

## ***Perception of Parents on the Availability of School Health Services in Private Primary Schools in Wuntin Dada, Bauchi***

**<sup>1</sup>Hadiza Coomassie Ahmad**  
[\*hadizaahmad2313@gmail.com\*](mailto:hadizaahmad2313@gmail.com)

**Hannatu Musa Paul, Ph.D**  
*Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education*  
*National Open University of Nigeria*  
[\*hannatuwa@gmail.com\*](mailto:hannatuwa@gmail.com)

**Joy Johnny Jonas**  
*Gombe State College of Health Technology, Kaltungo*  
[\*joymolgomo@gmail.com\*](mailto:joymolgomo@gmail.com)

**<sup>1</sup>Bilkisu Abubakar**  
[\*bilkisuabubakar004@gmail.com\*](mailto:bilkisuabubakar004@gmail.com)

**<sup>1</sup>Mercy Ayinda Mairabo**  
[\*ayindamercy@gmail.com\*](mailto:ayindamercy@gmail.com)  
<sup>1</sup>*Kaduna State College of Nursing and Midwifery, Kaduna*

---

### **Abstract**

*This study assessed perception of parents on the availability of school health services in private primary schools in Wuntin Dada, Bauchi state. To achieve this purpose, descriptive survey research design was used. A sample of 400 parents was used. The instrument used for the study was researchers' developed close ended questionnaire. All 400 copies of questionnaire distributed were retrieved and considered valid for analyses. Descriptive statistics of frequency, percentage, mean score and standard deviation were used for analysis and decision mean of 2.50 was adopted. The results revealed that parents perceive that school health services are not available in private primary schools in Wuntin Dada, Bauchi (Average means score: 2.32, SD: 1.162). Based on the results, it was concluded that parents perceive that school health services are not available in private primary schools in Wuntin Dada, Bauchi. It was recommended that the state Ministry of Education should come up with a policy that ensures that all private school owners meet the set requirement before starting a school. This would help in ensuring that everything needed for the teaching, learning and health needs of the pupils are met before commencement.*

**Keywords:** availability, health, services, parents, perceived

## **Introduction**

School health services (SHS) are essential for ensuring the health and well-being of students, creating a positive learning environment, and promoting academic success. School health programmes play a vital role in the growth and development of school children (Gilavand, 2016; Usman & Madudili, 2019). They provide essential services that promote physical, mental and social well-being, creating an environment where children can thrive holistically. School health services (SHS), as defined by the World Health Organization [WHO] (2021), are services provided by a health worker to students enrolled in primary or secondary education, either within school premises or in a health centre situated outside the school. Most countries have some forms of SHS, but many such programmes currently are not evidence-based, are not implemented well, are underfunded and/or are delivered with limited reach and scope.

For the majority of school-age children and adolescents, school health services may be the sole institutional means of providing regular, large-scale health care (Knopf et al., 2016). Because school health services are typically free at the point of use and are provided within or very close to schools, they also have the potential to enhance health equity through improved access to services. For underprivileged children and adolescents who lack appropriate coverage and efficient health services for their requirements, this can be particularly crucial. Additionally, communities, parents, and students place a high value on school health services when they are provided with reasonable quality (Montgomery et al., 2022).

Researchers, decision-makers, and development partners have generally not given school health service programmes the attention they deserve, despite all the potential benefits and the fact that the majority of nations have developed such programmes (Baltag, & Saewyc, 2017). School healthcare in high-income nations frequently depends on a network of school nurses, perhaps involving school-based health facilities (Knopf et al., 2016; Baltag et al., 2015). However, school health service programmes are more severely underfunded and/or provided with a limited reach and scope in many low and middle-income nations (Baltag et al., 2015). In reality, school health services in many low and middle-income nations are non-existent (Chaturvedi & Aggarwal, 2000), or restricted to those that can be provided by teachers, like counselling or routine deworming, and/or to infrequent visits by clinical staff from a nearby health facility, like during routine vaccinations. This is an extremely important chance lost. This implies that teenagers in these situations frequently would not seek medical attention until they are very sick or injured, and even then, they would not get help right away.

