

School Facilities As A Correlate of Academic Achievement of Student in English Language

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Abstract: The study sought to find out how school facilities correlate with the academic achievement of the students in English language. Correlational survey design was adopted for the study. The study was carried out in selected public secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The population of this study comprised senior secondary two students in Uyo Local Government Area. There are 14 public secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area and the estimated population of SS2 students was 3162. Simple random sampling technique was used to select eight public secondary schools where 303 SS 2 students were randomly selected for the study. The instrument used in this study for data collection was a questionnaire titled "Students Factors Questionnaire (SFQ)". The instrument was vetted and content validated by the researcher's supervisor and two lecturers who are experts in language education in the University of Uyo to ensure that the instrument has the accuracy, appropriateness, and completeness for the study under consideration. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.97, and this was high enough to justify the use of the instrument. The data were analyzed using t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics analysis. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels. From the findings and discussions of this study, it was discovered that the more standard school facilities the higher the students' academic achievement. The nature, condition, adequacy and relevance of school facilities such as library, laboratory, classroom equipment and other conveniences definitely have a direct impact on the learning engagement. That is to say, learning is more effective and rewarding if the learning environment like school has sufficient and standard facilities. Finally, it was concluded that there is no significant relationship between availability of school facilities and academic achievement of students in English Language. One of the recommendations made in the study was that since standard and adequate school facilities or learning facilities (in the form of library, laboratory, and spacious well ventilated and conducive classroom) enhance students' academic achievement, those facilities should adequately be provided in schools for effective use.

Keywords: School facilities, Students' Academic Achievement, English Language, Public Secondary Schools and Uyo Local Government Area

Introduction

A student is faced with many factors, which can promote or mar his academic excellence. Such factors, which can inhibit or accelerate academic achievement, include physiological factors, psychological factors and environmental factors. The factors influencing a student in his learning process as enumerated above are both internal and external factors. A student who shows great interest in any activity will strive hard to go about it. At least he would have to succeed. But a student who is disenchanted in any learning process would perform poorly. Interests are sources of motivation which drive people to do what they want to do when they are free to choose. By implication, interest in a particular subject enhances the level of performance by the student.

Age is an important factor in the acquisition and learning of a second language like English Language Progress in learning depends to a greater extent on how early or lately a learner is exposed to the learning task. Several research findings have confirmed the influence of age on learning process. To learn a second language like English Language, Larew (1961) comments on the age influence thus: There are four separate areas of the human cerebral context devoted to vocations. There is age when the child has a remarkable capacity to utilize these areas for the learning of a language, a time when several languages can be learned simultaneously as easily as one language. Later with the appearance of capacity for reason and abstract thinking, the early ability is lost.

Larew's comment is very instructive to every learner of a language. It stresses that acquisition and learning of a language is affected by age. Pupils or students who are not early exposed to English language would find it difficult to internalize the principles governing the acquisition and use of that language. The individual's level of maturity determines the extent of his readiness to learn a given concept. Certain concepts cannot be learnt until an individual grows up to a certain age. A child, for instance, does not possess the same mental equipment as an adult. That is why he would not understand such abstract concepts as democracy, freedom and justice.

Home environment influences positively and negatively, the academic performance of a student. Students from poverty-stricken homes find it difficult to get educational materials that can boost their academic achievement. But some homes whose parents are rich would readily provide learning facilities to their children. This would contribute to their academic success. Onwuchekwa (1987) observes that the type of home a child comes from affects highly his mental capacities and emotional behavior. Where a child is poorly provided in terms of school requisitions, he might be emotionally disturbed especially on seeing his mates having enough of what he does not. He might appear inferior in the presence of his mates. This can affect his learning.

Statement of the Problem

The situation of students' performance in English language in Nigeria is rapidly becoming poor and calls for immediate intervention. No one is able comprehend how comes the massive failure in the examinations undertaken by these students in the last few years. The awareness of the poor output of students in English language is so alarming and disappointing even to the Ministry of Education (both state and federal) in Nigeria. Regrettably, the society passes the blame of poor performance by students on teachers and school management as regards poor teaching techniques and in inadequate school facilities. But in other case the students might be the cause of their dismal performance in English language. It is in this light that this paper seeks to find out if school facilities really determines students' academic achievement in English language.

Objectives of Study

To out the influence of school facilities on the academic achievement of student in English language.

Research Question

Is there any relationship between school facilities and academic achievement of a student in English Language?

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between availability of school facilities and academic achievement of students in English Language.

Conceptual Review

School facilities and academic achievement of a student in English Language

A good learning environment is a stimulating factor in academic achievement of a student in English Language. This same notion is held by National Teachers' Institute – Kaduna (NTI, 2002) that experience shows that a good learning environment in the school is built around common activities that lead to proficiency in skills, good attitudes and understanding, which make a child capable of performing any task assigned to him. School activities are of two kinds - those concerned with society, intellectual and physical skills and those concerned with the development of personal qualities.

