

Utilization of Instructional Facilities and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between utilization of instructional facilities and the academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers state. One research question and one hypothesis guided the study which has a correlational research design. The numerical strength of the population was 2,350 teachers in 261 senior secondary schools. Using stratified random sampling technique, the sample size was 342 respondents. To collect data, two researcher structured instruments used are "Utilization of Instructional Facilities Questionnaire (UIFQ) and Students' Academic Performance Scale" (SAPS). These instruments were validated by experts and their internal consistencies were established using Cronbach Alpha method yielding reliability index of 0.79 and 0.81 respectively. The research question was answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) while the hypothesis was analysed using z-test at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study showed a positive relationship between effective utilization of instructional facilities and students' academic performance. Recommendations include the need for increased utilization of provided instructional facilities in Rivers state public senior secondary schools to enhance teaching-learning process for the ultimate increased academic performance of the students.

Keywords: Instructional facilities utilization, academic performance, senior secondary school students

INTRODUCTION

Instructional facilities in secondary schools are regarded as examples of school plants from educational planning perspective. School plants generally speaking are things that enhance teaching and learning in the education system at all levels. School plants are the totality of the things that make up a school system which include physical and material facilities (Nwokafor, 2001). As a matter of fact, school plants include all the facilities: instructional, administrative, recreational, residential including all equipment used for the effective learning of students. Corroborating, Abraham (2003) explained that school plants cover everything used in the school to bring about teaching and learning which include all facilities and equipment in the school used by all members of the school community.

Effective school plant planning ensures that relevant, adequate and functional facilities are utilised when they are provided in secondary schools so that they can be used for increased performance of students. InfactAdiele, Obasi, and Ohia (2017) opined that effective utilization of school plantplanningactivity ultimately goes a long way to ascertain the level of development of the education system. It then means that productivity in the secondary school system is hinged, to a great extent, on the utilization of school plants especially the instructional component of school plant. It is important to note that productivity in this study is a measure of the students' academic performance. High students' academic performance has

a direct bearing on the overall quality of education which currently seem to be of great concern to stakeholders in the education system.

The senior secondary education level in Nigeria is also known as the post-basic education level which is before the tertiary education level. The students at this level are being prepared for entry into the tertiary level therefore, the importance of proper utilization of provided instructional facilities cannot be overemphasized. The reason is very obvious because it is generally believed that students remember what they see but know better what they do; so the practical use of instructional facilities in teaching-learning process is expected to enhance the academic performance of the students. De-emphasizing theoretical approach and making practical use of instructional facilities in teaching is of great importance as is substantiated by the empirical study in Inyang's work (2015) in secondary schools in Cross Rivers State. In the same vein, the importance of proper utilization of instructional facilities is essential as Olaniyonu (2000) explained that instructional facilities utilization facilitates and stimulates instructional delivery in secondary schools. Therefore this scholar's assertion is that the use of relevant instructional facilities ought to be subject-specific. For example, teaching of science requires the use of equipped laboratories, while the teaching of English Language requires the use of instructional facilities like films, slides, video-tapes *etcetera*. This is necessary because there is a close relationship between utilization of appropriate instructional facilities and student's academic performance the scholar further explained. No wonder Wolf and Fraster (2007) explained that the totality of student's classroom environment has close relationship with their learning outcomes. A study by Asiabaka (2008) revealed that proper utilization of quality school instructional facilities generally speaking contributes greatly in improving students' academic performance; of course, the reverse will definitely be the case as the study by Olaniyan and Isreal (2013) showed that inadequate utilization of school plants affects negatively the academic performance of Nigeria secondary school students in general, and so students in Rivers State are inclusive.

