

School Environment and Teachers' Job Performance in Social Studies in Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated school environment and teachers' job performance in social studies in Cross River State, Nigeria. One research question and one hypothesis were used to guide the study. The population of the study consisted of 280 Social Studies teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. The sample comprised of 280 Social Studies teachers in the state of which each school was represented by at least a teacher. Teachers' Job Performance in Social Studies Questionnaire (TJPSOSQ) which had two sections (A&B) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by 3 experts in Measurement and Evaluation in the University of Calabar. Cronbach alpha reliability was used for ascertaining the reliability coefficient which yielded 0.74-0.89. Data obtained were coded and analyzed with Pearson Product Moment Coefficient using SPSS. The result showed a significant relationship between school location and teachers' job performance in Social Studies in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. From the findings, it was recommended that Government should endeavour to create good and access roads in rural areas especially at places where schools are located in order to boost the working conditions of teachers in rural settings.

Keywords: School, Environment, Job, Performance, Social, Studies

Introduction

The school environment which includes classrooms, libraries and technical workshops are variables that affect teacher's job performance. Hence, the school environment remains an important area that should be studied and well managed to enhance teachers' job performance in social studies. The issue of poor job performance of teachers has been of much concern to government, parents and other relevant stakeholders in the educational sector. The quality of education does not only depend on the teachers as reflected in the performance of their duties, but also in the effective co-ordination of the school environment (Asao, 2001). The school environment which also include instructional material planning, administrative planning, the teachers as well as the students are essential in teaching/learning process. The extent to which

teachers perform their job could be enhanced depending on their location within the school compound, the structure of the classroom, availability of instructional facilities and accessories. It is believed that a well-planned school will produce expected outcomes of education that will facilitate good social, political and economic emancipation. Orderly classroom environment brings about effective job performance. A comfortable and caring environment also contributes to teachers' job performance.

The physical characteristics of the school have a variety of effects on teachers, students and the learning process. Poor lightening, noise, high level of heat due to overcrowding in classrooms and inconsistent temperature make teaching and learning difficult. These factors can adversely affect student's behaviours and lead to high level of frustration among teachers and poor learning attitude among students. A fascinating school environment is one where they are adequate and qualified human and material resources. The prevailing condition in some school environments is far from satisfactory and this affects teaching and learning. It is indisputable that the school environment is an important factor that contributes to the learning and assimilation of students. It has the potential to determine how well a child or a teacher is able to realize or destroy his or her goal in life. Some school environments can be loving or frightening, stimulating or boring, conducive or inhibiting to the achievement of the purpose and goal for which it was established.

Teachers' job performance manifests in the students' poor learning outcomes as shown in internal and external examinations, school dropouts, and students' engagement in various anti-social behaviours like cultism and even examination malpractice of different forms. It has also been observed that some teachers have a lukewarm attitude toward their job; they are not punctual at work, attendance registers are not marked, many of them do not write their notes of lesson, the scheme of work is not always covered in a term, some of the teachers do not even go to school, while some are not regular in school. School diaries are not filled, students' note books are not marked, some of the teachers do not even have notes to give to the students and the resultant effect is the poor output of the students.

Owoeye (2011) looked at location of schools as it relates to academic performance of students and teachers' job performance in Ekiti State of Nigeria between 1990 and 1997. The study used results of the West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE) conducted between 1990 and 1997 in 50 secondary schools in both rural and urban areas of the state. One validated instrument "student location questionnaire (SLQ)" was used for data collection. One hypothesis was formulated and tested. Data were analyzed using mean and t-test. The result showed that there was a significant difference between students' academic achievement of rural and urban secondary schools in senior school certificate examination ($t=273, p<0.05$). The study had proven

that students in urban areas had better academic achievement than their rural counterpart. Therefore, it was recommended that incentive should be provided to teachers in rural areas to encourage them to put in their best to remain in their respective duty stations for an effective school performance.

Sandor (2000) observed that teachers with the highest training are posted to largest cities, and even more noticeably to the capital. This and more findings abound on the disparity in the quality of teachers in urban schools compared to those in rural areas, which consequently affect students' academic attainment. Nwachukwu and Anina (2014) carried out a similar research on school location and teachers' performance in Economics in Senior Secondary School Education in Oshilini South Local Government Area of Delta State. The study was a descriptive survey research; frequencies, arithmetic means and standard deviations were the statistical tools used to analyze the data. The findings concluded that despite the impact of change in the school environment in the State, the performance of teachers still remained below average in most secondary schools. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the state Government in collaboration with Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council should provide a favourable school location, climate and physical facilities to improve the performance of teachers in the schools.

Adesina (2011) observed that teachers' satisfaction were greater in well conducive school environment than unconducive ones. Flower and Melbery (2009) found out in one of their studies that school location in most secondary schools were poor and learning environment is not encouraging. Ananga (2012) opined that teaching and learning in secondary school were mostly affected by poor school location or environment and these create challenges to teachers' performance in the class. These challenges, according to Nwachukwu and Anina (2014), were as a result of poor location/climate change which leads to sub-standard education, lack of adequate resources for teaching and students' poor academic performance. According to Mbipom (2000), schools are either situated in one geographical location or the other. These geographical locations are either made rural (remote) where modern facilities such as leisure, easy transportation, cultural heterogeneity and cosmopolitan population are lacking, or city (urban) where there are adequate facilities such as leisure, cinema, easy transportation, cultural heterogeneity and cosmopolitan population.

