INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN LAGOS STATE

BY

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ABSTRACT
This study examines the influence of school environment on the student academic performance in secondary schools in Lagos State. Factors such as school facilities, class size, school location and school plant planning were examined to know their effects on the academic achievement of secondary school students. Questionnaire was contracted to test the hypotheses developed. Simple percentage statistical tool was employed to analyse the variables. Based on the findings, it was discovered that poor school facilities, large class size, inappropriate school location, and poor school plant planning negatively affects students’ academic performance. Recommendations were made to address the issues of school learning facilities, classroom population, school location and proper school plant planning.
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1.1 Background to the Study

The school environment, which include the classrooms, libraries, technical workshops, laboratories, teachers’ quality, school management, teaching methods, peers, etc are variables that affect students’ academic achievement (Ajayi, 2001 and Oluchukwu, 2000). Hence, the school environment remains an important area that should be studied and well managed to enhance students’ academic performance.

The issue of poor academic performance of students in Nigeria has been of much concern to the government, parents, teachers and even student themselves. The quality of education not only depends on the teachers as reflected in the performance of their duties, but also in the effective coordination of the school environment (Ajao 2001). School environment which include instructional spaces planning, administrative places planning, circulation spaces planning, spaces for conveniences planning, accessories planning, the teachers as well as the students themselves are essential in teaching-learning process. The extent to which student learning could be enhanced depends on their location within the school compound, the structure of their classroom, availability of instructional facilities and accessories. It is believed that a well planned school will gear up expected outcomes of education that will facilitate good social, political and economic emancipation, effective teaching and learning process and academic performance of the students.
Relating this study to international occurrences are the assertions of Williams, Persaud, and Turner (2008), quoting Marsden (2005), which reported that safe and orderly classroom environment (aspect of instructional space), School facilities (accessories) were significantly related to students’ academic performance in schools. The three researchers, also quoted Glassman (1994), asserting that a comfortable and caring environment among other treatments helped to contribute to students’ academic performance.

The physical characteristics of the school have a variety of effects on teachers, students, and the learning process. Poor lighting, noise, high levels of carbon dioxide in classrooms, and inconsistent temperatures make teaching and learning difficult. Poor maintenance and ineffective ventilation systems lead to poor health among students as well as teachers, which leads to poor performance and higher absentee rates (Frazier, 2002; Lyons, 2001; and Ostendorf, 2001). These factors can adversely affect student behavior and lead to higher levels of frustration among teachers, and poor learning attitude among students.

Beyond the direct effects that poor facilities have on students’ ability to learn, the combination of poor facilities, which create an uncomfortable and uninviting workplace for teachers, combined with frustrating behavior by students including poor concentration and hyperactivity, lethargy, or apathy, creates a stressful set of working conditions for teachers. Because stress and job dissatisfaction are common pre-curors to lowered teacher enthusiasm, it is possible that the aforementioned characteristics of school facilities have an effect upon the academic performance of students.
Previous studies have investigated the relationship of poor school environment including problems with student-teacher ratio, school location, school population, classroom ventilation, poor lighting in classrooms, and inconsistent temperatures in the classroom with student health problems, student behavior, and student achievement (Crandell & Smaldino, 2000; Davis, 2001; Johnson, 2001; Lyons, 2001; Moore, 2002; Stricherz, 2000; Tanner, 2000). To complement these studies, the present research will examine the aforementioned areas of school environment as it affect students performance in Nigerian schools.

**Statement of the Problem**

Emphasizing the importance of school environment to students academic performance, Oluchukwu, (2000) asserted school environment is an essential aspect of educational planning, he went further to explain that “unless schools are well suited, buildings adequately constructed and equipment adequately utilized and maintained, much teaching and learning may not take place.

The high levels of students’ academic performance may not be guaranteed where instructional space such as classrooms, libraries, technical workshops and laboratories are structurally defective. However, little is known on the impact of school environment on students’ academic performance in an urban city like Lagos State.
1.3 Objectives of the Study

The purposes of this study are:

i. To examine the relationship between school environment and the student academic performance

ii. To examine the impact of school facilities on the academic performance of students in the secondary school

iii. To explore factors such as class size that have been perceived to promote or inhibit students learning in the academic process of students in secondary school

iv. To investigate the extent to which school location affects the academic achievement of secondary school students.

1.4 Research Questions

i. Is there any relationship between school environment and the student academic performance?

ii. To what extent do school facilities affect student performance in secondary school?

iii. What effect does class size have on the academic performance of students in secondary school?

iv. To what extent does school location have on the achievement of secondary school students?
1.5 Research Hypothesis

\[ H_0^1 \] There is no significant difference between school environment and the student academic performance

\[ H_0^2 \] There is no significant difference between school facilities and academic performance of students

\[ H_0^3 \] There is no significant difference between class size and academic performance of students

\[ H_0^4 \] There is no significant difference between school location and academic performance of students

1.6 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that this study will provide information for parents, educators and school administrators to reflect upon various factors that help students in achieving their academic goals. In so doing, they can investigate the possibility of introducing those factors to their school, which may consequently lead to enhancing students’ educational outcomes in school. In addition, the fact that this study is conducted in public schools, it shares quite a lot of similarities with many other counterparts. In this connection, this study provides a valuable reference for other schools to reflect upon the school environment as it affect the academic performance of student in secondary school.
1.7 **Scope of the Study**

This research work focuses on influence of school environment on academic performance of secondary school students in some selected schools in Agege Local Government Area Of Lagos State. This research work covers all public secondary schools students in Agege Local Government Area Of Lagos State. However, four public secondary schools will be used as case study.

1.8 **Limitation of the Study**

Apart from time-frame and shortage of finance, the major limitation to this research is the inability of the researcher to cover the whole public secondary school in Agege Local Government Area Of Lagos State as the title suggest.

1.9 **Research Methodology**

A descriptive research design will be use in carrying out this study. The sample for this study constitutes one hundred (100) respondents. For this research work, random sampling technique will be used. This study will be restricted to the categories of students the researcher considered essentially relevant to issues being investigated. Simple percentage statistical analysis will be used for the study.
1.10 Definition of Terms

School: A school is an institution designed for the teaching of students (or "pupils") under the direction of teachers.

School Environment: A school’s physical environment includes the school building and the surrounding.

Academic Achievement – Knowledge attained or skills developed in school subjects by test scores.

Secondary school (also "high school") is a term used to describe an educational institution where the final stage of schooling, known as secondary education and usually compulsory up to a specified age, takes place. It follows elementary or primary education, and may be followed by university (tertiary) education.
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