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INFRASTRUCTURAL ADEQUACY AND TEACHER'S JOB PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN DELTA STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated the adequacy of infrastructure in public primary schools and the effects on teachers' job performance as perceived by the head teachers. The head teachers were purposefully chosen for this study since they are the immediate boss and instructional supervisors of the teachers working in the school environment. The population was the public primary school headteachers in Delta State with a sample of Agbor Education Zone, Delta State. The study revealed a very poor educational

infrastructure in all the schools. It is important to state that the inadequacy of infrastructure affects job performance, but some professional practices were affected, too. It is recommended that the federal, state and local governments properly fund primary education as the foundation and bedrock of all levels of education. Also, community members, Parents and Teachers Associations, Alumni members and Banks within the Local Government Areas should contribute to providing educational infrastructure in primary schools to improve teaching and learning.

Keywords: Public primary schools; infrastructural adequacy; job performance.

Introduction

Primary Education is the first stage of formal education. It comes in between the pre-school/kindergarten and the secondary level of education. This level of education is the foundation of the formal education system. The Nigerian National Policy on Education (FRN,2013) identifies the objectives of this level of education to include:

- ◆ Inculcate permanent literacy, numeracy and the ability to communicate effectively
- ◆ Lay a sound basis for scientific, critical and reflective thinking
- ◆ Promote patriotism, fairness, understanding and national unity
- ◆ instil social morals, norms and values in the child
- ◆ Develop in the child the ability to adapt to the changing environment, and
- ◆ Provide opportunities for the child to develop manipulative life skills that will enable the child to function effectively within the limits of the child's ability.

The same National Policy on education declared education as an instrument of excellence for national development. Lending credence to this, the Nigerian vision 20:2020 first national development plan states that:

"Education constitutes the core of human development. It opens up opportunities for both individual and group empowerment; it is a vital tool for transformation and the key to the sustainable development of a nation. Human capital development anchored on strong learning system is central to attainment of vision 20:2020. (NPC 2010)

The role of infrastructure adequacy in affecting teachers' productivity, especially at the primary school level, cannot be overemphasised. Schools need adequate equipment available for the learners to understand better the concepts being taught. Ema and Ajayi (2004) assert that teaching equipment and materials have helped over the years to facilitate teaching and learning situations and address the instructional needs of individuals and groups.

Adebayo (2009) noted that educational facilities at all levels of the Nigerian school system are in terrible shape. Schools are littered with battered structures, equipment (where they are available at all), junk and unserviceable vehicles, raggedly classroom buildings, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate manpower in quantity and quality, instability in the academic calendar owing to strikes, very low teacher morale due to poor remuneration and working conditions.

In the education process, the teacher's role is very significant as he stands as a pivot for development, modern civilisation and globalisation. Therefore, the role of the teacher in the efficacy of the teaching and learning process cannot be overemphasised. The Nigerian National Policy on Education (2013) says, "In recognition of the pivotal role of quality teachers in the provision of quality education at all levels, teacher education shall continue to be emphasised in education planning and development". (FRN 2013).

It is pertinent to note that no matter how well trained and prepared a teacher may be, he may not be able to achieve much on the job if other needed factors are not adequately available. Schools need to have available and adequate infrastructure and learning resources for the learners to understand better the concepts the teachers try to establish in the teaching and learning process. Ayeni and Adelabu (2012) asserted that there is strong evidence that high-quality infrastructure is a crucial element of the learning environment in schools and any other learning institution. They facilitate better instruction, improve student outcomes and reduce dropout rates.

In Nigeria, successive governments have tended to pursue poorly planned educational policies. Priorities have somehow been misplaced, and huge resources squandered with little results to show for it. There has arisen some level of crisis in the education sector. The availability of inputs in adequate quantity and quality plays a significant role in ensuring organisational efficiency. Onyeachu (2008:1) asserted that implementation is important no matter how well a curriculum of any subject is planned, designated, and documented. (Asiyai (2012) carried out a study to assess the state of school facilities in public secondary schools in Delta State. The result revealed that the facilities in the public secondary schools were generally in a state of disrepair.

