

Functional School Environment and Teachers' Job Performance in Secondary Schools In Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the existing relationship between functional educational institutions and teachers' job performance. To guide the study, four hypotheses were formulated. The population of the study was two thousand three hundred and twelve (2,312) teachers, while the sample comprised of two hundred and fifty (250) teachers. Stratified sampling technique and Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. Questionnaire instrument was used to generate the data and the data was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient analysis. All the hypotheses were analyzed and tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The result of the analysis revealed that a functional and conducive school environment is predominantly related to teachers' job performance in terms of maintenance of discipline; subject mastery, assessment and evaluation. From the findings, it was concluded that horticulture education/Young Farmers' Club should form part of the school curriculum with special attention given to young farmers' club for improved school aesthetics for an enhanced staff and students' productivity.

Keywords: Functional, Teachers' Productivity, Students' Productivity

Introduction

Nigeria's Educational policy as obtained in the National Policy of Education is based on the integration of all its citizens at all level of Education into a functional and effective

citizen and of equal educational opportunities hence the adoption of Education by the Federal Government of Nigeria as an instrument per excellence for National Development. NPE (2024). These objectives include the building of:

- a) A free and democratic society
- b) A just and egalitarian society
- c) A united, strong and self –reliant economy
- d) A great and dynamic economy and
- e) A land full of bright and full opportunities for all its citizens (NPN 2024).

Consequently to achieve these goals and objectives, the quality of instruction at all level has to be oriented towards the:

- i. Respect for the worth and dignity of individuals;
- ii. faith in man's ability to make rational decisions;
- iii. encourage moral and spiritual values in interpersonal and human relations
- iv. shared responsibility for the common good of the society
- v. respect for the dignity of labour and above all
- vi. promotion of the emotional, physical and psychological state of all children in Nigeria.

For this philosophy to be in harmony with Nigeria's national objectives as well as orienting the much needed values, it has to be geared towards self realization, better human relationship, individual and national efficiency, effective citizenship, national consciousness, national unity as well as social, economic, cultural, political, scientific and technological progress. The Federal government in its national education policies, aims amidst other intentions, the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society.

The Federal Government desires that Nigeria amidst other objectives should be a land full of opportunities for all its citizens; able to generate a great and dynamic economy and growing into a strong united and self reliant nation. To realize fully the potentials of the contributions of education to the achievement of these objectives, the educational stakeholders comprising of the Federal, State and Local Government has to concert not only with the provision of a functional school environment but ensure the students are exposed to lifelong skills like Agriculture that will enhance students livelihood especially in this era of scarce white collar jobs. They should reintroduce the Young Farmer's Club into the school's curriculum to boost Agriculture and Horticulture to consolidate on planting of flowers, trees, mowing of lawn to not only

beautify the school premises but for self –sustainability on graduation. A functional and conducive educational revolution can also stem from education being very highly rated in the national development plans through the provision, maintenance and availability of the educational and training facilities.

Education being the most important instrument of change and students being the prospective leaders must be groomed to foster nation building, fight ethnicity and religious primordialism in the nearest future as the future leaders as opined by Thomas & Thomas (2016), but unfortunately, series of plaques and failures have been recorded to confront the functional school environment of the Nigerian educational system where all these requirement are to be met. To Ozurumba and Thomas (2014), various educational institutions in Nigeria have recorded series of plaques and failures ranging from examination malpractice to poor funding by government, over population of students resulting in overcrowded classrooms hence mismanaged students, insufficient and deteriorating facilities, insecurity of the school environment and insufficient curriculum all resulting in under developed manpower. These anomalies to Thomas & Thomas (2025) have resulted in poor quality graduates with very poor ranking on the world educational scale and this may portend danger to the economic, social and cultural development of Nigeria.

Investment in school facilities, buildings, grounds, personnel and material resources involves a great deal of capital and therefore should be properly cared for, utilized and effectively managed by the school administrators. They should conduct routine activities of ensuring a functional and productive school environment like clearing and cleaning of the school buildings and grounds, securing of classrooms, offices and stores by locking of doors, scheduling and drawing of work rosters to authorized staff, repair of furniture, equipment and fixtures, painting of the interior and exterior walls, provision of a well encompassed curriculum as well as operating and maintaining a functional transport facilities. Akpan, Thomas, and Sunday (2019) and (Thomas & Thomas 2025).

