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Exploring the Interplay of Interpersonal Skills, Gender, Experience, Relationship Skills, Space Utilisation, and Instructional Skills in preschool teachers' Classroom Management

Abstract

Early childhood education requires an effective classroom management plan to create the optimal learning environment for improved student outcomes. This quantitative study examined the relationship between behavioural skills, classroom management skills (CMS), space CMS, relational CMS, interpersonal CMS, gender, experience, and instructional CMS. The participants were preschool teachers from various schools, and the data collection methods were self-report questionnaires. The research used regression analysis as a method for investigating the connections that existed between the relevant variables. The findings revealed that while gender and relationship CMS did not significantly mediate the relationship between instructional CMS and the mediating variables (behavioural CMS and space CMS), interpersonal CMS does. The direct effect of gender, experience, and relationship CMS on the mediating variables was insignificant, but that of interpersonal CMS was. The total impact of gender and relationship CMS on instructional CMS was insignificant, but that of experience and interpersonal skills were significant. The mediating variables have a significant positive effect on instructional CMS.

In summary, interpersonal CMS, behavioural CMS, space CMS, and experience positively affect instructional CMS. This study provides empirical proof of the relationships between these parameters in classroom administration. The study suggests that early year's educators and school officials should prioritise behaviour control measures interpersonal skills and help students use space creatively. This will improve teaching and classroom management. This study can help educators and administrators create engaging and supportive learning environments.

Keywords: Classroom management skill (CMS), Preschool teachers.

Introduction

When creating an optimal atmosphere for the student's academic growth, classroom management is one of the most significant things that may be considered (Akin et al., 2016). "Classroom management" refers to the process teachers go through to guarantee that classroom lessons run smoothly, and that students' disruptive behaviour does not interfere with the delivery of learning materials to the children (Alamri, 2022; Ozen & Yildirim, 2020; Zulkifli et al., 2019). It entails trying to avoid disruptive behaviour and taking action to remedy the behaviour when it has already happened. Students who are bullied cannot focus on their homework, significantly dropping the child's overall academic performance. These disturbances may vary from minor clashes amongst children to more significant problems with the functioning of the social class system (Özcelik & Sapsağlam, 2023). An effective classroom management plan will include several critical components, including the ability to govern the students' actions, the capacity to use the available space effectively, relational skills, interpersonal skills, and instructional skills. Effective classroom management requires several skills, including the ability to get pupils actively interested in the lesson, the capacity to regulate the distractions in the classroom, and the capacity to manage time (Cahyani, 2017).

Several classroom management skills (CMS) can help preschool teachers manage their classrooms effectively. Some such CMS are relationship CMS, interpersonal CMS, behavioural CMS, space CMS, and instructional CMS (Karademir & Saatçioğlu, 2021; Aksoy, 2020; Önder & Önder Öz, 2018). To maintain a positive and fruitful atmosphere in the classroom, educators of preschool-aged children need to be equipped with excellent behavioural CMS (Degol & Bachman, 2015). It is necessary to have enhanced talents in classroom management since this would lead to settings inside the classroom that would make it feasible for all pupils to learn without being disturbed (Laghari et al., 2020). The term "behaviour CMS" refers to teachers' strategies and procedures in the classroom to foster positive student behaviour and create an educational setting conducive to student growth (Akirolu and Gokolu, 2019). Some examples of skills in this area include communication skills, strategies for rewarding desirable behaviours, and methods for proactively controlling challenging behaviours. Instructors who can manage disruptions in the classroom, maintain student engagement, and create a friendly atmosphere in the school are more equipped to tackle these challenges (Vandenbroucke et al., 2017; Emmer & Sabornie, 2015). In addition, Wang and Holcombe (2010) found that teachers with better behaviour skills also had higher levels of instructional effectiveness and student achievement.

In addition, one more essential component of effective classroom management is using the available space effectively (Castilla et al., 2017). It is probable that the classroom layout, including the placement of items like furniture and supplies, substantially influences how effectively education is delivered. This is something that must be taken into consideration (Asino & Pulay, 2018). An arrangement in the classroom that is well-organised and practical provides support for a wide variety of educational activities. It encourages seamless transitions and makes it easier for teachers and students to communicate with one another. The capabilities required to make the most of the space in a classroom are skills that instructors need to have to make the most available space. Not only does this make it simpler for students to work together on group projects, but it also creates an atmosphere that is aesthetically attractive and intellectually challenging (Sanfo & Malgoubri, 2023; Barrett et al., 2015). Educators who make the most of the space that is allotted to them in their classrooms are more likely to use a broad range of instructional CMS and to successfully regulate the dynamics of the interactions that take place amongst their pupils (Marder et al., 2023; Mahvar et al., 2018).

