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School Environmental Factors as Correlates of Academic Performance of Economics Students' in Public Secondary Schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

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Abstract

This study investigated school environmental factors as correlate of academic performance of Economics students in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. The study adopted a correlational research design. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The population of this study consisted of 6,432 respondents; Economics teachers (30) and Economics students (6,399) in 13 public secondary schools in the Uruan L. G. A. The sample size was 377 respondents. Two instruments: School Environmental Factors Questionnaire (SEFQ) and Academic Performance of Economics Students Questionnaire (APESQ) were used for data collection. Test re-test reliability method was used to obtain the reliability of the instruments, which yielded coefficient values of 0.90 for School Environmental Factors Questionnaire and 0.83 for Academic Performance of Economics Students Questionnaire. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to answer the research questions and t-test was used to test Pearson coefficients for the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that: physical facilities to a low extent relates to academic performance of students in Economics and instructional facilities to a high extent relate to academic performance of students in Economics. Based on the findings, it was recommended that secondary school principals should ensure the availability and use of physical facilities in their respective institutions through collaboration with stakeholders in education.

Keywords: School Environmental Factors, Academic Performance of Economics Student.

Introduction

Economics being one of the crucial subjects taught in schools is intended to create in future, citizens with responsible effective decision-makers and enforcers of change. The importance of teaching and learning Economics in schools goes far beyond the goal of improving an understanding of the basic principles of supply and demand and the workings of the economy. This is because Economics can be taught for the generation of new knowledge with the help of exposing students to real-life learning environments and experiences (Motunrayo & Nkoyane, 2020). The important idea of teaching and learning Economics in classroom are to help the basic stage of student masters the principles vital for understanding the financial problem, precise economic issues (Khadka, 2019). Nazeer (2021) suggested that training teachers and students for cooperative learning is salient for effective implementation of cooperative learning for a positive influence on students' learning and teachers' pedagogy. Hence, the teaching and learning of Economics is hinge on students' academic performance.

Subsequently, Carlton (2022) defined academic performance refers to how well a student is doing in their academic endeavor, such as their ability to learn and understand concepts, complete assignment and achieve grades or scores on examinations or assessments. Corroborating this assertion, Phoebe (2019) viewed academic performance as a measure of a student's level of mastery or achievement in their academic pursuits. Academic performance is often accessed through various methods, including exams, quizzes, projects and overall grade point average (GPA). Good academic performance is often an important goal for students as it can open up opportunities for further education, scholarships and future career prospects (Hull, 2022).

Similarly, Addeh (2020) observed that there is a decline in the academic performance of students in economics. Pointing out the current state of students' academic performance is necessary as this would enhance the understanding the perspective of this study. Iniobong (2022) noted that in recent times, students performed poorly in Economics in *senior secondary school certificate examination in Uruan Local Government Area.* Ekpo (2022) posited that the academic performance of economics students in West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) and National Examination Council Examinations (NECO) have taken a dramatic decline in recent times. This poor performance is suspected to be as a result of school environmental factors.

Succinctly put, Ujagbe (2021) defined school environmental factors as the internal conditions of the school that influence students' academic performance. Commenting further, Harrison (2020) explained that school environmental factors are perceived to be the classroom spaces planning, administrative spaces planning, circulation spaces planning, spaces or convenience planning, general infrastructure planning, the teachers as well as the students themselves. Ojo (2019) pointed out some components of school environmental factors as; physical facilities, instructional facilities, social healthcare facilities and classroom facilities. In this study the attention of the researchers is on physical facilities and instructional facilities.

Physical facilities are the physical structures, the furniture, equipment and other material resources that make up a school (Ebose, 2020). Zainuddin and Subri (2021) posited that students from schools with adequate physical facilities exhibit improved academic performance in learning process and examination. Moreover, Arshad (2019) argued that school facilities affect teaching and learning processes, portray innovative trends in school activities and processes

which in turn influence teacher performance and academic performance of students. Similarly, Kekare (2022) noted that physical environment is not connected to academic achievement of students. Thus, students learning in well-furnished classroom with better facilities may not necessarily lead to excellent academic performance. Corroborating this assertion, Souck and Nji (2019) pointed out that school internal efficiency alone cannot be determined by adequate facilities but teacher quality, learner quality and a host of other factors are also important with regard to academic performance.

Instructional facilities refer to classrooms, seminar rooms, laboratories, computer centres, on-campus clinics, libraries and other spaces used principally for the purpose of delivering formal instruction to our university students (Harsh, 2019). Eya and Unuigbe (2019) observed that instructional facilities promote quality teaching and learning in secondary schools. Ayeni (2017) revealed that the quality of learning facilities available within the learning environment has positive relationship with the quality of teaching and learning activities which in turn influence academic performance of students. Furthermore, Koroye (2020) portrayed that instructional materials and facilities have significant influence on academic performance of students. More so, Mushtaq and Khan (2022) asserted that students in secondary schools with adequate instructional facilities perform well in their academics. Adebanjo (2019) opined that children learn best, when the school environment is enriched with adequate teaching learning materials, by encouraging students to develop intellectually according to their potentials and abilities. Ugwulashi and Mbonu (2018) suggested that physical facilities should be checked because lack of availability, maintenance and management of available ones have been

identified as a major obstacle to effective teaching and learning processes, in fulfilling curriculum requirements for the realization of educational goals and objectives.