Ogili (2009) posited that the per capital income among rural people are low and there is general poverty. About 70% of the rural populations are engaged in farming at subsistence level while the urban populations are mostly civil servants, traders and artisans. The effect of nature has compelled man to either settle or dwell in an urban area. This implies that in the rural settlement or location, there is the near absence of

modern educational facilities and this serves as a hindrance to the motivation of teachers and rural child learning which invariably result in poor performance of teachers.

Statement of the problem

The problem of poor learning output in our public secondary schools has become a burning question to many people including parents, educators, government and other relevant stakeholders in the educational sector. The problem has eaten into the fabric of the educational system in Nigeria. It has been observed over the years that teachers' job performance in public secondary schools is poor, because most of the teachers fail in the discharge of their official duties; some of them have a lukewarm attitude towards their job.

The above poor performance of the teachers may be as a result of poor learning or school environment. It may be that some of the teachers travel a very long distance to get to their school, the terrain of some areas in the study area is so bad that even when a teacher is ready to go to school the fare is so high, leaving the teacher with no other option than choosing days in a week or month to go to school. The topography of some schools are bad, some of the secondary schools are situated very close to the market places, industrial areas, cinema houses and close to the highway thereby getting distracted by the external noise of the environment. Other schools are situated at inaccessible areas with no means of communication or transportation. The extent to which teachers teach could be enhanced depending on the location of the school which the teacher is sent to.

Despite the effort of the government and other educational stakeholders in the area to provide conducive school environment by creating accessible routes to wherever a school is situated, good school spotting and renovation of some dilapidated structures in the school, and even giving special remuneration to teachers who work in rural areas, the problem of poor job performance still persists. The problem of this study is to investigate the extent to which school location influence teachers' job performance.

Research question

1. How does school location relate with teachers' job performance in Social Studies in secondary schools?

Hypothesis

In order to guide the study, one research hypothesis was formulated thus:

Ho1: School Location does not have any significant relationship with teachers' job performance in Social Studies in secondary schools in Cross River State

Methodology

This research adopted descriptive survey research design. This design was used because the researcher makes description of variable the way and manners it appears as at the time of investigation without further manipulation. The study was conducted in public secondary schools in Cross River State. The area consists of three geopolitical zones: the northern, central and southern senatorial districts. Educationally, the area consists of three educational zones namely: Ogoja, Ikom and Calabar Education Zones. The population consisted of the all the 280 Social Studies teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State.

This entire population was used as the sample. Instrument used for data collection was a researchers-developed instrument titled “Teachers’ Job Performance in Social Studies Questionnaire (TJPSOSQ).” The questionnaire had two sections (A and B). Section A consisted of personal data of respondents while section B consisted of 20 items. The instrument was validated by three experts in Measurement and Evaluation while Cronbach Alpha was used to test the reliability and the coefficient yielded 0.74-0.89. Data obtained through questionnaire administration were coded and analyzed via SPSS using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation analysis.

Presentation of results

Research question 1: How does school location relate with teachers’ job performance in Social Studies in secondary schools?

Ho1: School location does not have any significant relationship with teacher’s job performance in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Table 1 indicated that at .05 level of significance, the calculated r-value of 2.83 was greater than the critical r- value of 1.984 with 278 degree of freedom. With this positive result, the null hypothesis which stated that school location does not have any significant relationship with teachers’ job performance in Cross River State, Nigeria was rejected. This was alternatively stated thus: school location significantly and positively relate to teacher’s job performance in Cross River State. This indicates that when teachers are located in an ill equipped school environment, there is that tendency that little will be given out in terms of their performance. But if they are in a location where the school environment is well equipped, there is that tendency that much will be imparted from them to the learners.

Table 1: Summary of the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between school location and teacher's job performance in Cross River State

Variables	N	mean	SD	r-cal
School location	160	149	6.2	
Teachers job performance	120	113	4.4	2.83*

$p < 0.05$, $df = 278$, $critical\ r-critical = 1.984$

Discussions of findings

The result of testing the hypothesis as presented in Table 1 revealed a positive relationship between school location and teachers' job performance in Cross River State, Nigeria. This finding is in line with Mbipom (2000) who opined that schools are either situated in one geographical location or the other. These geographical locations are either rural (remote) where modern facilities such as leisure, easy transportation, cultural heterogeneity and cosmopolitan population are lacking or city (urban) where there are adequate facilities such as leisure, cinema, easy transportation, cultural heterogeneity and cosmopolitan population.

In consonant with this, Ogili (2009) posited that rural dwellers are generally poor and are of low per capita income. Over 70% of rural populations are peasant farmers at subsistence level whereas urban dwellers are mostly civil servants, traders and artisans. The wide gap that exists in terms of facilities in these locations can either make or mar teachers' performance. Thus, the near absence of school facilities in rural areas can impact negatively on teachers' job performance.

Conclusion/Recommendation

The finding in this study revealed a significant positive relationship between school location and teachers' job performance in Cross River State, Nigeria. Arising from this conclusion it is recommended that government should endeavour to create good and access roads in rural areas and provide facilities such as pipe borne water and electricity to places where schools are located in order to boost the working conditions of teachers in rural settings.

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