A functional and productive school to (Thomas & Thomas 2025) and Thomas & I tighise (2024) entails the administrators, teachers, students and non- academic staff being zestful and exuding confidence in their daily duties; they should incorporate team work approach as well as derive pleasure in working with each other. These approach will reflect on the teachers' productivity with an enhanced students' academic performance. On the contrary, it may also refer to non-motivated school environment where the principal, teachers, and the rest of the school component are

very uncomfortable with the general state of the school outlay resulting in unsatisfactory school conduct amongst the human resources emotionally, socially, physically and even psychologically.

Poor school environment does not only influence the employee's job behavior but students' academic output as well. Denga (2008) in Thomas and Thomas (2016), Moffat, Thomas, Umanah (2023), and Thomas and Inyang (2021) refers to it as the Bio-psycho-social status, a situation which hampers one's ego and self esteem. To them, the learning environments are not altogether filled with exciting moments, but traditional strategies and environmental hazards like dilapidated and insecured environment resulting in mental instability and stress for the teachers and learners.

Akpakwu (2012) posits that the major task of the educational manager to ensuring a functional and productive institutional staff is to assist or help create aesthetically and ideal environment in which individual can render services effectively and efficiently to the school system. To him, job performance cannot be complete without a systematic provision for the security of the workers in the system. In other words, a functional and conducive school environment is a necessity for teachers and students increased work productivity.

A critical evaluation of the various reports on the school climate in Akwa Ibom State Secondary Schools is in consonance with Jonah, Chukwudi, Akpanuko & Thomas (2023) on the traditional and modern mode of motivation, poor maintenance culture of school plant and grounds which include:

- i. Poor funding of the school by the government
- ii. Lack of relevant curriculum
- iii. The deteriorating nature of the school environment
- iv. Lack of clean portable water supply
- v. Poor sanitation
- vi. Inadequate facilities, (scuffed and mutilated chalkboards)
- vii. Poor drainage of waste disposal facilities
- viii. Absence of gender-sensitive toilet facilities,
- ix. Poor conditions of teaching and learning aids (non- functional media devices where available)
- x. Dilapidated buildings (leaking roofs, poor state of teacher's staffrooms, poor ventilated classrooms)
- xi. In-sufficient desks, overcrowded classroom,
- xii. Untrained and non-motivated teachers etc.

For these problems to be sufficiently addressed there is a dire need for government to improve on the maintenance culture by adequately funding of the secondary school

system especially the school property and staff welfare. It is however sad to note that government have failed to implement this very crucial aspect of education in many if not all the secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

A functional school environment according to Idehen (2011) in Awe and Adeyemi (2011), Ereh and Thomas (2023), and John et al (2024) should be equipped with current research materials in all discipline to motivate teachers for the implementation of instructions and execution of curriculum contents by training and retraining of teachers, else shortage of trained personnel, lack of functional equipment and inadequate funding will forestall the government goals and objectives of not only building a nation with great and dynamic economy but a land full of bright and full opportunities for all citizen (Edet, Iniobong & Thomas(2024).

School administrators in every institution of learning should live up to their role expectations of being a leader, mentor, manager of operations, decider and builder as opined by Moffat et al (2023). They should be able to plan for the functionalness of the organisation, organize, staff, direct, motivate, coordinate and control resources effectively for the growth and consolidation of the organization. Teachers of secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State are also challenged by their role expectation of maintaining orders, fostering of a positive learning environment with a functional knowledge of the subject matter and a serene environment to promote social and psychological growth for enhanced job performance. (Okorie & Thomas, 2016)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The conduct of a functional instructional programme is the product of a functional school environment. A functional school environment provide the physical setting in which teachers are able to teach. The job satisfaction and performance of teachers are measured in relation to the functional and secured work environment, hence productivity and lack of this will pose a great setback in the development of Secondary School system in Akwa Ibom State

It is not very common to find most of the secondary school environment plagued with dilapidated structures, poor sanitation, traditional teaching materials, inadequate water supply, poor drainage system, poor waste disposal, overcrowded classroom, incessant violent, criminal activities, vandalization, unsafe-security amongst others. These of course adversely affect the job performance of teachers and students' academic performance. The inability of the state government and other stakeholders to adequately provide a functional learning environment and up-to-date security system within the schools has been a regular problem. The severity of the problem of unhealthy

environment has in part, contributed to teachers' poor job performance in their academic work.