Osarenren Osaghae and Irabor(2012) studied the availability and adequacy of human and material resources for the teaching and learning skill-based courses in Nigerian public universities. The findings revealed that the human and material resources on the ground did not match the minimum standard requirement recommended by the National University Commission.

Mabeyo (2016) argues that most schools have a shortage of school infrastructure. He pointed out that most primary schools lacked teachers' accommodation, classrooms, toilets and desks and that this led to poor academic performance in Nzeega District Tabora in Tanzania. This aroused the curiosity of the researchers to seek to carry out a similar investigation at the primary school level in Delta State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

- ◆ How do Head teachers perceive the adequacy of infrastructure in public primary schools?
- ◆ To what extent does the adequacy of infrastructure in public primary schools impact teachers' job performance as perceived by Headteachers?

Method

The design of the study was a descriptive survey. The survey design was adopted because of its flexibility and effectiveness in information gathering on facts, attitudes and opinions of respondents. The population of Headteachers, according to the state Universal Basic Education Board, is one thousand, one hundred and twenty-six. The sample for the study is the Agbor Educational Zonal which consists of Ika North East and Ika South Local Government areas of Delta State. There are fifty-six public primary schools in Ika North East Local Governments, while Ika South Local Government has fifty-seven public primary schools. Two research questions guided the study. The questionnaire was the instrument for the study. The researchers developed two instruments. The two instruments titled – adequacy of infrastructure in public primary schools (AOIPPS) and Head Teachers perception on the impact of the adequacy of infrastructure on teachers' job performance (HTPAITJP) were employed in the study. The face validation of the instruments was done by three experts, two in educational management and the other in measurement and evaluation of the faculty of education University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State. To ensure internal consistency, Cronbach's Alpha was adopted to calculate the instrument's reliability. The alpha value were 0.67 and 0.77, respectively, indicating the high reliability of the instruments used for the study. Data was collected through the local Education Authority in Agbor, Education zone. They helped distribute the questionnaire to the Headteachers in the two local government areas. The questionnaire was distributed to the one hundred and thirteen Headteachers in the Agbor education zone, but Ninety-five were returned. The data was collected and analysed using the mean. The study employed the four-point Likert scale of strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). Mean values of 2.50 and above were regarded as agree, while values below 2.50 were considered as disagree.

$$\text{Mean} = \frac{4 + 3 + 2 + 1 + \frac{10}{4}}{4} = 2.50$$

Research Question One

Table 1: Mean scores of respondents on the adequacy of infrastructure in public primary schools in Delta State.

S/N	Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	sums of score	mean \bar{x}^2
1	Enough classroom blocks in all Primary schools	40	111	68	13	232	2.44
2	Provisions of enough and spacious classrooms	24	129	72	10	235	2.47
3	There is a playground and fields in the school	108	159	18	6	291	3.06
4	The schools have enough chalkboard/boards in the classrooms	52	153	54	4	263	2.76
5	All teachers have comfortable accommodation from government	4	39	86	38	167	1.75
6	All teachers have enough spacious and comfortable offices	4	12	68	56	140	1.47
7	All the schools have an adequate supply of instructional materials/both for teachers and pupils	-	24	88	43	155	1.63
8	The school has enough furniture for pupils and Teachers	12	90	94	15	211	2.22
9	There is a library in every primary schools	4	63	70	27	166	1.76
10	Teachers and pupils have access to computer and internet services	4	3	46	70	123	1.29
11	There is constant power supply in your school	4	3	30	78	115	1.21
12	There are equipped laboratories in your school	4	6	40	144	194	2.04
13	The school has supply of portable water	8	24	56	57	145	1.52
14	There are adequate recreational and sporting activities in your school	4	39	76	43	162	1.70
15	All school libraries are well equipped and functional	4	6	20	81	121	1.27

Table 1 only items 3 and 4 (there is a playground and fields in the schools, and the schools have enough chalkboards/boards in the classroom(s) scored above 2.50. The remaining thirteen items scored below 2.50. This implies that there was an inadequacy of infrastructure in public primary schools.

Research question 2: What are the Head teachers' perceptions of the influence of infrastructure adequacy on teachers' job performance?

Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents on perceived influence of adequacy of infrastructure on teachers' job performance.