There is a correlation between increased teaching abilities and student engagement, as well as increased student engagement and the relationship skills of instructors (Poulou, 2020; Martin & Collie, 2019). Relationship classroom management skills refer to establishing positive relationships with students, parents, and colleagues (Egeberg et al., 2020). This refers to preschool teachers' ability to establish and maintain positive relationships with children, parents, and colleagues. Effective relationship classroom management skills include being approachable, empathetic, and responsive to the needs of others. Teachers with strong relationship classroom management skills can build trust with their students and create a safe and supportive learning environment in a preschool classroom. These relationships CMS include the instructors' capacity to establish supportive classroom environments and cultivate constructive connections with their students. (Fernández-García et al., 2019). To successfully manage interactions, promote collaboration, and develop a learning environment that is respectful and friendly to all students, it is very vital to have excellent interpersonal CMS. Establishing rapport, communicating, resolving problems, cooperating, working as a team, having empathy for others, and gaining understanding are some of the skills that fall under this category. Strong interpersonal skills may help promote student engagement, support good behaviour, and aid social-emotional development. These abilities can also contribute to a joyful and conducive learning atmosphere, which can be contributed to by having robust interpersonal CMS. Teachers with strong interpersonal CMS are better able to manage the specific needs of their pupils, maintain control over the classroom dynamics, and provide an educational setting that encourages and accepts all students.

The term “instructional CMS” refers to the collection of capabilities and strategies that instructors draw upon to manage their classrooms efficiently while simultaneously providing instruction to their students. It comprises the techniques, practices, and approaches that instructors use to cultivate an atmosphere that is favourable to learning, encourages student participation, and supports teaching and learning that is both effective and efficient (Ozen & Yildirim, 2020; Pitchford et al., 2019). In addition to skills related to conduct and the use of space, a broad range of pedagogical factors, including classroom management, can potentially impact instructional abilities (Kwok, 2017). For instance, gender has been explored as a potential element that leads to differences in teaching ability. The research on gender differences in the administration of classrooms has yielded mixed findings (Antonio, 2020; Al-Kindi et al., 2017; Varank et al., 2013). Yet, several studies suggest that male and female instructors may use various instructional strategies and approaches to classroom management. (Keng, 2020; Santrock, 2017). Experience is yet another component of one’s educational background that has the potential to influence their ability to instruct. New teachers often struggle to keep order in their classes, and they might greatly benefit from more support and further training to strengthen their talents as educators (Mohd Said et al., 2021; Yusnita et al., 2018; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

There are studies on the skills needed to be an effective preschool teacher (Ozen et al., 2018; Yilmaz et al., 2016) and classroom management skills of preschool teachers (Aksoy, 2020; Beaudoin et al., 2018). Also, some studies have looked at classroom management’s influence on children’s academic achievement. But there is a lack of research specifically investigated the relationship among these classroom management skills in Nigeria. In addition, the mediating effect of some of these classroom management skills has not been studied. This study decided to cover these empirical gaps in the literature (Alordiah, 2023). Hence the study investigates the influence of behaviour CMS, space usage, interpersonal CMS, and relationship CMS have on instructional classroom management skills, with a particular emphasis on improving instructional capabilities. Specifically, the research examines how classroom management can improve by improving instructional abilities. The primary goals of the study include determining the direct, indirect, and total effects of the independent variables (gender, experience, relationship CMS, and interpersonal CMS), as well as the effects of the mediating variables (behaviour CMS and space CMS), on instructional skills in the classroom management of preschool teachers. Another goal of the study is to determine the effects of the mediating variables (behaviour CMS and space CMS) on instructional skills in the classroom management of preschool teachers. This research’s findings are intended to add to the existing body of knowledge on classroom management and instructional skills. Ultimately, this will lead to greater educational chances for teachers to improve teaching strategies, which will improve children’s learning.

Method

Participants

The participants in this survey study are preschool teachers from public, private, and faith-based schools in Delta and Anambra states in Nigeria. The study population comprised preschool teachers in two Geo-Political Zones (GPZ) in Nigeria (there are six Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria). The two GPZs that made up the population were from southern Nigeria. We randomly choose one state from each of the two GPZs. A sample of 264 preschool teachers was selected using purposive sampling. Participants were selected based on the following inclusion criteria: they must be currently employed as preschool teachers, have at least one year of teaching experience, and have completed their pre-service teacher training. The sample consisted of 14 (5.3%) male and 250 (94.7%) female preschool teachers. Also, 211 (79.9%), 23 (8.7%), and 30 (11.4%) of preschool teachers were drawn from private, public, and faith-based schools, respectively. The experience of the preschool teachers has a mean of 5.64 ± 5.36 .