Inadequate funding of schools by the government has also posed another huge challenge to teachers' job performance. The provision of inadequate poor allocation of fund to schools functional maintenance, especially in the areas of environmental pollution, insecurity and other related problems are really affecting the job performance of teachers. Through a careful appraisal it seems obvious that the major problem hindering teachers' job performance is not lack of good ideas but lack of functional and conducive environment for effective and efficient job performance.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study generally was to examine the secondary school environment and teachers' job performance in Akwa Ibom North East Education Area.

Specifically, the study intend to find out:

1. If there is any relationship between functional school environment and teacher's job performance.
2. If there is any relationship between overcrowded classroom and teacher's job performance.
2. If there is any relationship between insecurity in the school and teacher's job performance.
3. If there is any relationship between dilapidated structures in school and teacher's job performance.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study.

1. To what extent does functional school environment relate to teachers' job performance?
2. To what extent does overcrowded classroom relate to teachers' job performance?
3. To what extent does insecurity in school relate to teachers' job performance?
4. To what extent does dilapidated structure of school buildings relate to teachers' job performance?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between functional school environment and teachers' job performance.
2. There is no significant relationship between overcrowded classroom and teacher's job performance.

3. There is no significant relationship between insecurity of school environment and teachers job performance.
4. There is no significant relationship between dilapidated structures and teachers job performance.

Specifically, the study intended to find out the extent to which :

Research Questions

1. To what extent does overcrowded classroom environment relate to teachers' job performance?
2. To what extent does functional school environment relate to teachers' job performance?
3. To what extent does dilapidated structure of school buildings relate to teachers' job performance?
4. To what extent does insecurity in the school environment relate to teachers' job performance?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between overcrowded classroom environment and teachers' job performance.
2. There is no significant relationship between functional school environment and teacher's job performance.
3. There is no significant relationship between dilapidated structures and teachers job performance.
4. There is no significant relationship between insecurity of school environment and teachers job performance.

Methodology

The design adopted for this study was ex-post-facto design. The population of the study comprised of five thousand five hundred (5,500) teachers, all in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State North East Education Area. The researcher used stratified sampling technique for the study. The criterion for the stratification was based on local government areas. The study sample was two hundred and fifty (250) teachers. The instrument used for data collection was a Four-point Likert Scale questionnaire titled Secondary School Environment and Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (SSEATJPQ) in secondary schools. The questionnaire was divided into two sections;

Section A and B, Section A comprised of demographic factors while section B comprised of 30 items drawn on a four point-Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The instrument was validated by experts to ascertain the validity and the reliability of the items as well as ensure a thorough test-retest method using a sample of fifty (50) subjects outside the study sample. The instrument was re-administered to the same respondents after an interval of two weeks, the first and second result was correlated to obtain the estimated reliability of the study. The correlated analysis showed a reliability co-efficient range of 0.7-0.8 proving the strength of the reliability of the instrument.

- 1) there is no relationship between functional school environment and teachers' job performance.
- 2) there is no relationship between overcrowded classroom and teachers' job performance.
- 3) there is no relationship between insecurity in the school and teachers' job performance.
- 4) there is no relationship between dilapidated structures in the school and teachers' job performance.

Result

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between functional school environment and teachers' job performance.

Table 1: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between polluted school environment and teachers' job performance (N = 250)

Variables	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r
Functional school environment (x)	3623	54399		
Maintenance of environment discipline (y)	10702	473186	154469	0.267*
Subject mastery (y)	10737	477183	155629	0.381*
Assessment and evaluation (y)	11216	520044	162495	0.375*
Classroom management (y)	10557	465591	151603	0.100*

Significant at 0.05 level; df = 248; critical r = 0.136

Based on the above result, the hypothesis was rejected. The result indicated that functional school environment has a significant relationship with teachers' job performance. Result of analysis in table one shows that, the calculated r-value for teachers job performance in terms of maintenance of discipline (0.267), subject mastery (0.381), assessment and evaluation (0.375) are each greater than the critical r-value of 0.136 at 0.05 level of significance with 248 degrees of freedom.