There are certain factors that can promote sound teaching and learning activities in the school environment. Such factors include standard and well-equipped library and laboratories, spacious, well ventilated and furnished classrooms, instructional materials and cordial and democratic school management. When such factors are put in place, they encourage productive academic exercise. Akpan (1996) supports that school environment requires useful facilities to promote sound academic work. He outlines factors that would influence students' achievement to include, teacher-related indices, teaching method, availability of instructional materials, physical facilities in the school such as library, laboratory and classroom spaces.

Another scholar Nwankwo (1987) opines that the nature, condition, adequacy and relevance of school facilities such as library, laboratory, classroom equipment and other conveniences definitely have a direct impact on the learning engagement. Nwankwo implies that learning is more effective and rewarding if the learning environment like school has sufficient and standard facilities. By extended implication, if there are insufficient facilities in the school system, the academic achievement of a student in subjects like English would be low.

Reading habits and skills in a student of English Language can be affected by availability of good books in the library. When there is a standard library with sufficient and useful books, a student is opportune to select the books required for his use. Sadler (1971) notes that, the improvement of reading skills and consequent acquisition of knowledge is related to the availability of books in the library. He stresses further that the amount of time that children spend with books and the suitability of these books to their developmental stages are all necessary in the improvement of the reading skills of children in schools and homes.

Adams (1973) submits that a functional library is essentially a way of enriching the learning environment of the school child. He explains that the school library programmes provides, comprehensive services to students and teachers of all disciplines. He believes that functional library enhances academic achievement in schools. In spite of the importance of library in the academic advancement in a student of English, many secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State are poorly equipped with good books in the library. Some schools in the urban enjoy better libraries than rural secondary schools. This disparity in the building of standard library and providing adequate books retrogresses academic achievement in students. It is in line with the above observation that King (1920) states that the public libraries are located mainly in the urban areas than the villages. Urban schools without functional libraries have easy access to the public libraries than schools in the rural areas. It is on that note that Nnaji (1986) suggests that if academic achievement in schools in the rural areas is to improve, functional services should be provided to improve the reading habits of students and teachers for effective teaching and learning in schools.

Another factor in the school setting which is an important determinant in academic achievement of students in English is classroom condition. When students are accommodated in spacious classrooms with good seats, ventilation, lighting and chalkboard, they would enjoy and assimilate

their lessons. But where students have overcrowded classes with insufficient seats and space, they would learn their lessons in a hard way which inhibits success. Okoro (2002) concludes that learning cannot be as effective in large classes as in small ones. Bill (1975) stresses that any classroom space that does not allow the students carry out activities cannot produce desirable achievement. Udo (1986) observes that classroom accommodation is more readily available in urban schools than in rural areas. Therefore, students who are exposed to better teaching strategies in adequate environment are bound to achieve greatly.

Methodology

Survey design was adopted for the study. The study was carried out in selected public secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The population of this study comprised senior secondary two students in Uyo Local Government Area. There are 14 public secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area and the estimated population of SS2 students was 3,162. Simple random sampling technique was used to select eight public secondary schools where 303 SS 2 students were randomly selected for the study. The instrument used in this study for data collection was a questionnaire titled "Students Factors Questionnaire (SFQ)". The instrument was vetted and content validated by the researcher’s supervisor and two lecturers who are experts in language education in the University of Uyo to ensure that the instrument has the accuracy, appropriateness, and completeness for the study under consideration. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.97, and this was high enough to justify the use of the instrument. The data were analyzed using t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics analysis. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels.

Result

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between the school facilities, and academic achievement of students in English Language.

Pearson product moment correlation was used in testing the hypothesis and summary data shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between quality of teaching staff on academic performance.

Variables	Σ	X^2	XY	R	Sig of r
School (x)	6094	105	1766		
				301	Significant
			250444	.3219*	
Academic achievement (y)	10018	3176221			

Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Critical r = 0.88

df = 301

Since the computed r (.5963) was greater than the critical r (.088) at of 301 and .05 level of significant; hence the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, school facilities significantly relate to academic achievement.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 illustrates hypothesis one which states that there is no significant relationship between availability of school facilities and academic achievement of a student in English Language. The result was significant and the null hypothesis was rejected. The result proves that there is significant relationship between availability of school facilities and academic achievement of a student in English. The result confirms earlier studies by respectable scholars. For an example, Nwankwo (1987) comments that the nature, condition, adequacy and relevance of school facilities such as library, laboratory, classroom equipment and other conveniences definitely have a direct impact on the learning engagement.

Conclusion

From the findings and discussions of this study, it was discovered that the more standard school facilities the higher the students' academic achievement. The nature, condition, adequacy and relevance of school facilities such as library, laboratory, classroom equipment and other conveniences definitely have a direct impact on the learning engagement. By extended implication, if there are insufficient facilities in the school system, the academic achievement of a student in subjects like English would be low. That is to say, learning is more effective and rewarding if the learning environment like school has sufficient and standard facilities. Finally, it could be concluded that there is no significant relationship between availability of school facilities and academic achievement of students in English Language.

Recommendations

1. Since standard and adequate school facilities or learning facilities (in the form of library, laboratory, and spacious well ventilated and conducive classroom) enhance students' academic achievement, those facilities should adequately be provided in schools for effective use.
2. English teachers should encourage students who do not have English textbooks to make friends and study together with those who have English textbooks in the school library.

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