Measures

The study used a self-report questionnaire to measure preschool teachers' predictor skills and instructional classroom management skills (Alordiah & Ossai, 2023). The questionnaire consists of six sections. Section one measured the personal information (gender, years of teaching experience, state, and school type) of the preschool teachers. Four sections (sections 2–5), each measuring one of the predictor skills (Relationship, Interpersonal, Behaviour, and Space classroom management skills) and the last section measuring Instructional Classroom Management Skills. The questionnaire items were prepared based on information obtained from the literature review and the researcher's personal experiences. Some of the items in the relationship classroom management skills are talking with the children, maintaining eye contact, I call the children by their names, and I note individual birthdays and accomplishments. The section on interpersonal classroom management skills has items like I operate open-mindedness when dealing with children, I apply persuasiveness in making the children do the right thing, and I apply conflict management skills when addressing disagreements among the children. The behaviour classroom management skills section consists of items like I use various behaviour management models/techniques. I encourage children with positive statements; I remind them of expected behaviour; I warn them of the consequences of misbehaving. Some of the items in the space classroom management skill sections are I design suitable seating arrangements, I make children work in small groups, I separate workspace from play space in my class, and making sure that the transition from one activity to

the next is smooth; I teach them to always wait for their turn, I teach them to sit calmly and wait for teacher's instruction, I teach them to put their materials back after use. Lastly, a few of the items in the instructional classroom management skill sections are If a child disrupts the lesson, I redirect the child quickly, I encourage students to engage in learning tasks, I prepare well-structured learning activities, I encourage children to talk about their experiences, I signal my children that it is time for serious work, I use incentives. The questionnaire used a 4-point Likert scale (Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Always). The reliability of the five sections using Cronbach Alpha ranges between .79 to .83. The questionnaire was reliable. The instrument was also valid based on the reports of expert judges who rated the relevance and adequacy of the items in the questionnaire.

Procedures

The researchers contacted the selected schools in the selected states to request participation. Preschool teachers who agreed to participate were given an informed consent form to sign. Participants then complete the questionnaire in a quiet and private location at their school. The researchers and the trained research assistants were available to answer any questions arising during the questionnaire's completion.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical principles such as informed consent, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, their right to refuse participation and the confidentiality of their responses. The data was stored securely, and only the researchers had access to the data. The researchers ensured that participants were not harmed or exposed to any risk.

Data Analysis

The JAMOV 2.25 statistical package was used to carry out the descriptive statistics analysis, correlation, multiple regression and the predictive effects of the independent and mediating variables on the dependent variable. The significance level was set at $p < .05$.

Results

Model Information

The study explores 11 models, two mediator models, one full model, and eight indirect effect models.

Mediator models

1. m1: This model examines the relationship between behaviour skills and the predictors of gender, experience, relationship skills, and interpersonal skills.
2. m2: This model examines the relationship between space skills and the predictor's gender, experience, relationship skills, and interpersonal skills.

Full model

3. m3: This model includes all the predictors (behaviour skills, space skills, gender, experience, relationship skills, and interpersonal skills) and examines their relationship with instructional skills.

The indirect effects (mediation paths) are represented as IE1 to IE8:

1. IE1: This represents the indirect effect of gender on instructional skills through behaviour skills. It suggests that gender may influence instructional skills by affecting behaviour skills.
2. IE2: This represents the indirect effect of gender on instructional skills through space skills. It suggests that gender may influence instructional skills by affecting space skills.
3. IE3: This represents the indirect effect of experience on instructional skills through behaviour skills. It suggests that experience may influence instructional skills by affecting behaviour skills.
4. IE4: This represents the indirect effect of experience on instructional skills through space skills. It suggests that experience may influence instructional skills by affecting space skills.
5. IE5: This represents the indirect effect of relationship skills on instructional skills through behaviour skills. It suggests that relationship skills may influence instructional skills by affecting behaviour skills.
6. IE6: This represents the indirect effect of relationship skills on instructional skills through space skills. It suggests that relationship skills may influence instructional skills by affecting space skills.
7. IE7: This represents the indirect effect of interpersonal skills on instructional skills through behaviour skills. It suggests that interpersonal skills may influence instructional skills by affecting behaviour skills.
8. IE8: This represents the indirect effect of interpersonal skills on instructional skills through space skills. It suggests that interpersonal skills may influence instructional skills by affecting space skills.

Path Model

Model Diagram

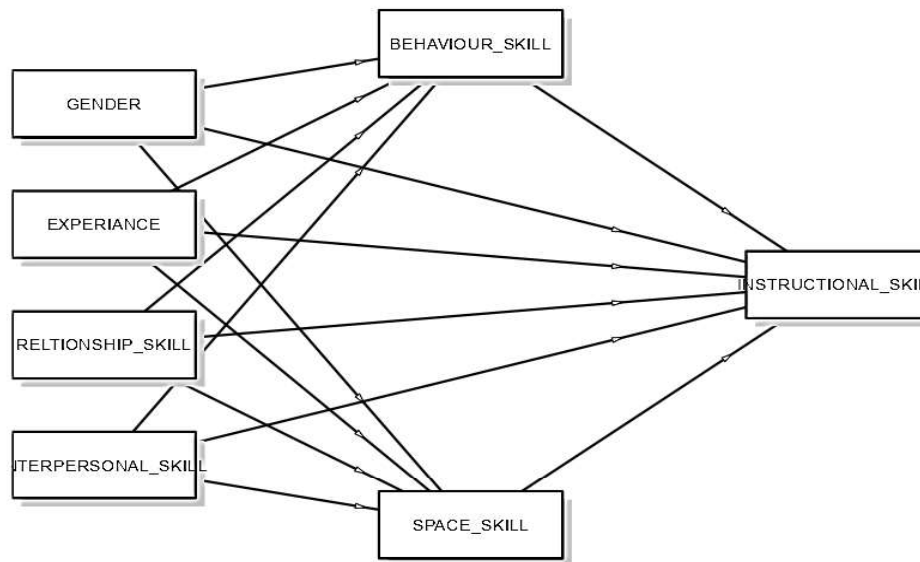


Figure 1

Path Model diagram showing the study's variables

The direct, indirect, and total effects of the independent variables, mediating variables, and dependent variable