However, the results in table one further shows that, the calculated r-value for classroom management (0.100) is less than the critical r-value of 0.136 at 0.05 level of significance with 248 degrees of freedom. This implies that there is no significant relationship between the existence of functional environment and teachers' job performance in terms of classroom management.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between overcrowded classroom and teachers' job performance.

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between overcrowded classroom and teachers job performance (N = 250)

Variables	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r
Overcrowded classroom (x)	3574	53554		
Maintenance of discipline (y)	10702	477186	154390	0.229*
Subject mastery (y)	10737	477183	15553	0.296*
Assessment and evaluation (y)	11216	520044	162127	6.277*
Classroom management (y)	10557	465591	152380	0.209*

Significant at 0.05 level; df = 248; critical r = 0.136

Result of the analysis in Table 2 revealed that, the calculated r-value of teachers job performance in terms of maintenance of discipline (0.299), subject mastery (0.296), assessment and evaluation (0.277) and classroom management (0.209) are each greater than the critical r-value of 0.136 at 0.05 level of significance with 248 degrees of freedom. This implies that, maintenance of discipline in the school environment significantly relate to teachers' job performance in the school.

That is, the less crowded the classrooms are the better the level of teachers' job performance in terms of maintenance of discipline, subject mastery, assessment and evaluation of students and classroom management. Based on this result the null hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between insecurity in school environment and teachers job performance.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between insecurity in school and teachers' job performance.

Variables	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r
Insecurity of school environment (x)	3705	56873		
Maintenance of discipline (y)	10702	473186	159729	0.207*
Subject mastery (y)	10737	477183	160846	0.307*
Assessment and evaluation (y)	11216	520044	167933	0.298*
Classroom management (y)	10557	465591	157800	0.216*

Significant at 0.05 level; df = 248; critical r = 0.136

Result of Table 3 revealed that the calculated r-value for teachers' job performance in terms of maintenance of discipline (0.207), subject mastering (0.307), assessment and evaluation (0.298) and classroom management (0.216) are each greater than the critical r-value of 0.136 at 0.05 level of significance with 248 degrees of freedom. This means that insecurity in the school environment significantly relate to teachers' job performance in terms of maintenance of discipline, subject mastery, assessment and evaluation and classroom management.

This implies that, the more secured the school environment, the higher the level of teachers' job performance in terms of maintaining of discipline, subject mastery, assessment, evaluation and classroom management. Based on this the null hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between dilapidated school structures and teachers' job performance.

Table 4 : Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between dilapidated school structures and teachers job performance (N = 250)

Variables	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r
Dilapidated school structures (x)	3724	57262		
Maintenance of discipline (y)	10702	473186	160618	0.231*
Subject mastery (y)	10737	477183	161298	0.254*
Assessment and evaluation (y)	11216	520044	168345	0.232*
Classroom management (y)	10557	465591	157488	0.039

Significant at 0.05 level; df = 248; critical r = 0.136

Results of the analysis on Table 4 indicated that, the calculated r-value for teachers job performance in terms of maintenance of discipline (0.231), subject mastery (0.254), and assessment and evaluation (0.232) are each greater than the critical r-value of 0.136 at 0.05 level of significance with 248 degrees of freedom. This implies means that there is significant relationship between dilapidated school buildings and teachers job performance in terms of

maintenance of discipline, subject mastery, assessment and evaluation of students respectively. Based on these results, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The result of hypothesis one revealed a significant relationship between functional school environment and teachers job performance in terms of teachers' maintenance of discipline, mastery of subject matter as well as assessment, evaluation and classroom management. Based on this result the null hypothesis was rejected. This finding is in consonance with the study of Thomas and Itighise (2014). Thomas & Thomas (2025) posit that performance of teachers is dependent on the physical and psychological environment of the school. This implies that effective teaching and learning cannot take place in an un-conducive school environment.

Report of the African regional studies programme of the World Bank also presented a sorry picture of learning in African schools by affirming that most schools in sub-Sahara Africa operates in functional school environment devoid of discipline and control. This deplorable learning environment according to Deji (2006) and Moffat, Thomas, Umanah (2023) is believed to contribute to the poor academic performance of students. To Dapo (2005), the dilapidating and functional state of the school plant and grounds has actually brought about the decline in students' enrolment in public schools pointing to the ineffectiveness of school administrators and other members of the school environment to maintain regular sanitation in the school environment.

