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INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU EDUCATION ZONE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of school environment on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Enugu state. The study was guided by three research questions and one hypothesis. The study adopted a survey design. The population of the study comprised 4,842 senior secondary school students in Enugu education zone. Simple random sampling was employed in selecting 3 secondary schools from 9 secondary schools in the zone. Multi-stage random sample was adopted in selecting 60 senior secondary students from each school, making a total of 180 respondents for the study. Instrument for data collection was a research questionnaire developed by the researcher with 17 items tagged "School Environment and Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (SESAPQ)''. The instrument was validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha technique which yielded reliability index of 0.76, 0.74, and 0.78, for the three clusters with an overall reliability of 0.76. The data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Findings revealed that to a high extent, overcrowded classroom, the school library, laboratory and workshop were infrastructures that influence the academic performance of students in secondary schools. It was also discovered to a high extent that chalkboard/whiteboard, textbooks, charts, computers and pictures to a high extent are instructional materials that influence students' academic performance. It was further revealed that to a high extent, principal/teacher, teacher-teacher, teacher-student and student-student were the human relations that influence the academic performance of students. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that government at all levels should come to the aid of schools in the provision of needed infrastructures and instructional materials to enhance academic performance of students.

Keyword: School Environment, Influence, Academic Performance.

Introduction

The environment plays a vital role in the life of every organism that exists. It also determines the growth and development of a child from childhood to adult hood. Environment refers to the physical and psychological school conditions in which students grow and learn. Schools are the

temple of knowledge and agent of social change and transformation, the general condition of schools plays a significant role in the development of personality of student. The students spend most of their time at school, the school environment is responsible for inculcating high value to them. Adele (2015) believed that intellectual and moral development of every student is influence by both hereditary and environment.

The school environment is that particular environment where teachers and students come together for the purpose of teaching and learning. It is also an academic environment where teaching and learning are made available to learners based on the prescription of a formal curriculum. Booth & Okely (2005) defined school environment as the physical environment (e.g. facilities and equipment), school policies (e.g. time allocated for activities) and infrastructures (e.g. library, laboratory and hostels) made available for learning achievement of students. Chuma (2012), states that the school environment includes those aspects within the students surrounding at school that influences the process of teaching and learning. Similarly, Ileoye (2015) posit that the school environment comprises the availability of adequate and qualitative facilities to promote teaching and learning. Odeh, Oguche and Ivagher (2015) outlined the characteristics of the school environment to include school buildings, furniture's, playgrounds, sporting facilities and other related equipment which aid the teacher's delivery of lesson. The school environment also includes the social relationships in the school. The relationships include principal-community relationship, principal-teacher relationship, teacher-teacher relationship, teacher-students and students-students relationships. It has been observed that the school environment has a great influence on students learning.

Influence is a force that drives an individuals' behavior or action. Ada (2005) said that influence is a powerful force a phenomena has on somebody which directs behavior. She added that this powerful force called influence must be persistence to bring out behaviors. Similarly, Odeh, Oguche, and Ivagher (2015) refer to influence as the power or force an environment exerts on a person. The fact remains that the school environment exerts pressure on students and by this, has a powerful influence on students' academic performance which might be negative or positive.

Academic performance means student's educational outcome after a short period of learning engagement. It is also regarded as students' success in a short term learning activity. Bossart, Doumen, Buyse and Verschueren (2011), defined academic performance as students success in meeting short or long term goals in education. Similarly, Duruji, Azuh, and Oviasosogie (2014) posited that academic performance is the degree of a student's accomplishment of his or her task and studies. Duruji et al further said that the most well-known indicator of measuring academic performance is grades which reflect the students "score" for their subjects and overall tenure. Academic performance means the extent to which a student has attained their short or long term educational goals. The researcher observes that a good school environment promotes academic performance of students while the

reverse is the case. Poor school environment which has a negative influence on students' academic performance as reported by Good (2009) was a major reason why some students indulge in various forms of examination malpractices. Reports from Areghan (2020) shows that the percentage of candidates who sat for the WASSCE in 2019, that is, those who obtained credit and above in minimum of five (5) subjects, including English Language and Mathematics, was 64.18%. Though, there was a marginal 1.06% improvement in performance in this regard in 2020 result; upon this, Areghan further reports that the result of 13.98% of the total number of candidates that sat the examination, are being withheld in connection with various reported cases of examination malpractice. A healthy and attractive school environment makes for conducive learning and promotes students pride in their schools and their interest to stay in school (Mgbodile 2014). Since some school environments are in bad condition, the influence they have on students are also not rewarding.

