the participants used for the study.

Table 2: Frequency distribution of participants by treatment

Treatments	Frequency	Percentage
Experimental I Group	18	48.6
Experimental II Group	11	29.7
Control Group	8	21.6
Total	37	100.0%

Table 2 shows frequency distribution according to treatment with high percentage of Experimental Group I which is 18 with (48.6%), Experimental Group II which is 11 with (29.7%) while Control Group which is 8 with a (21.6%) respectively. This implies that majority of the participants in the study were in Experimental Group I.

Table 3 ANCOVA: Main effect of treatments on off-task behaviour and control group on Pre and Post Text

	Experimental Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta
<u>Main Effect (Combined)</u>	272297.960	1	272297.960	1622.151	0.000*	.986
Treatment	2722.380	2	1361.190	8.109	0.002*	.414
Gender	24.388	1	24.388	.145	0.707	.006
<u>2.Way Interaction (Combined)</u>						
Treatment*Gender	248.980	2	142.490	.849	0.441	.069
Model	6829.877	13	525.383	3.130	0.008*	.639
Residual	3860.833	23	167.862			
Total	401372.000	37				

* Significance at 0.05

Hypotheses

The following are the summary of findings as shown on Table 3:

H₀₁: There is no significant main effect of treatments on the management of off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in secondary schools in Ibadan.

The results presented on Table 3 showed that there was a significant main effect of treatment on the management of off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in secondary schools in Ibadan ($F_{(2,23)} = 8.109$, $p = 0.002 < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.41$). Premised on this, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is, therefore, concluded that the treatments improved the management of off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.

H₀₂: There is no significant main effect of gender on the management of off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.

The results presented on Table 4 also showed that there was no significant main effect of gender on the management of off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in secondary schools in Ibadan ($F_{(1,23)} = 0.145$, $p = 0.707 > 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.01$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. Resultantly, it is concluded that gender plays no significant role in the management of off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.

H₀₃: There is no significant interaction effect of treatments and gender on the management of off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.

The results presented on Table 4 indicated that there was no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in secondary schools in Ibadan ($F_{(2,23)} = 0.849$, $p = 0.441 > 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.06$). Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is, therefore, concluded that treatments and gender do not positively impact the management of off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.

Table 4: Estimated Marginal Means for the Treatment Group and Control Group.

Treatment Group	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1.Experimental I Group (EGI)	102.50	3.404	95.457	109.543
2.Experimental Group II (EGII)	116.70	4.231	107.947	125.453
3.Control group (CG)	87.12	6.371	76.014	98.236

Results on Table 4 showed that the Experimental Group II (EGII) has the highest mean score ($x = 116.70$) followed by the Experimental Group I (EGI) score ($x = 102.50$) while Control group (CG) had ($x = 87.12$) respectively. This implies that Experimental Group II (EGII) performed better than those exposed to Experimental Group I (EGI) and Control group (CG) respectively. Furthermore, the sources of the significant main effect of treatments on off-

task behaviour among students with hearing impairment was traced using Scheffe Post-hoc test as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Scheffe Homogeneous Subset Analysis of Treatment Effect on Posttest effect of treatment on off-task behaviour in Experiment I, Experiment II and Control group.

Group	N	Subset	
		1	2
1. Control group (CG)	8	85.75	
2. Experiment group I (EGI)	18		102.67
3. Experiment group II (EGII)	11		115.27
Sig.		1.000	.095

* Significant difference at $p < 0.05$ level of significance

Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 11.051

The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 167.862

Table 5 shows Means for groups in homogeneous subsets displayed based on observed means of pretest-posttest of students with hearing impairment on management of off-task behaviour (Experimental II) mean scores (Mean $x = 115.27$) was significantly different from those of the Experimental II group (Mean $x = 102.67$) and Control group (CG) group (Mean $x = 85.75$). This implies that Experimental group II and Experimental Group I (Exp I and Exp II) were significantly different from the Control group.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant main effect of treatments on off-task behaviour among the participants. In other words, the treatments were more effective in the management of off-task behaviour than the control group. This implies that graphic organizer and self-monitoring strategies decreased off-task behaviour of students with hearing impairment. The finding of the study corroborates that of Jiang and Grabe, (2007) who reported that graphic organizers provide a means of teaching students how to recognize text structures. Students are expected to comprehend texts better when shown visually how information in the text is organized and they pay more attention to school activities.

Also, the study by Moore, Anderson and Kumar (2005) found that self-monitoring decreases off-task behaviour. The results pointed to statistically significant differences between achievement scores on off-task behaviour of the experimental groups and the comparison group. In essence, the two experimental groups performed significantly better than the control group on off-task behaviour.

The findings of the study have shown that gender had no significant main effect on management of off-task behaviour of the participants. This means that off-task behaviour of male and female participants do not differ significantly. There was no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on off-task behaviour among students with hearing

impairment in secondary schools in Ibadan. It means that participants' response and performance in the different intervention groups did not depend on their gender. The findings of this study negative the findings of Espelage and Swearer (2004) and Davies (2005) who reported significant difference in the classroom behaviour of male and female students.

Conclusion

Off-task behaviour manifest as inattention and distraction during teaching-learning process and this has adverse effect on students' learning outcomes. It is documented in literature that when off-task behaviour is not controlled, it can affect and reduce the academic performance of average and intelligent students. It is, therefore, concluded that graphic organizer and self-monitoring are useful management strategies for decreasing off-task behaviour among students with hearing impairment.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of study:

1. Graphic organizer and self-monitoring strategies should be adopted in the management of off-task behaviour of students with hearing impairment in Nigerian schools.
2. There should be more investigation into the management of off-task behaviour among learners with hearing impairment at various levels of education.
3. There should be regular in-service training for teachers of students with hearing impairment on the effects and management of off-task behaviour on their students.
4. Students with hearing impairment should be encouraged to be focused during teaching and learning in order to avoid all forms of distractions.

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