In hypothesis two the result revealed a relationship between overcrowded classroom and teachers' job performance. The hypothesis was rejected. The result is in consonance with Akpakwu (2013) as well as Thomas & Thomas (2025) observation hence the opinion that educational organizations, classrooms or learning environment has become a source of epidemic and even death- traps due to poor maintenance of school plants and grounds. This has also hampered the teacher's productivity. Students' class ratio has increased from 30:1 to 70:1 or more with inadequate and or traditional teaching methods and learning facilities.

The result of hypothesis three emphasized the insecurity risk faced by students in schools with no parameter fence. The porous nature exposes members of the school community to excessive invasion and vandalizing of school property thus endangering life and property negating effective productivity by both the teachers and the students. Moral laxity on the part of the school community members also constitutes a great security challenge to the school. The members' attitude and behavioral pattern, decline in moral values, disorders in social structure, violence and poor relationship amongst staff and students inhibits teachers' effort and interest in performing their jobs creditably. This is in consonance with the study of Alhassan (2005p206), Thomas & Thomas (2025) they perceive security

problems of the school as manifestation of vandalism, aggression, disobedience, threatening of teachers, interfering with the work and rights of other students and staff.

The result of hypothesis four revealed a significant relationship between existence of dilapidated structures in the school and teachers' job performance. Here, the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternate one. To Thomas and Thomas (2025) and Adeyemi and Kalesanwo (2003), most school buildings in the society are in a very deplorable condition, hence the need for total overhauling and assessment of the state of facilities in the educational system is not contestable. Most schools have neglected the promotion of school policies and the promotion of maintenance culture which is the basic determinants of a functional school programme.

Idehen (2011) and Ozurumba & Thomas (2014) are of the opinion that one of the ways to address the problem of dilapidated school structure and its constituted hazard is for education stakeholders to enforce functional policies and embark on regular supervision and maintenance of the school buildings. They opined that all educational organizations should mandatorily include horticulture education in the school curriculum to serve as guidelines for examining and solving school plant and grounds problems relating to the physical environment as opined by Ereh & Thomas (2018).

Badejo (1996) & Ozurumba & Thomas (2014) in furtherance to the above contention, points out that there is no doubt that there are insufficient infrastructures in schools and when they are available, poor or inadequate care cripples them and by so doing become rickety and dilapidated. They went further to affirmed that there is no security in most schools for teaching and learning in that buildings do collapse on children and that children receive instruction under poor academic environment especially when different overcrowded class have to share the same classroom space.

The issue of dilapidated facilities according to Ajayi (2001) as cited in Kalesanwo Adeygun (2003) and Thomas & Ereh (2017) is seriously concerned that approximately 276, 9054 classrooms in 1999/2000 school session in Nigeria were in a dilapidated state. The obvious inadequacy of this number still persists today resulting in overcrowding of classroom space with pupils sitting on bare floor to study. This situation indeed speaks volume of the teaching and learning situations in our schools.

Conclusion

Based on the result of the findings, it was concluded that there is a significant relationship between functional school environment, overcrowded classroom, insecurity and dilapidated school structures and teachers job performance in terms of maintenance of discipline, subject mastery, assessment and evaluation and classroom management. The promotion of a functional environment in the school organization is very important to enhance

teachers' job productivity. This can only be possible through the incorporation of horticulture education/Young Farmers' Club in the school curriculum whereby students are trained to giving special attention to school plants and grounds both at school, home and the entire community. The improvement in teachers' job performance is possible when the school environment is functional, conducive, clean and green for teaching and secured for learning. These are the great contributors to teacher's service delivery towards high performance and productivity.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study, the paper recommends that:

1. There is a dire need for educational stakeholders to make provisions and implement programmes to encourage students to participate in horticultural and Agricultural studies.
2. Stake holders should institute, consolidate and sustain adequate supervision of school infrastructural facilities to check incessant vandalisation of school properties.
3. Stake holders should embark on routine check and timely intervention as well as imbibe a good sense of maintenance culture of school properties for 'a stitch in time saves nine.'
4. Social amenities like water reservoirs, portable drinking water, well-ventilated classrooms and good drainage system should be provided to curb outbreak of epidemic amongst the staff and students of the institution.
5. Training and retraining programmes should be mounted for teachers to encourage research hence provision of current learning materials

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