Table 1

Indirect, direct and total effect models

Indirect and Total Effects								
95% C.I. (a)								
Type	Effect	Estimate	S.E.	Lower	Upper	β	z	p
Indirect	GENDER \Rightarrow BEHAVIOUR_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.2623	0.491	0.703	1.229	0.0065	0.534	0.53
	GENDER \Rightarrow SPACE_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.9011	1.335	3.517	1.706	0.0233	0.677	0.49
	EXPERIENCE \Rightarrow BEHAVIOUR_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.0140	0.019	-0.020	0.0509	0.00955	0.740	0.459
	EXPERIENCE \Rightarrow SPACE_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.1193	0.0514	0.0186	0.2200	0.08164	2.321	0.020

Table 1
Indirect, direct and total effect models (cont.)

Indirect and Total Effects								
95% C.I. (a)								
Type	Effect	Estimate	S.E.	Lower	Upper	β	z	p
Indirect	RELATIONSHIP_SKILL \Rightarrow BEHAVIOUR_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	-0.0242	0.0335	-0.0898	0.0414	-0.01219	-0.724	0.469
	RELATIONSHIP_SKILL \Rightarrow SPACE_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.1656	0.0909	-0.0126	0.3437	0.08327	1.821	0.069
	INTERPERSONAL_SKILL \Rightarrow BEHAVIOUR_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.2662	0.0560	0.1565	0.3759	0.12757	4.757	< .001
	INTERPERSONAL_SKILL \Rightarrow SPACE_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.6461	0.1024	0.4453	0.8469	0.30959	6.307	< .001
Component	GENDER \Rightarrow BEHAVIOUR_SKILL	1.1794	2.1995	-3.1316	5.4904	0.02856	0.536	0.592
	BEHAVIOUR_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.2224	0.0366	0.1507	0.2942	0.23983	6.076	< .001
	GENDER \Rightarrow SPACE_SKILL	-1.2609	1.8617	-4.9099	2.3880	-0.03467	-0.677	0.498
	SPACE_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.7146	0.0433	0.6298	0.7994	0.67868	16.522	< .001
	EXPERIANCE \Rightarrow BEHAVIOUR_SKILL	0.0628	0.0841	-0.1021	0.2276	0.03984	0.746	0.456
	EXPERIANCE \Rightarrow SPACE_SKILL	0.1669	0.0712	0.0274	0.3065	0.12029	2.344	0.019
	RELATIONSHIP_SKILL \Rightarrow BEHAVIOUR_SKILL	-0.1089	0.1494	-0.4017	0.1838	-0.05081	-0.729	0.466
	RELATIONSHIP_SKILL \Rightarrow SPACE_SKILL	0.2317	0.1264	-0.0161	0.4795	0.12270	1.833	0.067
	INTERPERSONAL_SKILL \Rightarrow BEHAVIOUR_SKILL	1.1969	0.1565	0.8901	1.5038	0.53192	7.646	< .001
	INTERPERSONAL_SKILL \Rightarrow SPACE_SKILL	0.9041	0.1325	0.6444	1.1638	0.45616	6.823	< .001
Direct	GENDER1 \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	1.0555	1.3101	-1.5124	3.6233	0.02756	0.806	0.420
	EXPERIANCE \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.0471	0.0506	-0.0521	0.1463	0.03225	0.931	0.352
	RELATIONSHIP_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.0860	0.0895	-0.0894	0.2614	0.04327	0.961	0.336
	INTERPERSONAL_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRUC- TIONAL_SKILL	0.0915	0.1101	-0.1242	0.3073	0.04386	0.831	0.406

Table 1
Indirect, direct and total effect models (cont.)

Indirect and Total Effects								
95% C.I. (a)								
Type	Effect	Estimate	S.E.	Lower	Upper	β	z	p
Total	GENDER1 \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.4168	2.1134	-3.7255	4.5591	0.01024	0.197	0.844
	EXPERIANCE \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.1804	0.0808	0.0219	0.3388	0.11609	2.231	0.026
	RELATIONSHIP_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRUCTIONAL_SKILL	0.2273	0.1435	-0.0539	0.5086	0.10755	1.584	0.113
	INTERPERSONAL_SKILL \Rightarrow INSTRU- CTIONAL_SKILL	1.0038	0.1504	0.7090	1.2986	0.45238	6.673	< .001

Note. Confidence intervals computed with method: Standard (Delta method)

Note. Betas are completely standardised effect sizes

Indirect effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable

Gender

The indirect effect of gender (contrast variable representing the comparison between male and female) on instructional skills (instructional CMS) through behaviour skill (behavioural CMS) is estimated to be positive (0.2623). However, the effect is not statistically significant ($p = 0.593$), as the confidence interval includes zero. Similarly, the indirect effect of gender on instructional skills through space skills is negative (-0.9011) but not statistically significant ($p = 0.499$). These results suggest that gender differences may not significantly mediate the relationship between instructional skills and the mediating variables (Table 1).

