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APPRAISAL OF SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS THAT PROMOTE FUNCTIONAL EDUCATIONAL OUTPUT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IHIALA EDUCATION ZONE OF ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study, appraisal of school environmental factors that promote functional educational output in secondary schools in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State was guided by two research questions and one hypothesis. Descriptive research survey design was utilized for the study. The population of the study comprised 10 public secondary schools in Ihiala education zone. The sampling technique applied was total enumeration which utilized the entire schools. 50 teachers and 100 students were selected by the researcher using simple random sampling technique totalling 1, 500 were used as sample size. The researchers designed an instrument entitled "Appraisal of School Environmental Factors Educational Questionnaire" (ASEFQ) was employed to elicit information from the participants. Validity of the instrument was ascertained by three experts. The reliability index of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha method which yielded 0.82 thus adjudged reliable. Administration of the instrument was done by the researchers along with three trained research assistants. Out of 1, 500 copies of questionnaire distributed, 1,399 was retrieved and used for data analysis. Mean and Standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while t-test statistics was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significant. The findings revealed that secondary schools in Ihiala education zone are ill-equipped and the existing facilities in a sorry state among others. It is therefore recommended that government and/or appropriate agencies should as a matter of necessity provide adequate educational resources so as to enable the graduates meet up with the world best practices.

Keywords: Appraisal, School Environment, Promote, Functional, Educational output

Introduction

School is building(s) and/or partitions, well equipped purposely for teaching/learning instructions. Educational delivery process is most effective when it is done in a serene and calm school environment. In view of this, School environment consists of everything found within the school premises that contribute either positively or negatively to the achievement of educational objectives. Environment is the surroundings, location or setting. School environment is therefore, the school surroundings, location or setting. In support of the above idea, Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2022) described environment as the circumstances, objects or conditions which one is surrounded. The structure or

building called school has lots of objects in its surroundings which impact teaching/learning interactions.

It is based on this ideology that Tapia-Fonllem, Fraijo-sing, Corral-Verdugo, Garza-Teran & Moreno-Barahona (2020) defined school environment as the interrelationships among members of the school community in relation to the physical, individual and well-designed factors instituted by the school. In reaction to the afore-mentioned view-points American Institute for Research (2022) admitted that school environment is categorized by the school facilities, classrooms, sick-bay and well specified control measure in form of rules and regulations. In addition the institute emphasized that supportive school environment leads to meaning outcome conversely poor school environment is strongly connected to poor test scores, low grade, poor school attendance and eventual withdrawal. In his own submission, Baweja, (2021) posited that school environment dictates the achievement of quality and functional education thus listed what characterized the school environment to include social values, school facilities, teacher-student ratio, competent teachers etc.

Apparently, school environment has to do with the human and non-human factors that determine the physical, social and psychological wellbeing of the learners and other school actors. It describes the managerial acumen of the school administrators that dictate the school climate. The school climate in turn determines the staff morale to either work assiduously or back slide. The school environment is synonymous with school atmosphere and digressed into the relationships among the workforce which also reflects on the level of productivity. There is no gain saying that when the school atmosphere is engaged and open, the workforce are desirous to work enthusiastically for goal attainment unlike where the climate is harsh and disengaged, laxity, lackadaisical attitudes and eye service take the centre stage thereby frustrating the accomplishment of educational objectives.

It is said that when two elephants fight, the grass suffers. Stemming from this, jerky and unstable school environment adversely affects the students psychologically, socially and academically. The learners/students are the recipients or beneficiaries of educational intricacies and are therefore prioritized when sourcing human and material resources that make up the school environment. Precisely, without the learners, there would be no school. They are the reason the school is established. In furnishing the school and/or designing the school environment, the learner should be considered first. This is why the learner achieves excellent performance when the school environment is positive conversely bears the brunt when the school environment is deficient. Based on this, Fashiku, Yusuf, Opadokun and Fashiku (2020) averred that effective and efficient school operation remains doubtful in the face of lack of these essential tools.

The learners are taught by the teaching staff while the non-teaching staff provides auxiliary tasks for the up liftment of the school. The school facilities are used by the staff to assist the learners to attain great height during teaching/learning experiences. Going by this, school environment consists of two main categories namely: The human elements and the non-human elements.