The above developments got the attention of education stakeholders who, from time to time, questions how effective is the school environment towards the academic performance of school children because there shouldn't be no malpractice if the school environment is healthy for academics. There are rains of opinions in pages of literatures on what could be the problem. For instance, Sabitu, Babatunde and Oluwole (2012) discovered that some facilities in Nigerian schools such as classrooms, staffrooms, laboratories, workshops, libraries, chairs and tables amongst other things are in bad shape and makes learning uncomfortable for students. Instructional facilities according to studies have been proved as essential instrument that facilitates teaching and learning in classroom, Adele (2015) held that availability and proper utilization of instructional material have close tie in fostering students learning in classroom. Commenting on why high academic attainment is not in vogue in Nigeria secondary schools, Adesina in Odeh, Oguche, and Ivagher (2015) identified poor and inadequate physical facilities, obsolete teaching techniques, overcrowded classrooms among others, as factors.

The researcher having come across the above discoveries, it still bias because the above studies were not carried out in Enugu state and this became a gap in this study. To fill this gap, the researcher delved into a study of this kind to investigate influence of school environment on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Enugu state.

The school environment cannot be written off when considering an effective education for a student, this is because school environment makes provisions of both human and material resources needed to make learning more effective. Human resources here include teachers and other special resource persons who offer academic help to students while material resources includes a host of infrastructures and instructional materials needed in the school. As observed, some schools in Nigeria are still suffering from dilapidated infrastructures, obsolete instructional materials and lack of teachers. Observation further show that some pupils and students learn under trees in some

parts of the country due to dilapidated classrooms. Due to lack of instructional materials in some schools, teachers use students project improvised materials in teaching. There has been incident of lack of power supply in some schools which in-turn affects learning of computer studies. These computers lack maintenance culture and by this dumped at the computer laboratory. The researcher is worried of what could be the effects of these problems on students' academic performances should these problems be found among secondary schools in Enugu State.

The above problems made the researcher to delve into this study to investigate influence of school environment on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Enugu state.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the influence of school infrastructures on academic performance of students in public secondary school in Enugu State?
2. What are the influence of instructional materials on academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Enugu State?
3. What ways do the social relationship influence academic performance of students in secondary schools in Enugu State?

Hypothesis

1. There is no significance mean difference between responses of male and female students on influence of school environment on students' academic performance in public secondary schools.

Research Method

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised 4,842 senior secondary school students in Enugu education zone. Reason for selecting senior secondary school students was based on the fact that they are more experienced to respond to the questionnaire items. Simple random sampling by balloting was used in selecting 3 secondary schools from 9 secondary schools in Enugu zone. Multi-stage random sampling technique was adopted in selecting 60 senior secondary school students from each school, making a total of 180 respondents for the study. Instrument for data collection was a questionnaire containing 17 items drafted by the researcher tagged "School Environment and its Influence on Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (SEISAPQ)". The instrument was validated by three experts as were arranged on 4 point likert scale A, High extent, Very low extent, and Low extent. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha technique which yielded reliability index of 0.76, 0.74, and 0.78, for the three clusters with an overall reliability of 0.76 indicating that the instrument is suitable for data collection. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher with the help of three research assistants who are secondary school teachers. Out of 180 copies distributed 174 were properly filled and returned indicating 98 percent return rate.

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The data was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The decision rule was based on the midpoint 2.50. Therefore any mean score rating 2.50 or above was interpreted to indicate agreement while the mean score rating 2.50 and below was interpreted as disagreement. In testing null hypothesis, if t-calculated is equal to or greater than t-critical at 0.05 level of significance the null hypothesis was rejected, but if t-calculated was less than t-critical at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What are the influence of infrastructures in a school on the academic performance of students in public secondary school in Enugu State?

Table One: influence of infrastructures in the school on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools Enugu State. N=174

S/N	ITEMS	_X	SD	Decision
1	Classrooms are well ventilated	2.21	1.52	Disagree
2	Overcrowded classroom affects students concentration during lessons	2.62	1.92	Agree
3	School library are stocked with current books which contributes to students reading and research	2.97	1.14	Agree
4	Laboratories in the school lack needed apparatus for practical lessons.	3.08	2.35	Agree
5	Overgrown play grounds in the school contributes to students poor performance in sports	1.14	2.11	Disagree
6	Workshops in school are well equipped for students orientation	2.79	1.56	Agree
7	There are operational ceiling fans in classroom	2.17	2.01	Disagree

Analysis in table 1**:** shows that items 2, 3, 4 and 6 have mean rating above the cut off mean of 2.50, this implies that the identified items are the influence infrastructure on the academic performance of students. On other hand mean rating of items 1, 5 and 7 fell below the accepted mean score of 2.50 indicating their disagreement with the items as influence of infrastructure on academic performance of students.

Research Question 2: What are the influence of instructional materials on academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Enugu State?