The availability of school clinics in private schools in Nigeria varies greatly depending on several factors, including the school's location, size, and financial resources. While some private schools boast of well-equipped clinics with qualified medical personnel, others may have limited facilities or rely on designated staff members with basic first-aid training (Chabo, & Ejemot-Nwadiaro, 2019). Studies across Nigeria reveal a concerning picture of school health services (SHS). The National School Health Policy (NSHP) established clear guidelines; yet implementation seems inadequate (Kuponiyi et al., 2014). A situation analysis found low awareness of the school health programme (SHP) among students, teachers, and even parents (Kuponiyi et al., 2014). Although some screenings like vision and hearing are conducted, pre-admission health assessments and proper record keeping for illnesses are far from the norm (Kuponiyi et al., 2014). This lack of consistent service delivery suggests a systemic weakness in providing basic healthcare to a significant portion of the Nigerian youth population. Focusing on Bauchi state specifically, data is limited, but national trends likely hold true. Further research is needed to understand the specific context within Bauchi. However, considering the national shortfall in trained personnel, proper facilities, and programme awareness, it is likely that Bauchi faces similar challenges in ensuring comprehensive SHS for its students.

Nigerians' perception of school health services availability is unfortunately marked by disappointment. While the National Policy on Education prioritizes such services (Okafor, 2000), studies reveal a significant gap between policy and reality. Research suggests a lack of basic facilities like well-equipped sick bays and qualified personnel in most schools, particularly public ones (Oladeji, 2024; Kuponiyi et al., 2016; Sabitu et al., 2016; Olatunya et al., 2015; Toma et al., 2014; Ademuwagun & Oduntan, 2010). This scarcity leads many Nigerians to believe that school health services are inadequate, potentially hindering their children's well-being and learning abilities. There is, however, a glimmer of hope. Some studies show a slightly better situation in private schools (Oladeji, 2024; Kuponiyi et al., 2016; Toma et al., 2014; Olatunya et al., 2015). Additionally, there is recognition among educators and policymakers about the importance of improving school health services (Ajayi et al., 2014). This recognition, coupled with advocacy efforts, could pave the way for increased investment and improved access to healthcare within Nigerian schools.

The researchers observed that many private schools around the study area do not have any school health services available in the schools. It was also observed that many private schools in the area do not even have standard amenities for teaching and learning activities, because most of them are running in makeshift spaces or rented apartments. This research highlights a critical gap in the availability of essential school health services. The current landscape of school health services necessitates a collaborative effort from

policymakers, educators, healthcare professionals, and communities. By strengthening existing programmes, exploring innovative service delivery models, and fostering greater awareness amongst stakeholders, the potential of school health services to promote students' well-being and academic achievement can be fully realized. It is on this background that the researchers carried out this study to access the perception of parents on the availability of school health services in private schools in Wuntin Dada, Bauchi.

### **Purpose of the study**

The study sought to access the perception of parents on the availability of school health services in private primary schools in Wuntin Dada, Bauchi.

### **Research question**

The following research question was formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the perception of parents regarding the availability of school health services in private primary schools in Wuntin Dada?

### **Methodology**

To ascertain the perception of parents regarding the availability of school health services in private primary schools in Wuntin Dada, the researchers employed a descriptive survey research design. A total of 400 respondents were selected using a multi-stage sampling technique. This sample size is in conformity with Dessel (2013) who suggested that a sample size of 400 should be appropriate for any survey. The researchers employed a systematic random sampling technique to select households to carry out the study. Every odd number starting from the community leader's house was selected until the total number of houses needed was selected and a convenience sampling technique was used to administer the questionnaires at the households selected for the study.

The researchers used a researchers-developed questionnaire for data collection. The research instrument titled "Availability of School Health Services Questionnaire" is made up of two sections. Section A comprises of three (3) items on socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents while Section B comprises of 10 items to measure the perception of parents regarding the availability of school health services. The instrument adopted the Likert-like scale of measurement with response options including Strongly Agree (SA) with 4 points, Agree (A) with 3 points, Disagree (D) with 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) with 1 point.

The research instrument was vetted by two experts in the Department of Physical and Health Education, Faculty of Education, University of Jos, to determine its face validity. After the comments, suggestions and corrections were done, a final draft was produced

and used for data collection in the field. The data collected was analysed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) v26. Descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage was used to describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research question. Every response with a mean score of 2.50 and above was considered accepted.