The issue of students' academic performance in secondary schools has different contributory factors one of which is adequate utilization of provided instructional facilities. The importance of utilization of adequate classroom instructional resources for example is relevant to children's learning experiences. This is a pre-requisite in the provision of quality education delivery. This of course, hinges to a great extent, on the performance of the students. It is pertinent therefore that the facilities provided be utilized to make the students' learning more meaningful. This assertion is corroborated by the study of Iyang (2015) on utilization of instructional materials and students' academic performance. Result of this study showed that the students' performance academically was not good due to non-utilization of instructional materials. This goes to buttress the general believe that students merely remember what they see the teaching-learning process but internalize better what they see in the teacher do especially if they are also allowed to do same themselves. Therefore the practical use of instructional facilities in teaching and learning process is of prime importance in the academic achievement of students. Also to buttress this fact, a study by Matthew cited in Neji & Nuoha (2015) showed a positive relationship between the utilization of laboratory facilities and students' academic performance in science subjects in secondary schools in Calabar, Cross-River State of Nigeria. The result of a separate work by Edet cited in Neji and Nuoha (2015) showed that students who are taught frequently using laboratory facilities performed better and achieved higher than students who are not taught frequently using laboratory facilities.

Statement of the Problem

There seem to be an increased public outcry and obvious lack of confidence in the output from the nation's education system generally and the secondary level in particular. All these come from the perceived below-expectation performance of these outputs, who are the students.

Could it be that there is a relationship between the proper utilization of instructional facilities and the academic performance of students in senior secondary schools in Rivers State? This constitutes the problem of the study.

Purpose

The main thrust of this study is to ascertain the relationship between proper utilization of laboratory instructional facilities and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Question

What is the relationship between utilization of laboratory instructional facilities and students' academic performance in public secondary school in Rivers state?

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis statement is that there is no significant relationship between instructional facilities utilization in public secondary schools and the students' academic performance.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted correlational research design.

Population

The numerical strength of the population for the study was 2,350 teachers in 261 public senior secondary schools.

Sample and sampling technique

The sample size was 342 got from the population using proportionate stratified random sampling technique.

Instrumentation

Data were collected using self-structured questionnaire titled "Instructional Facilities Utilization Questionnaire" (IFUQ) and "Students' Academic Performance Scale" (SAPS). These instruments were validated by experts in the area of measurement and evaluation. The reliabilities established using Cronbach Alpha method yielded 0.79 and 0.81 respectively.

Method of data collection

The instruments were administered to the respondents by the researcher and three trained research assistants.

Method of data analysis

The research question was answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics (r) while the hypothesis was analysed using z-test at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Questions

What is the relationship between utilization of laboratory instructional facilities and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis statement is that there is no significant relationship between instructional facilities utilization in public secondary schools and academic performance of the students.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment (r) calculation of the relationship between instructional facilities utilization and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State

Item	N	r	z-cal	z-crit	Sig. value	Remark
Instructional facilities utilization	342	0.814	16.28	±1.96	0.02	Significant
Students' academic performance						

$P < 0.05$

Results in Table 1 show 0.814 as the value of r indicating a positive relationship between instructional facilities utilization in public secondary schools and students' academic performance. This is in line with the result of the empirical study of Inyang (2015), summarily emphasizing importance of the practical utilization of instructional facilities in enhancing the academic performance of students. This is corroborated by Olaniyonu (2000) who explained that instructional facilities utilization facilitates and stimulates instructional delivery in secondary schools. This will obviously improve the academic performance of the students. In testing the null hypothesis as also shown in Table 1, the calculated significant probability value of 0.02 is less than the critical significant probability value of which is 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not accepted that is why the remark in Table 1 shows significant. There is a positive significant relationship between instructional facilities utilization and students' academic performance; as a study by Asiabaka (2008) showed that proper utilization of school instructional facilities contributes in improving students' academic performance.

CONCLUSION

The use of instructional facilities in the teaching-learning process helps a lot in improving the academic performance of students in secondary schools in Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATION

There is need for the teachers to continually make use of provided instructional facilities in the teaching-learning process in order to enhance the academic performance of the students.

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