1. The human elements: This comprised the teachers, the administrators and other ancillary staff. The teachers

should be highly qualified with good moral principles to be able to imbue with the students the right attitudes, morals, knowledge and skills. When the teachers are incompetent and unqualified, the learners are confused and frustrated out of school. The school administrator also creates enabling school climate that dictates the teachers' job performances which indirectly determines what goes on in the classroom. The same applies to the supporting staff. The teachers remain the fulcrum in teaching/learning situation. Their personal attributes, professional expertise and techniques employed in the classroom are of essence when it comes to goal feat. Unfortunately, when the teachers and/or other school players are negatively influenced due to unwholesome school climate, the learner becomes the endangered species and the goals driven to oblivion.

2. The non-human elements are the school facilities provided in the school for the purpose of enhancing teaching/learning efficacy. These include but not limited to; instructional facilities like writing boards, projectors etc., equipped laboratories and libraries, suitable furniture, standard classrooms, modern toilets, adequate water provision, good and maintained dump site for waste disposal, field and sporting equipment.

Kpee (2013) gave credence to the above assertion and declared that school is a place where teaching and learning takes place. The scholar further reiterated that the school being a formal organization is peopled and made up of facilities that foster teaching/learning outcomes as well as the interrelationships among the staff and students. The people in the school are the staff and students, the infrastructures include building, social amenities like water, light, desks, seats, tables, chairs while school climate lends itself to interactions among staff and students which the scholar rightly referred to as the tone of the school.

The school performs a production function through learners intake (admission of students) in their raw form, processing them (teaching, assignment, test, projects etc.) to refined and productive entities (cultured, civilized, educated, disciplined etc.) individual who is not only useful to himself but the entire society (Kpee, 2013). If the school must perform this onerous duty as expected, there is need to sufficiently and adequate provide all that constitute school environment (human and non-human resources). This is because absence or insufficient provision of good school environment jeopardizes the noble objectives of education thus presents the students' with insurmountable learning difficulties. This could lead to students' failure, irregular school attendance, truancy, repetition, poor enrolment rate, increased dropout rate and eventual withdrawal. On the reverse side, good school environment propels teaching/learning effectiveness and breeds quality and functional output.

On another dimension, Mohammed & Elegonye (2020) posited that teacher performs the production function while in the classroom and as such dictates the success or failure of the learners. The scholars further stressed that the teachers take the glory when students have excellent performance and at the same time takes the blame in the event of underachievement or summary failure. In the same vein, Agabi, Onyeike & wali (2013) were of the opinion that poor school environment forces teachers to teach under the trees in very harsh weather conditions. This the authors noted was due to lack of classroom

accommodation space and/or dilapidated and substandard classrooms with craters on the floors, leaking roofs, broken chairs, writing board, windows and insufficient air. This is in consonance with what many researchers in the likes of Agabi & Wali (2012) :Osagie-Jacobs (2010) discovered in the past that a major contributory factor for poor quality and functional output in educational system lies with ill-equipped school environment (Agabi et al).

When teachers are challenged by lack or shortage or decrepit school facilities, they may lose the zeal to teach and instead resort to extortion either in cash or kind to influence examination scores. This is what made Asodike & Ejiogu (2013) in Agabi et al took a stand that teachers should not use their position to humiliate, threaten, intimidate, harass or blackmail any learner to succumb to selfish interest or engage in sexual abuse, substance misuse/trafficking, cultism and other social vices. This unprofessional conduct among teachers is capable of frustrating and presenting the learner as endangered species because quality and functional education has eluded them.

Quality output defines the quality of the graduates on completion of their study duration. On this note, Uwaezuoke and Morah (2020) opined that quality has to do with the value, worth of something. It describes the worth and value of the educational products (output). For educational output to be qualitative and functional, it must have met all the specifications and policies statement set out to ensure uniform standard. It is that relevance which education has implanted in the individual having passed through the educational processes. The quality of educational product is ascertained in the labour market. This is based on the demand and job openings for the worthy output. Normally, employers of labour placed value in employee recruitment based on the quality. In other to achieve quality output, adequate resources must be fed into the system. It is for this reason that Uwaezuoke and Morah lucidly put that the relevant resources must be provided in the required quantity to guarantee functionality and quality output. When the educational resources are substandard and insufficient, students explore other cheap and obscured ways of acquiring unmerited results. Thus engage in examination malpractice, cultism etc.

Examination misconduct, school dropout and withdrawal from school have been in an alarming increase which has left many stakeholders in education in bewilderment. No functional and quality production of students could thrive under this crisis in the educational system enterprise. It therefore becomes extremely necessary to investigate this educational quagmire that has endangered the learners from achieving desired goals and tackle it headlong for a better Nigeria. There are lots of areas under suspicion for this educational malady. These areas include the teachers, the principals, the ancillary staff, the learners themselves, poor school facilities, the government and a host of others too numerous to mention. The problem of the researcher is to examine the teachers and students' perception on the human and material environmental factors that promote functional and quality educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State.