Experience

The indirect effect of experience on instructional skills through behaviour skills is estimated to be positive (0.0140) but not statistically significant ($p = 0.459$). On the other hand, the indirect effect of experience on instructional skills through space skills is positive and statistically significant (0.1193, $p = 0.020$). These findings indicate that experience may have a modest influence on instructional skills, mainly through the mediating variable of space skills (space CMS) (Table 1).

Relationship skill

The indirect effects of relationship skill (relationship CMS) on instructional skills through behaviour skill (-0.0242) and space skill (0.1656) are not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). These results suggest that the relationship skills may not significantly mediate the relationship between instructional skills and the mediating variables (Table 1).

Interpersonal skill

The indirect effects of interpersonal skill (interpersonal CMS) on instructional skills through behaviour skill (0.2662) and space skill (0.6461) are both positive and highly statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). These findings indicate that interpersonal skills strongly influence instructional skills, primarily through the mediating variables of behaviour skills and space skills. Improving interpersonal skills in classroom management may positively impact instructional effectiveness (Table 1).

Direct effects of independent variables on mediating variables

Table 1 also presents the estimates, S.E., and C.I.s for the component effects, which represent the direct effects of the independent variables on the mediating variables and the direct effects of the mediating variables on instructional skills. The direct effect of gender on behaviour skills (component effect) is not statistically significant ($p = 0.592$), suggesting that gender differences may not directly impact behaviour skills. The direct effect of gender on space skills (component effect) is not statistically significant ($p = 0.498$), indicating that gender differences may not directly affect space skills. The direct effect of experience on behaviour skills (component effect) is not statistically significant ($p = 0.456$), suggesting that experience may not directly impact behaviour skills. The direct effect of experience on space skills (component effect) is statistically significant ($p = 0.019$), indicating that experience may directly influence space skills. The direct effect of relationship skill on behaviour skill (component effect) is not statistically significant ($p = 0.466$), suggesting that relationship skills may not directly impact behaviour skills. The direct effect of relationship skill on space skill (component effect) is not statistically significant ($p = 0.067$), indicating that relationship skills may not directly affect space skills. The direct effect of interpersonal skills on behaviour skills (component effect) is highly statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that interpersonal skills directly influence behaviour skills. The direct effect of interpersonal skills on space skills (component effect) is also highly statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that interpersonal skills directly impact space skills. The direct effect of behaviour skill on instructional skill is highly statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), meaning that behaviour skill directly impacts instructional skills. This is equally true with the effect of space skills on instructional skills (Table 1).

Direct effects of independent variables on the dependent variable

Table 1 also showed the estimates, S.E., and C.I.s for the direct effects of the independent variables on instructional skills. These direct effects represent the influence of each independent variable on instructional skills, independent of

the mediating variables. The direct effect of gender on instructional skills is not statistically significant ($p = 0.420$), indicating that gender differences may not directly impact instructional skills. The direct effect of experience on instructional skills is not statistically significant ($p = 0.352$), suggesting that experience may not directly influence instructional skills. The direct effect of relationship skills on instructional skills is not statistically significant ($p = 0.336$), indicating that relationship skills may not directly impact instructional skills. The direct effect of interpersonal skills on instructional skills is not statistically significant ($p = 0.406$), suggesting that interpersonal skills may not directly influence instructional skills (Table 1).

Total Effects

Table 1 present the estimates, S.E., and C.I.s for the total effects, which represent the overall influence of each independent variable on instructional skills, including both the direct and indirect effects. The total effect of gender on instructional skills is not statistically significant ($p = 0.844$), indicating that the combined direct and indirect effects of gender differences on instructional skills are not significant. The total effect of experience on instructional skills is statistically significant ($p = 0.026$), suggesting that the combined direct and indirect effects of experience on instructional skills are significant. The total effect of relationship skills on instructional skills is not statistically significant ($p = 0.113$), indicating that the combined effects of relationship skills on instructional skills are not significant. The total effect of interpersonal skills on instructional skills is highly statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that the combined effects of interpersonal skills on instructional skills are significant.