In summary, school environmental factors are perceived to be a hindrance to the academic performance of students in economic. It is hoped that a school that is adequately endowed with good environmental factors would contribute to rouse the expected outcomes of learning to facilitate good academic performance of students in Economics by encouraging effective teaching and learning. It is against this backdrop that the study sought to examine school environmental factors as correlates of academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary school in Uruan Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

Statement of the problem

Despite the usefulness of Economics in secondary schools, the researchers observed that the academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in *Uruan* Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom state is poor. This is manifested in poor academic performance of students in external examinations such as the WAEC, NECO and NABTEB. This has become a source of worry and an unsatisfactory state of affairs which is the gap this study intended to fill. Thus, the problem of this study put in question form is: To what extent do school environmental factors correlate to academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary school in Uruan Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State?

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to examine school environmental factors as correlates of academic performance of students in Economics in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the study therefore sought to:

1. ascertain the extent to which physical facilities relate to academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools.
2. determine the extent to which instructional facilities relate to academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools.

Research questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the extent to which physical facilities relate to academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools?
2. To what extent do instructional facilities relate to academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between physical facilities and academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.
2. There is no significant relationship between instructional facilities and academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

Significance of the study

The findings of this study if published would be beneficial to educational stakeholders such as: Economics teachers, Economics students, principals and future researchers.

Economics teachers, through the findings this study would be acquainted with the knowledge and understanding of the relationship between physical facilities and academic performance, this would enhance Economics teachers' efforts and ensure that they are able to cause significant change in the learners' academic performance.

Economics students would have deep understanding of the relationship between school environmental factors and academic performance through the findings.

Nonetheless, principals would be guided to access reliable information on the relationship between school environmental factors and academic performance of students. Thus, principals would be able to fashion out strategies to assist both Economics teachers and student to work towards improving the academic performance of the students.

Finally, future researchers through the findings would be made to have deep knowledge and understanding of the relationship between environmental factors and academic performance. More so, it will serve as a source of literature in their studies.

Scope of the study

The geographical scope of this study focused on public senior secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area in Akwa Ibom State and the respondents in this study were Economics teachers and senior secondary school two (SSS 2) Economics students. The content scope of

this study focused on school environmental factors and academic performance. However, the study addressed the relationship between physical facilities and academic performance of students in Economics and the relationship between instructional facilities and academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

Methodology

This study adopted a correlational survey research design. A correlational survey research design was used because the study sought to establish the relationship and direction of the relationship that exist between two variables of a study. The population of this study consisted of 6,432 Economics teachers and Economics students in 13 public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State in the 2021/2022 academic session. The population comprised of 30 Economics teachers and 6,399 Economics students in 13 public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area (Education Authority, Uruan Local Government, 2022). Economics teachers and Economics students were chosen for this study because they were directly involved in the teaching and learning of Economics. The sample size of the study was 377 respondents made up of 30 Economics teachers and 352 students selected from 13 public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area. Taro Yamen's (1970) formula was used to determine the sample size. Two sets of instruments, namely; School Environmental Factors Questionnaire (SEFQ) and Academic Performance of Economics Students' Questionnaire" (APESQ) were used for data collection. Test re-test reliability co-efficient was used to get the reliability coefficient of 0.90 for school environmental factors and 0.83 for academic performance of Economics students. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to answer the research questions and linear regression to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis is meant for relationship of the variables. The extent or strength of relationship of the variables was decided or interpreted using Creswell (2014) correlation coefficient scale, which stated that: ±.70 to 1.00 = Strong/High Extent Relationship, ±.40 to 0.69 = Moderate/Medium Extent

Relationship and ±.00 to 0.39 = No correlation/Weak/Low Extent Relationship. To this end, Creswell (2014) asserted that correlation coefficients can range from -1.00 to +1.00 with positive numbers used to identify a positive relationship and negative numbers being used to identify a negative relationship while no linear association is indicated with a correlation coefficient of 0.00.

Results

Research question 1: What is the extent to which physical facilities relate to academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State?