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Table 2: Influence of instructional materials on the academic performance of Students in public secondary schools in Enugu State

S/N	ITEM	X	SD	Decision
8	Adequate sitting chairs/desk in the classroom helps in retaining the students in the class	2.90	1.97	Agree
9	Available textbooks in the school serve students' academic needs.	3.14	2.10	Agree
10	The use of charts helps students pay attention to lessons.	3.11	2.00	Agree
11	Students feel more creative when they learn with computer.	3.04	1.92	Agree
12	Use of pictures in teaching makes students active than passive.	3.06	1.79	Agree

Table 2 indicated that all items from 8 to 12 were rated above 2.50 of the acceptable mean score and this implies that the students were in agreement with all the items: adequate chairs/desk, availability of textbooks, use of charts, learning with computer and use of pictures as influence of academic performance of students.

Research question 3: What ways do social relationship in the school influence academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Enugu State?

Table 3: Ways social relationship in the school influence academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

S/N	ITEMS	X	SD	Decision
13	Principal/community relationship contributes to students' academic performances.	2.39	2.01	Disagree
14	Principal-teacher relationship contributes to students' academic performances.	3.09	2.05	Agree
15	Teacher-teacher relationship has no impact on student's academic performance in school.	2.88	2.71	Agree
16	Teacher-student relationship contributes to student's academic performance	2.52	1.23	Agree
17	Student-student relationship in a school contributes to students' academic performances.	3.04	2.00	Agree

The result as shown in Table 3 shows that the students mean scores for all item with exception of item 13 are within the real limit mean of 2.50 indicating that the students agreed that social relationship influence academic performance of students.

Testing of Hypothesis

1. There is no significance mean difference between responses of male and female students on the influence of school environment on students' academic performance.

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Table 4 t-test comparison of male and female students on influence of environment on student academic performance.

Respondents	N	SD	X	t-cal	Df	A	T-crit	Decision
Female	98	0.62	0.71	0.103	172	.05	1.98	Accept Null Hypothesis
Male	76	0.47	0.44					

On table 6 above, t-cal (0.103) is less than t-crit (1.98). The null hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is no significance between the response of male and female students on the influence of the school environment on students' academic performance.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in research question 1 revealed that overcrowded classroom, the school library, laboratory and workshop were the infrastructures that influence the academic performance of students in public secondary schools. This is agreement with Bisi-Onyemaechi, Akani, Ikefuna, Tagbo and Chinawa (2018), who noted that the deplorable state of infrastructures in public schools were a major reason most parents withdraw their children from public to private schools. Since students were not comfortable with overcrowded classrooms, leaking roofs, broken chairs, overgrown school play grounds (field), poor equipped laboratory, and lots more, there is a high tendency that the mentioned factors is a jeopardy to students' academic performance.

The findings in table 2 showed that chalk/whiteboards, available textbooks, charts, use of computer and pictures were the instructional materials that influence students' academic performance. This is in conformity with Good (2009) discovered that most public primary and secondary schools in Nigeria lack current text materials to make our children literate and expose students to challenging ideas. Although Obasi and Anyachebelu (2020) discovered that most teachers has sufficient charts and pictures and thus, make use of them during classroom activities; on the other, ICT's such as computers and camera's in different schools are in a bad shape as most of them had broken down, and liable to result to poor performances of students.

The finding in research question 3 revealed that principal-teacher relationship, teacher-teacher relationship, teacher-student relationship and student to student relationship influences students' academic performances of students. This is confirmed in the findings of Ajewole & Okebukola (2000) which states relationship that motivates learning among school to include: teacher-teacher, teacher-student, student-student and school principal-teacher relationship and that these relationships are pragmatic based on how effective they are used in schools. Anuna (2010) termed this type of relationship democratic and pressed

that it is one of the best that units teachers, students, resources and other academic staff in a school for the purpose of instruction. The result of the study also indicated that there is no significant relationship between the mean rating of male and female students on influence of school environment on students' academic performance.

Conclusion

The school environmental factors that influence students' academic achievement include the infrastructures in the schools, instructional materials in the school and the human relationship in the schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings above, the researcher recommends the followings;

1. That government at all levels should invest more infrastructures such as modern library fully equipped with current books, modern science and computer laboratory, spaced classroom blocks, borehole to provide good drinking water for occupants of the school as well as other infrastructures needed to facilitate education in the school.

2. Government should as well provide schools with sufficient instructional materials such as computers, chalkboards, current text materials, regular power supply and lots more which would go miles in facilitating academics in the schools.

3. School heads should periodically engage their staff on awareness programmes through workshop or seminar also provide all the need to maintain good relationship with co-teachers and students as this would help to maintain order in the school and smooth relationship between teachers and students.

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