The Purpose of the Study

This study was aimed at appraisal of school environmental factors that promote functional educational output in secondary schools in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the extent of teachers and students' perceptions on the provision of the school facilities that promote functional and quality educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State.
2. Ascertain the extent of students' perceptions on the teachers' classroom behaviours that promote functional and quality educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State.

Research Questions

1. What is the extent of teachers and students' perceptions on the school facilities provision that promote functional educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State?
2. What is the extent of students' perceptions on the teachers' classroom behaviours that promote functional educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State?

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the teachers and students perception on the extent of school facilities provision that promote functional educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State.

Research Method

Descriptive research survey design was utilized for the study. The population of the study comprised 10 public secondary schools in Ihiala education zone. The sampling technique applied was total enumeration which utilized the entire schools. 50 teachers and 100 students were selected by the researcher using simple random sampling technique totalling 1, 500 were used as sample size. The researchers designed an instrument entitled "Appraisal of School Environment Factors Questionnaire" (ASEFQ) was employed to elicit information from the participants. Validity of the instrument was ascertained by three experts. The reliability index of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha method which yielded 0.82. Administration of the instrument was done by the researchers along with three trained research assistants. Out of 1, 500 copies of questionnaire distributed, 1, 399 was retrieved and used for data analysis. Four point-Likert scale Very High extent (VHE) = 4, High Extent (HE) = 3, Low Extent (LE) = 2 and Very Low Extent (VLE) =1 was utilized. The criterion mean = 4+3+2+1=10÷4=2.5. Following this process, any score from 2.5 and above is regarded as HE while any score below 2.5 is taken as LE. Mean and Standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while t-test statistics was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significant.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What is the perception of teachers and students on the extent of school facilities provision that promote functional educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State?

Table 1: Responses of teachers and students on their perceptions on the extent of school facilities provision that promote functional and quality educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State**.**

S/N	N=1,399 Item statement: To what extent are the following school facilities provision available in your school?	N=432 Teachers Mean	SD	Dec.	N=967 Students Mean	SD	Dec.
1.	Spacious classroom	2.4	0.64	LE	2.2	0.9	LE
2.	Good lighting	2.0	0.67	LE	2.5	0.86	HE
3.	Functional chairs and desks	2.5	0.53	HE	2.6	0.74	HE
4.	Equipped laboratory	2.8	0.66	HE	2,5	0.88	HE
5.	Equipped library	2.2	0.58	LE	2.3	0.8	LE
6.	Alluring school compound	1.8	0.55	LE	2.2	0.65	LE
7.	Well ventilated classroom	3.0	0.72	HE	2.6	0.67	HE
8.	Good toilets	1.2	0.7	LE	1.8	0.73	LE
9.	Constant water supply	1.8	0.68	LE	1.8	0.58	LE
10.	Functional computer laboratories	2.4	0.48	LE	2.2	0.86	LE
	Cumulative mean	2.21	0.55	LE	2.27	0.77	LE

Table 1 shows that the school facilities provision are to a low extent available for use in schools in Ihiala education zone of Anambra state going by the teachers items; 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10 which has the mean scores of 2.4, 2.0, 2.2, 1.8, 1.2, 1.8 and 2.4 with their SD of 0.64, 0.67, 0.58, 0.55, 0.7, 0.68, and 0.48 respectively. The students mean scores ranges between 1.8 and 2.3 with SD of 0.73 & 0.8. Items 3, 4 & 7 with mean scores of 2.5, 2.8 & 3.0 with SD of 0.53, 0.66 & 0.73 for teachers and students means scores of 2.5, 2.6 & 2.6 with SD of 0.74, 0.88 & 0.67 accepted that the school facilities provision are to a high extent available in the area under study. It is only on item 2 that there disparity where the students opted for high extent as against the teachers' low extent. The cumulative mean yielded 2.21 with SD of 0.55 for teachers & 2.27 with SD of 0.77 for students.

Research Question 2: What are the students' perceptions on the extent of teachers, classroom behaviours that promote functional educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State?

Table 2: Responses of students on their perceptions on the extent of teachers' classroom behaviours that promote functional educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State.