## **Presentation of results**

The results of the descriptive statistics of demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Demographic information of the respondents

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Variable options</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Age range	18-25years	46	11.4
	26-30years	65	16.3
	31-35years	127	31.7
	>36years	162	40.6
	Total	400	100
Sex	Male	224	55.9
	Female	176	44.1
	Total	400	100
Occupation	Artisans	177	44.3
	Not Employed	48	12
	Civil servants	115	28.7
	Applicants	60	15
Total		400	100

Table 1 revealed the demographic information of the respondents; the table showed that the majority (162 or 40.6%) of the respondents were between the age range of 36 years and above. The table also indicated that the majority (224 or 55.9%) of the respondents were male. The table further revealed that majority (177 or 44.3%) of the respondents were artisans who have a form of business or trade to provide income for themselves and their families.

**Research question:** What is the perception of parents regarding the availability of school health services in private primary schools in Wuntin Dada?

**Table 2:** Mean scores and standard deviation on the perception of parents regarding the availability of school health services in private schools

S/N	Perception of parents regarding the availability of school health services	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1	Health education for pupil.	2.32	1.242	Not available
2	Pre-admission medical screening.	2.32	1.215	Not available
3	Immunization services for students in school.	2.27	1.251	Not available
4	Practical demonstration of balanced diet.	2.28	1.217	Not available
5	Personal hygiene inspection in school.	3.41	0.819	Available
6	Bush clearance and insect control.	2.28	1.232	Not available
7	Hearing test for students in school.	2.35	1.227	Not available
8	Visual test for students in school.	2.20	1.156	Not available
9	First aid services in schools.	2.16	1.136	Not available
10	Health records in schools.	2.16	1.125	Not available
	Aggregate mean	2.32	1.162	

Table 2 revealed the mean scores of the responses of the parents in Wuntin Dada regarding their perception on availability of school health services in private primary schools. The table showed that the mean response of each item on perception of parents on availability of school health services in private primary schools was less than the decision mean of 2.50 except for the item on personal hygiene inspection in school (3.41). The result in the table also showed that the aggregate mean of 2.32 is less than the decision mean of 2.50. Therefore, this implies that parents perceive that school health services are not available in private primary schools in Wuntin Dada, Bauchi.

### **Discussion of the findings**

This study examined the perception of parents on the availability of school health services in private primary schools in Wuntin Dada. The data collected were subjected to analysis and the following results were reported: parents in Wuntin Dada perceive that school health services are not available in private primary schools in Wuntin Dada, Bauchi. This finding reflects the view of the study's respondents (average mean score: 2.32, SD: 1.162) which implies that school health services are not available in private primary schools in Wuntin Dada, Bauchi. The finding of this study was not in agreement with Kuponiyi et al. (2016) who conducted a similar study in Ogun state. The study by Kuponiyi et al. revealed that school health services are available but found out that the practice of the various components of school health services was poor, but better in private primary schools in Nigeria.

The finding of the study was also in disagreement with Toma et al. (2014), who conducted a similar cross-sectional descriptive study in Jos. The findings of the study revealed that school health services were generally poor in public and private primary schools, although the situation was better in the private schools. The finding of the study was also in discord with the report from Oladeji (2024) who also conducted a similar study in Ibadan, Oyo State. The study revealed that the majority of participants, particularly in private schools, exhibit a higher level of awareness and utilisation of school health services compared to their public-school counterparts. However, it highlights deficiencies in human and material resources necessary for the implementation of a comprehensive school health programme in secondary schools within the Ibadan North-West Local Government Area.

The finding of the study was in agreement with the report of Chaturvedi and Aggarwal (2000) who conducted a similar study in Delhi. Result of the study revealed that school health services were non-existent in 56 (27.45%) of the total schools; and in another 27%, the visits made by school health team were only three times or less in the last one year. In most of the schools having some form of school health services (government or private), all the essential areas of health appraisal including anthropometry, general health check-up, vision testing, ENT check-up and dental examination, were covered. The finding of the study was not in consonance with the report from Sabitu et al. (2016), who conducted a similar study at Funtua Zone, Katsina State. Results of the study revealed that school health services are available in majority (86.70%) of the schools under study, but there were not enough qualified health personnel for effective utilization of school health services in the study area.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the finding of this study, it is concluded that parents perceive that school health services are not available in private primary schools in Wuntin Dada, Bauchi.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the conclusion of this study, the following recommendation was made:

1. The state Ministry of Education should ensure that all private school owners should meet the set requirement before starting a school. This would help in ensuring that everything needed for the teaching, learning and health needs of the pupils are met before commencement.