Regressions Results

Table 2

Regression result of total effect prediction of the dependent variable, instructional skill

Names	Effect	Estimate	S.E.	Lower	Upper	β	df	t	p
GENDER1	MALE - FEMALE	0.417	2.1297	-3.7770	4.611	0.0102	259	0.196	0.845
EXPERIENCE	EXPERIENCE	0.180	0.0815	0.0200	0.341	0.1161	259	2.214	0.028
RELATIONSHIP SKILL	RELATIONSHIP_SKILL	0.227	0.1446	-0.0574	0.512	0.1075	259	1.572	0.117
INTERPERSONAL SKILL	INTERPERSONAL_SKILL	1.004	0.1516	0.7053	1.302	0.4524	259	6.623	< .001

In the regression results shown in Table 2, the total effects of the independent variables (gender, experience, relationship skill, interpersonal skill) on dependent variable (instructional skill) are presented. The estimated effect of gender, experience, relationship, and interpersonal skill on instructional skill is 0.417, 0.180, 0.227, and 1.004, corresponding p-values of 0.845, 0.028, 0.117, and 0.001. Experience and interpersonal skills significantly positively affect instructional skills; that of interpersonal skills was more highly significant. This result suggests that as experience increases, instructional skills also tend to increase. Also, a higher level of interpersonal skills suggests higher instructional skills. However, gender and relationship skills do not significantly contribute to instructional skills.

Table 3

Regression results when the dependent variable is behaviour skill

Names	Effect	Estimate	S.E.	Lower	Upper	β	df	t	p
GENDER	MALE – FEMALE	1.174	2.27	3.13	5.52	0.06	29	0.51	0.56
EXPERIENCE	EXPERIENCE	0.068	0.09	0.14	0.20	0.098	259	0.739	0.461
RELATIONSHIP _SKILL	RELATIONSHIP _SKILL	-0.1089	0.1508	-0.406	0.188	-0.0508	259	-0.722	0.471
INTERPERSONAL _SKILL	INTERPERSONAL _SKILL	1.1969	0.1580	0.886	1.508	0.5319	259	7.573	< .001

Table 3 presents the results of the mediator models, with the dependent variable being “behaviour skill” in the context of classroom management. The effects of the independent variables (gender, experience, relationship skill, and interpersonal skill) on the behaviour skills are indicated. The findings show that interpersonal skills have a statistically significant and strong positive effect on behaviour skills. Teachers with higher levels of interpersonal skills tend to exhibit better behaviour management skills in the classroom. This relationship is supported by the large estimate and the low p-value, indicating high confidence in the significance of the effect. The results in Table 3 also suggested that gender, experience, and relationship skills do not directly affect behaviour skills.

Table 4

Regression analysis with the dependent variable being space skill

Names	Effect	Estimate	S.E.	Lower	Upper	β	df	t	p
GENDER1	MALE-FEMALE	-1.261	1.8796	-4.9622	2.440	-0.0347	259	-0.671	0.503
EXPERIENCE	EXPERIENCE	0.167	0.0719	0.0254	0.308	0.1203	259	2.322	0.021

Table 4
Regression analysis with the dependent variable being space skill (cont.)

Names	Effect	Esti- mate	S.E.	Lower	Upper	β	df	t	p
RELATION- SHIP_SKILL	RELATION- SHIP_SKILL	0.232	0.1276	-0.0197	0.483	0.1227	259	1.815	0.071
INTERPER- SONAL_SKILL	INTERPER- SONAL_SKILL	0.904	0.1338	0.6407	1.168	0.4562	259	6.758	< .001

Table 4 presents the regression analysis results with the dependent variable being “SPACE SKILL” in the context of classroom management. The effects of the independent variables (gender, experience, relationship skill, and interpersonal skill) on the space skills of teachers are examined.

It can be observed from Table 4 that interpersonal skills have a statistically significant and positive effect on space skills. Teachers with higher levels of interpersonal skills tend to exhibit better space management skills in the classroom. This positive relationship is supported by the large estimate, low p-value, and confidence interval that does not include zero. It suggests that strong interpersonal skills contribute to effectively using classroom space. However, the results show that gender, experience, and relationship skills do not directly affect space skills statistically significantly.

Table 5
Regression analysis for the full model predicting the dependent variable (instructional skill)

Names	Effect	Esti- mate	S.E.	Lower	Upper	β	df	t	p
BEHAV- IOUR_SKILL	BEHAV- IOUR_SKILL	0.2224	0.0448	0.1342	0.311	0.2256	257	4.967	< .001
SPACE_SKILL	SPACE_SKILL	0.7146	0.0529	0.6104	0.819	0.6383	257	13.506	< .001
GENDER1	MALE – FE- MALE	1.0555	1.3302	-1.5640	3.675	0.0259	257	0.793	0.428
EXPERIENCE	EXPERIENCE	0.0471	0.0513	-0.0539	0.148	0.0303	257	0.919	0.359
RELTION- SHIP_SKILL	RELTION- SHIP_SKILL	0.0860	0.0914	-0.0939	0.266	0.0407	257	0.941	0.347
INTERPER- SONAL_SKILL	INTERPER- SONAL_SKILL	0.0915	0.1058	-0.1168	0.300	0.0412	257	0.865	0.388

Table 5 presents the results of a regression analysis with the dependent variable “instructional skill” in the context of classroom management. The aim is to examine the relationship between several independent variables (behaviour skill, space skill, gender, experience, relationship skill, and interpersonal skill) and teachers’ instructional skills. It can be observed that both behaviour skills and space skills have statistically significant and positive effects on instructional

skills. Teachers with higher levels of behaviour and space skills tend to exhibit better instructional skills in the classroom. These positive relationships are supported by the large estimates, low p-values, and confidence intervals that do not include zero. It suggests that effective behaviour management and utilisation of classroom space positively contribute to instructional skills. On the other hand, the variables gender, experience, relationship skills, and interpersonal skills do not have statistically significant direct effects on instructional skills.