S/N	N=967 Item statement: To what extent does your teacher put up the following classroom behaviours in your class?	Students Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Teacher normally revises the previous lessons before introducing new one.	2.5	0.68	High extent
2.	The teacher is fluent and uses language of instruction very well	2.8	0.63	High extent
3.	The teacher permits and encourages students to ask questions.	2.5	0.66	High extent
4.	The teacher calls students by name when asking questions in the class.	3.0	0.56	High extent
5.	The teacher staggers the questions in the class.	2.8	0.8	High extent
6.	The teacher reviews students notes and assignments	2.0	0.7	Low extent
7.	The teacher makes use of reinforcements	2.6	0.5	High extent
8.	The teacher marks class work and ensures that the class do corrections which she signs	2.2	0.9	Low extent
9.	The teacher encourages class participation	2.8	0.48	High extent
10.	The teacher has emotional link with the students	2.0	0.46	Low extent
	Cumulative mean	2.52	1.27	High extent

Table 2 indicates that items with serial numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 & 9 with mean scores of 2.5, 2.8, 2.5, 3.0, 2.8, 2.6, & 2.8 and the corresponding SD of 0.68, 0.63, 0.66, 0.56, 0.8, 0.5 & 0.48 to a high extent accepted that the stated attributes describe teachers' classroom behaviours in the school under study. Conversely, items 6, 8 &10 with mean scores of 2.0, 2.2 & 2.0 and the corresponding SD of 0.7, 0.9 & 0.46 shows that teachers to a low extent exhibit the outlined teachers' classroom behaviour. The cumulative mean and SD stood at 2.52 and 1.27 accordingly.

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the teachers and students' perceptions on the extent of school facilities provision that promote functional educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State.

Table 3: t-test statistics of no difference between the mean scores of the teachers and students perception on the extent of school facilities provision that promote functional educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State.

N=1,399 Category	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Sig. level	Remark
Teachers	2.21	0.55	1,398	0.32	1.96	0.05	Not sig.
Students	2.27	0.77					

Table 3 above shows t-test statistics with teachers and students mean scores of 2.21 & 2.27 with SD of 0.55 & 0.77 respectively. Degree of freedom gave rise to 1, 398, t-calculate yielded 0.32 as against 1.96 t-critical on 0.05 level of significant. Since the t-cal is less than the t-crit, the hypothesis testing is not rejected but concluded that there is no difference between the mean scores of teachers and students' perceptions on the extent of school facilities provision that promote functional educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding of this study was that teachers and students' perceptions on the extent of school facilities provision in the Ihiala education zone of Anambra State is low. School facilities are the facilitators and frame work upon which educational delivery process stand. It helps the teachers concretize abstract objects and drives home their lesson. It is in this regard that Fashiku, Yusuf, Opadokun and Fashiku (2020) reaffirmed that no school could be functional in the absence of school facilities. Kpee (2013) aligned with the above concept when the author espoused that school facilities and education are sine qua non hence inseparable if the educational goals must be attained. School facilities are the instrument/channel through which educational nutrients are explored and assimilated. Even the best teacher in the world becomes incapacitated in the classroom in the midst of lack or dilapidated school environment.

The second finding of this study was that students to a high extent perceived the teachers' classroom behaviours that promote functional and quality educational output in Ihiala education zone of Anambra. Teachers are the mediator between the educational curriculum and the students. They determine the extent the intricacies of educational delivery process that are inculcated into the learners. Their competencies are very crucial if quality and

functional output should be produced at the long run. It is in the light of this, Baweja, (2021) : Mohammed & Elegonye (2020) posited that the teacher remains a major determinant factor in the production of quality and functional output.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it is concluded that school facilities provision as perceived by the teachers and students are to a low extent provided in Ihiala education zone. However, the teachers' classroom behaviours as perceived by the students are on a high extent. Sufficient provision of educational resources both in quality and quantity creates easy access of children to qualitative and functional education which the nation needs to meet up with the world best practices. Hypothesis testing upheld that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the teachers and students on the extent of their perceptions on the school facilities provision in Ihiala education zone of Anambra State.

Recommendations

Following the findings of this study, the researcher made the under listed recommendations:

1. The government or her appropriate agencies should as a matter of priority provide essential school facilities so as to redeem educational industry from total decay and perjury.
2. Another recommendation is that recruitment of teachers should be purely on merit and on-the-job training should be prioritized. This is to maintain the stability of the teachers' competencies and keep them abreast with current trend in educational enterprise for quality and functional output.

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