S/N	Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	sums of score	mean \bar{x}^2
1	Teaches the classes/subjects conscientiously and with zeal	8	6	118	32	164	1.72
2	Early and regular attendance to school	96	195	08	-	292	3.14
3	Organise classroom as well as learning resources to develop a positive learning atmosphere	4	6	40	144	194	2.04
4	Plan, prepare and present lessons to the class	48	150	50	8	248	2.61
5	Motivates pupils to be active and develops their enthusiasm to learn.	24	129	72	10	233	2.47
6	Conducts extra curricular activities with special interest	16	18	126	22	204	2.14
7	Facilitates positive pupils' development	8	30	124	16	178	1.87
8	Maintains and updates pupils' attendance records	152	150	10	02	312	3.35
9	Maintains discipline in the school	164	144	08	02	318	3.34
10	Co-ordinating activities and resources in the school	08	28	60	55	143	1.50
11	Covers all topics in the syllabus	12	90	94	15	211	2.22
12	Conducts tests and examinations	80	165	36	02	253	2.79
13	Counsels pupils to imbibe positive values	4	39	86	38	167	1.75
14	Use the class time judiciously	52	153	54	4	263	2.76
15	Put in their best to comply with policies of Education	4	12	68	56	140	1.47

Table 2 shows that the mean ratings of the respondents concerning six items, namely items 2,4, 8, 9, 12 and 14, were above 2.50. The statements in these items were regarded as areas where teachers performed positively and effectively. These statements are:

- * Early and regular attendance at school
- * Plan, prepare and present lessons to the class

- ◆ Maintains and updates pupils' attendance records
- ◆ Maintains discipline in the school
- ◆ Conducts tests and examinations
- ◆ Use the class time judiciously

The remaining nine (9) items' main rating was below 2.50 showing that the statements constituted areas where headteachers perceived that teachers performed low. The whole analysis summarises that the opinion of the head teachers is that inadequacy of infrastructure in the public school affected the teachers' performance.

Discussion

This study analysed the adequacy of infrastructure and how this affected or influenced the job performance of teachers in public primary schools as perceived by the Headteachers. The study revealed an inadequate infrastructure in public primary schools, which had implications on teachers' job performance.

The analysis in table 1 showed that apart from playground/fields and availability of chalkboards and boards in the public primary schools, all other important infrastructure for teaching and learning was inadequate. The finding is in agreement with the studies of Onyeachu (2008), Asiyai (2012) and Mabeyo (2016), who reported on the inadequacy of infrastructure in public schools. The implication is that many parents today enroll their children and wards in private schools where they prefer because of the availability of school teaching and learning facilities. Many schools that lack the essential facilities do not function properly. There is also the problem of poor academic performance among the pupils in examinations.

Research question two and analysis in table 2 sought to find out how Headteachers perceived teacher's performance as influenced by the inadequacy of infrastructure. The result revealed that on issues directly related to the professional duties of the teachers like early and regular attendance to school, planning preparation and lesson presentation, class record-keeping, conducting of tests and examinations and maintenance of discipline, the teacher performed high. But the teacher performed poorly or low in most areas where facilities were required for their duty performance. This finding agrees with Ayeni and Adelabu (2012), who asserted that high-quality infrastructure is a crucial element of the learning environment in schools. The results also agree with that of Chukwu (2009) that lack of school infrastructure hinders effective teaching and learning. The implications of the findings are both gloomy and far-reaching. As revealed in this study, we cannot expect good education for our children in the face of glaring inadequacies of infrastructure.

Conclusion

Education infrastructure is an important factor in determining the quality of teaching and learning. Where there are inadequacies of the basic facilities in public primary school, teaching and learning would be non-effective.

Bearing in mind that primary education is the bedrock of all other levels of education, the foundation should be solid. Public primary schools should be furnished with all needed infrastructure and made conducive for teaching and learning both for teachers and pupils.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made

- ◆ Education should be properly funded, especially at the primary education level, to create enthusiasm for the children in the modern trend where the value system is shifting to money and material acquisition
- ◆ The Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and the old pupils of the public schools who are now well placed should give maximum financial and material support in undertaking projects and providing teaching materials for quality improvement of teaching and learning.
- ◆ The local education authority should work in collaboration with local commercial banks operating in the local government area to assist in the provision of school infrastructure

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