Discussion

In classroom management, this research aimed to investigate how elements related to teaching, such as behaviour CMS, space CMS, interpersonal CMS, relationship CMS, gender, and experience, affect instructional CMS. The results give valuable insights into the correlations between these factors and their implications for improving instructional CMS. Behaviour CMS was shown to be a strong predictor of instructional CMS of preschool teachers. Since there is a positive correlation between behaviour skills and instructional CMS, it can be deduced that instructors who possess efficient behaviour management techniques are more likely to demonstrate great instructional CMS. This conclusion is consistent with other studies emphasising the significance of maintaining a good classroom atmosphere and practising effective behaviour management to maximise student engagement and learning outcomes (Stevenson et al., 2020; Jones & Jones, 2016; Massetti et al., 2010). It is easier for teachers to create an ideal learning environment favourable to successful teaching if they first set clear expectations for students, consistently praise good behaviours, and then handle troublesome behaviours (Paramita et al., 2020; Simonsen et al., 2020; Gage et al., 2018).

According to the findings of the mediation study, interpersonal CMS have a strong indirect impact on instructional classroom management skill. Skills about classroom behaviour CMS and space CMS mainly mediates this influence. On the other hand, the impacts of gender differences, experience, and interpersonal skills on instructional CMS are either insignificant or have minor direct and indirect effects. This is true for both the direct and the indirect effects. These results indicate how important it is to work on building interpersonal CMS to boost instructional effectiveness in the administration of classrooms. However, further study is required to comprehend better the intricate connections that exist between these factors and the effects that they have on the administration of the classroom. Both experience and interpersonal CMS play significant roles in predicting instructional CMS in classroom management. Superior instructional skills are significantly connected with greater interpersonal competence,

which is substantially associated with enhanced instructional skills. Teachers with more experience tend to demonstrate better instructional abilities. At least in the context of this study, the findings indicate that gender and relationship skills may not directly affect instructional skills which is in line with Sarfo et al (2015) study.

These results have significance for the professional growth and training of educators. Teachers' instructional CMS can be improved by emphasising the development of teachers' interpersonal skills and offering chances for instructors to acquire experience. In addition, the findings imply that concentrating one's efforts only on gender or interpersonal skills may not directly influence instructional abilities. Further research must confirm and generalise these results to diverse contexts and groups.

Because of the consequences of these results, interpersonal skills have been highlighted as particularly important for good space management in the classroom. Educators who have excellent interpersonal CMS are more likely to be able to establish an ideal physical environment that encourages learning and participation in classroom activities (Pansiri, 2008). The training of teachers and efforts for professional development should stress the development of interpersonal CMS to improve space management (Mouw et al., 2020).

The ramifications of these results underline how important it is to effectively control student behaviour and use available space to improve teaching abilities in the classroom. It is more probable for teachers to encourage students learning and involvement in classroom activities if they display effective ways of managing student behaviour and make optimal use of available classroom space (Escobar, 2023; Schwab et al., 2014). Programs for the training of teachers and initiatives for professional development should emphasise the development of skills for behaviour control and spatial organising to improve the efficacy of instructional methods (Parkash, 2017; Sarfo et al., 2015).

The effective usage of space was another factor that significantly improved instructional CMS. Teachers who can efficiently arrange their physical classrooms, strategically distribute resources, and maximise space for educational goals are more likely to display better levels of instructional competency (ALKIN-ŞAHİN> et al., 2022; Kuyini et al., 2016). This study lends credence to the idea that the surrounding environment plays a significant part in creating favourable conditions for educational opportunities (Barrett et al., 2015). A classroom that has been thoughtfully planned has the potential to boost children's engagement, encourage interaction, and provide an environment that is conducive to efficient teaching (Hu et al., 2021). To make the most of the chances for teaching, educators should carefully consider the placement of furniture, the presentation of educational materials, and the use of available space.

The results of this research have important implications for the development of teaching abilities and the administration of classrooms. Because good classroom management abilities directly affect the quality of education, teachers should be strongly encouraged to acquire these skills. Preschool teachers may be provided with ways to promote good behaviours, manage problematic behaviours, and foster a supportive classroom atmosphere by participating in professional development programs and training seminars. In addition, consideration needs to be made of the physical atmosphere of the classrooms. Creating a well-organised and dynamic learning environment that encourages active involvement and engagement on the part of students should receive support from the education community (Asok et al., 2016). School administrators are critical in creating supportive school policies prioritising effective instructional classroom management skills (Ezechinyere et al., 2021). They can provide early years teachers with the necessary resources, materials, and technology to optimise their classroom space and implement effective instructional strategies. Administrators can also implement a system of regular classroom observations and provide constructive feedback to early years teachers. Additionally, administrators can involve early years teachers in decision-making processes related to classroom management and instructional practices, valuing their expertise and insights and encouraging a collective effort towards improving classroom management and instructional skills.