Table 1: Correlation Matrix of Relationship between physical facilities and academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools

		PF	APSE
PF	Pearson	1	.894
	Sig (2-tailed)		.000
	N	377	377
	R^2	(0.799)	
		79.9%	
APSE	Pearson	.894	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	377	377

PF=Physical Facilities, APSE= Academic Performance of Students in Economics

Data in Table 1 indicate a correlation coefficient (r) of .894 which is positive and within the coefficient limit of ±0.80 and above indicating strong, positive and a very high extent relationship. This however implies that physical facilities relate to academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.799 indicates that 79.9% of the variance

observed in the academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State was attributed to physical facilities.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between physical facilities and academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

Data for testing hypothesis 1 are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Linear Regression Analysis of the relationship between physical facilities and academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	3645.331	1	3645.331	159.275	.000[b]
	Residual	12977.451	376	22.887		
	Total	16622.782	377			

Df= degree of freedom, F = F-calculated, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The data in the Table 4.2 showed a probability (P) - value of 0.000 which is less than the alpha value 0.05. Since the P-value is less than 0.05 alpha value, the hypothesis of no significant relationship was rejected and the alternate upheld. Therefore, there is significant relationship between physical facilities and academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

Research question 2: To what extent do instructional facilities relate to academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State?

Table 3: Correlation Matrix of Relationship between instructional facilities and academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools

		IF	APSE
	Pearson	1	.783

IF	Sig (2-tailed)		.001
	N	377	377
	R^2	(0.613)	
		61.3%	
APSE	Pearson	.783	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	377	377

IF= Instructional Facilities, APSE= Academic Performance of Students in Economics

Data in Table 3 revealed a correlation coefficient (r) of.783 which is positive and within the coefficient limit of ± 0.60-0.80 indicating strong, positive and a high extent relationship. This however implies that instructional facilities to a high extent relate to academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.613 indicates that 61.3% of the variance observed in the academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State was attributed to instructional facilities.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between instructional facilities and academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

Data for testing hypothesis 2 are presented in Table 4.4

Table 4: Linear Regression Analysis of the Relationship between instructional facilities and academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3812.217	1	3812.217	166.168	.001[b]
Residual	13008.115	376	22.942		

Total	16820.332	377

Df= degree of freedom, F = F-calculated, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The results in the Table 4 above revealed a P- value of 0.001 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Since the P-value is less than 0.05 alpha value, the hypothesis of no significant relationship was rejected and the alternate upheld. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between instructional facilities and academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

Discussion of findings

The study revealed that physical facilities significantly to a positive very high extent relate to academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. This finding conforms to the findings of Zainuddin and Subri (2021) who posited that students from schools with adequate physical facilities exhibit improved academic performance in learning process and examination. Moreover, the finding of the study corroborates that of Arshad (2019) who argued that school facilities affect teaching and learning processes, portray innovative trends in school activities and processes which in turn influence teacher performance and academic performance of students. Similarly, the finding of the study disagrees with the findings of Kekare (2022) who opined that physical environment is not connected to academic achievement of students. Thus, students learning in well-furnished classroom with better facilities may not necessarily lead to excellent academic performance.

Similarly, the result of the tested hypothesis revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between physical facilities and academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. This finding is similar to that of Zainuddin and Subri (2021) and Arshad (2019) in their independent studies.

The study revealed that instructional facilities significantly to a high extent relate to academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. This finding corroborates the findings of Eya and Unuigbe (2019) who observed that instructional facilities promotes quality teaching and learning in secondary schools. This finding is in line with that of Ayeni (2017) who revealed that the quality of learning facilities available within the learning environment has positive relationship with the quality of teaching and learning activities which in turn influence academic performance of students. Furthermore, Koroye (2020) portrayed that instructional materials and facilities have significant influence on academic performance of students.

Also, the result of the tested hypothesis revealed that, there was a positive significant relationship between instructional facilities and academic performance of students in Economics in public secondary schools in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. This finding is in tanden with that of Mushtaq and Khan (2022) who posited that students in secondary schools with adequate instructional facilities perform well in their academics. This also conforms with the findings of Adebanjo (2019) who opined that the children learn best, when the school environment is enriched with adequate teaching learning materials, by encouraging students to develop intellectually according to their potentials and abilities.

Therefore, the above studies indicate that school instructional facilities, when available and put in wise use, can bring about improvement in academic performance of students.

Conclusion

The study concluded that physical and instructional facilities are important inputs that enhances the academic performance of students in Economics and should be therefore provided and made available for use by both teachers and students. Then, the non-availability and use of these facilities would hinder effective teaching and learning of the subject which will mean that students' academic performance might be negatively affected.

Recommendations

Based on the findings that emanated from this study, the following recommendations have come inevitable:

1. Secondary school principals should ensure the availability and use of physical facilities in their respective schools through collaboration with stakeholders in education. These facilities constitute important inputs that enhance the academic performance of Economics students.
2. Secondary school principals should ensure adequate provision of instructional facilities needed for effective teaching and learning of Economics. This will equip teachers with sufficient instructional facilities to make their work easier and also enhance students' learning in Economics.

3. Secondary school principals should regularly supervise Economics teachers in order to get acquainted with their classroom facilities practices and ensure that such practices are carried out in the most appropriate manner. This will help in inducing adequate classroom facilities practices that will elicit high academic performance of students in Economics.

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