### **References**

- Ademuwagun, O. A., & Oduntan, O. O. (2010). Availability and application of school health services in selected primary and secondary schools in Ovia Local Government Area. *International Journal of Science and Education*, 1(2), 6-12.

- Ajayi, O. O., Olorunsogo, O. O., & Adebowale, A. A. (2014). Teachers' knowledge and perception of practice of school health services in Demsa Local Government Area, Adamawa State, Nigeria. *African Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology*, 8(25), 778-783.
- Baltag, V., & Saewyc, E. (2017). Pairing children with health services: The changing role of school health services in the twenty-first century. *International Handbook on Adolescent Health and Development: The Public Health Response*, 463-477.
- Baltag, V., Pachyna, A., & Hall, J. (2015). Global overview of school health services: data from 102 countries. *Health Behaviour and Policy Review*, 2(4), 268-283.
- Chabo, J. A. U., & Ejemot-Nwadiaro, R. I. (2019). An Assessment of the Level of Provision of School Health Services in Selected Secondary Schools in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State, Nigeria. *Greener Journal of Biomedical and Health Sciences*, 4(1), 01-10.
- Chaturvedi, S., & Aggarwal, O. P. (2000). Assessment of availability and working components of school health services in Delhi. *The Indian Journal of Pediatrics*, 67, 179-184.
- Dessel, G. V. (2013). How to determine population and survey sample size. Retrieved on 11 March 2019 from <https://www.checkmarket.com/blog>
- Gilavand, A. (2016). Evaluation of the effect of learning environment on student's academic performance in Nigeria. *International Journal of Medical Research & Health Sciences*, 5(7S), 360-369.
- Knopf, J. A., Finnie, R. K., Peng, Y., Hahn, R. A., Truman, B. I., Vernon-Smiley, M., ... & Community Preventive Services Task Force. (2016). School-based health centres to advance health equity: A community guide systematic review. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 51(1), 114-126.
- Kuponiyi, O. A., Akinsola, A. K., & Adebowale, O. A. (2014). Performance of school health programme in Nigeria: A situation analysis. *Nigerian Journal of Public Health*, 13(3), 190-196.
- Kuponiyi, O. T., Amoran, O. E., & Kuponiyi, O. T. (2016). School health services and its practice among public and private primary schools in Western Nigeria. *BMC Research Notes*, 9, 1-10.
- Montgomery, P., Knerr, W., Ross, D. A., & Patterson, J. (2022). The effectiveness and acceptability of comprehensive and multicomponent school health services: a systematic review. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 70(2), 192-207.
- Okafor, N. (2000). The Nigerian school health programme: A comprehensive approach. As cited in Ademuwagun, O. A., & Oduntan, O. O. (2010). Availability and application of school health services in selected primary and secondary schools in Ovia Local Government Area. *International Journal of Science and Education*, 1(2), 6-12.



- Oladeji, I. A. (2024). Knowledge and Availability of School Health Services among Secondary School Students in Ibadan, Oyo State. *International Journal of Nursing, Midwife and Health Related Cases*, 10(1), 39-48.
- Olatunya, O., Oseni, S., Olaleye, A., Akani, N. A., & Oyelami, O. (2015). School health services in Nigeria: A sleeping giant. *African Journal of Health Sciences*, 28(1), 127-141.
- Sabitu, A., Matazu, M. Y., & Tambaya, I. S. (2016). A Survey on Availability and Utilization of School Health Services among Junior Secondary Schools in Funtua Zone Katsina State, Nigeria. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Healthcare*, 3(1), 1-9.
- Toma, O., Tinuade, O. O., Gabriel, I. O., & Agaba, E. (2014). School health services in primary schools in Jos, Nigeria. *Open Science Journal of Clinical Medicine*, 2(3), 83-88.
- Usman, Y. D., & Madudili, C. G. (2019). Evaluation of the Effect of Learning Environment on Students' Academic Performance in Nigeria. *Online Submission*.
- World Health Organization, (2021, June 22). WHO guideline on school health services. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240029392>