Despite the great insights gathered from this research, it is essential to realise that there were some limitations. The research included self-report questionnaires which is susceptible to possible biases and limitations due to the nature of self-reporting interpretations. In further research, researchers might use a combination of research procedures to get a more holistic comprehension of the connections investigated in this study. Also, the male preschool teachers used in the study were far fewer than their female counterpart. Caution should be taken when generalizing the findings on gender. In addition, the results may not apply to all teachers since the research was conducted with just a small subset of classroom instructors. The findings of the research would have a higher degree of external validity if they were replicated with a participant pool that was both bigger and more demographically varied.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to add to the current body of literature by investigating the connections between behavioural CMS, space CMS, experience, gender, interpersonal CMS, relationship CMS, and instructional CMS. The results shed light on the significance of space CMS and behaviour CMS, interper-

sonal CMS, and experience as essential factors in improving instructional CMS. The results imply that educational institutions and politicians should prioritise tactics and support mechanisms that seek to develop behaviour CMS, interpersonal CMS, and optimise classroom settings. These strategies and mechanisms are focused on improving classroom environments. They will be able to increase the students' learning outcomes if they accomplish this since it will establish an environment favorable to efficient teaching. In the next study, other elements that impact instructional abilities should be investigated further, and various populations should be taken into consideration to get a thorough knowledge of successful classroom management strategies.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and implications of this study, the following recommendations are suggested for early years teachers and school administrators:

- Provide professional development programs focused on behaviour management strategies, interpersonal skills, and instructional techniques to enhance teachers' classroom management skills.
- Foster a positive and supportive classroom environment that promotes positive relationships between teachers and students and among students themselves.
- Encourage collaboration and sharing of best practices among teachers to exchange ideas and strategies for effective classroom management.
- Implement policies and guidelines prioritising effective classroom management practices, emphasising the importance of creating a conducive learning environment.
- Conduct further research to explore additional variables that may impact instructional skills and classroom management in early years education.
- Collaborate with parents and guardians to establish a strong home-school partnership, promoting consistent behaviour management strategies and student support.

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Badanie wzajemnego oddziaływania umiejętności interpersonalnych, płci, doświadczenia, umiejętności w zakresie relacji, wykorzystania przestrzeni i umiejętności instruktażowych w zarządzaniu klasą przez nauczycieli przedszkolnych

Edukacja wczesnoszkolna wymaga skutecznego planu zarządzania klasą, aby stworzyć optymalne środowisko uczenia się, które zapewni lepsze wyniki uczniów. W prezentowanym badaniu ilościowym zbadano związek między umiejętnościami behawioralnymi, umiejętnościami zarządza-

nia klasą (CMS), przestrzennym CMS, relacyjnym CMS, interpersonalnym CMS, płcią, doświadczeniem i instruktażowym CMS. Uczestnikami byli nauczyciele przedszkoli z różnych placówek, a metodą zbierania danych były kwestionariusze samoopisowe (ankiety). W badaniu wykorzystano analizę regresji jako metodę badania powiązań istniejących pomiędzy odpowiednimi zmiennymi. Odkrycia ujawniły, że chociaż płeć i CMS relacji nie pośredniczyły w znaczący sposób w związku między instruktażowym CMS a zmiennymi pośredniczącymi (behawioralnym CMS i przestrzennym CMS), lecz interpersonalny CMS – tak. Bezpośredni wpływ płci, doświadczenia i CMS relacji na zmienne pośredniczące był nieistotny, ale wpływ interpersonalnego CMS został stwierdzony. Całkowity wpływ CMS płci i relacji na CMS instruktażowy był niewielki, ale wpływ doświadczenia i umiejętności interpersonalnych był znaczący. Zmienne pośredniczące mają znaczący pozytywny wpływ na instruktażowy CMS.

Podsumowując, interpersonalny CMS, behawioralny CMS, przestrzenny CMS i doświadczenie pozytywnie wpływają na instruktażowy CMS. Niniejsze badanie dostarcza empirycznego dowodu na związek między tymi parametrami w zarządzaniu klasą. Badanie sugeruje, że wychowawcy klas wczesnoszkolnych i władze szkolne powinny priorytetowo traktować kontrolę zachowania jako środki służące umiejętnościom interpersonalnym i pomagać uczniom w kreatywnym wykorzystaniu przestrzeni. Poprawi to nauczanie i zarządzanie klasą. To badanie może pomóc nauczycielom i administratorom w tworzeniu angażujących i wspierających środowisk edukacyjnych.

Słowa kluczowe: umiejętność zarządzania klasą (CMS), nauczyciele przedszkolni.