

ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL PLANT MANAGEMENT FOR QUALITY DELIVERY IN SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN ABA EDUCATION ZONE OF ABIA STATE

Stephen Abuchi Ezenwagu, PhD¹,
sa.ezenwagu@unizik.edu.ng

Uju Theresa Onyeansi, PhD²
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education,
Coal City University, Enugu Nigeria
Email: honorius.chibuko@ccu.edu.ng ; Phone +2348020747480
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-4567-2433>

Igwe Jane Adaora³
ja.igwe@unizik.edu.ng

&

Veronica ifeyinwa Onyeansi⁴
nkolikanwa2001@gmail.com

Abstract

The study investigated the Influence of School Plant on the Management of Secondary Schools in Aba Education zone of Abia State of Nigeria. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study is two thousand, seven hundred and forty-nine (2749) teachers, out of which two hundred students (200) teachers constituted the sample of the study. A 10- item structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled “Influence of School Plant and Management of Secondary School Questionnaire (ISPMSSQ)” was used for data collection. Data obtained for the study were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean and Standard Deviations were used to answer the research questions while the z score test of goodness of fit was used to test the hypotheses. The null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The finding of the study revealed that school site/location, school medical facilities and school laboratories have significant Influence on the Management of Secondary Schools in Aba Education zone of Abia State of Nigeria. It was recommended among others that educational

administrators should ensure that schools are sited/ located in areas that will encourage effective teaching and learning. The Government should ensure that sufficient medical facilities are provided for teachers and students so as to encourage effective and efficient teaching and learning process in schools. Also, the educational administrators should ensure that school laboratories are stocked with sufficient chemicals, equipment and functional instruments in schools so as to enable teachers and students carryout effective experiment and practical. The implications of the findings were highlighted and Conclusion drawn based on the study.

Keywords: School, Plant, Management, and Quality Delivery

Introduction

Education is widely acknowledged as a fundamental driver of national development, and the quality of its delivery depends significantly on the adequacy and effective management of school plants. The term *school plant* encompasses all physical facilities and resources in an educational institution, including classrooms, laboratories, libraries, workshops, furniture, equipment, and recreational spaces. These facilities form the backbone of teaching and learning processes, and their proper management is essential for achieving desired educational outcomes (Nwankwo, 2015).

In Nigeria, secondary education serves as a critical stage in preparing students for higher education, vocational training, and participation in the workforce. However, the effectiveness of this level of education is often undermined by poor infrastructure and weak management of school plants. The Aba Education Zone of Abia State, a region characterized by rapid urbanization and economic activity, faces unique challenges in this regard. Many schools in the zone struggle with dilapidated buildings, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate laboratories, and insufficient maintenance culture. These deficiencies compromise the quality of instruction, reduce student motivation, and hinder the attainment of educational goals (Okeke, 2018).

School plant management involves planning, utilization, maintenance, and evaluation of facilities to ensure optimal use. Effective management guarantees that resources are equitably distributed, properly maintained, and aligned with educational objectives. Unfortunately, in the Nigerian context, challenges such as inadequate funding, lack of professional facility managers, and weak

policy implementation often undermine these processes (Ogunyemi, 2017). The result is a widening gap between educational demand and the capacity of schools to provide quality services.

The importance of assessing school plant management lies in its direct link to quality assurance in education. Quality delivery in secondary schools requires not only competent teachers and relevant curricula but also adequate and functional facilities. For instance, science education cannot be effectively taught without well-equipped laboratories, and literacy development is hampered without access to functional libraries. Thus, evaluating how school plants are managed provides insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the education system and guides policymakers in making informed decisions (Eze, 2019).

Furthermore, global frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4, emphasize inclusive and equitable quality education. Achieving this goal in Abia State requires deliberate efforts to improve school plant management. By assessing the current state of facilities and their management practices, stakeholders can identify areas needing intervention, such as renovation, expansion, or modernization. This will not only enhance the quality of secondary education but also contribute to human capital development, social equity, and economic growth in the region.

In summary, the background to this study underscores the critical role of school plant management in ensuring quality delivery of secondary education. The Aba Education Zone provides a relevant context for examining these issues, given its unique challenges and opportunities. The study seeks to highlight the extent to which school plant management practices influence educational outcomes and to recommend strategies for improvement, thereby contributing to sustainable educational development in Abia State.

Education is regarded as machinery for development process for bringing positive change in that society. The primary aim of the teaching and learning process is to bring about in the learner desirable change in behavior through critical thinking.(Bokova,2015) The process does not take place in a vacuum but rather in the environment structured to facilitate learning. The school comprises the site, buildings, play grounds, health clinics and all forms of school equipment and all other facilities.(Asiabaka, 2015). The school plant is also known as the controlled environment which facilitates teaching and learning process as well as being of the occupants.

A good school plant enhances better school programmers and the community needs by providing a place for psychological and physical safety for students and teachers and enhance the quality and

quantity of instructions. Oyesola (2017), states that the school plant availability is to satisfy educational goals which have been predetermined by educational planners. School plant availability and utilization include school location, instructional space, administrative space, classroom facilities, recreational facilities which are relevant in the teaching and learning process in the educational system. The rate at which these spaces may enhance proper teaching and learning depends on the location of structure and facilities within the school environment. A proper school plant in terms of location, structure and facilities would encourage effective teaching and learning and enhance better learning environment.

The physical needs of staff and students can only be met by ensuring safe structures, adequate sanitary facilities, balanced visual environment, an appropriate thermal environment and sufficient accommodation of their work and relaxation. However, Akpakwu (2022) states that school plant should start and end with the students and staff. This means that school facilities should be designed to satisfy the physical and emotional needs of both staff and students. The emotional needs of both staff and students can be met by creating conducive and pleasant surroundings, a friendly environment and an inspiring school environment that is capable of increasing students' academic performance. The teaching and learning process involves large number of learners coming together to acquire knowledge. In view of the foregoing, this is not possible without physical spaces, and facilities which aid teaching and learning. A well developed curriculum would not succeed if it is not supported with adequate facilities. A well trained teacher who can improvise would not succeed if he or she does not have the minimum facilities to work with. Indeed, teaching and learning and other sporting activities of the school can only successfully take place in a conducive learning environment. The school plant therefore has to create favorable environments for teachers to use their creativity and knowledge in teaching and for the students to learn properly (Elujekwute, 2025).

In this similar vein, the selection of school site or location is one aspect of the school plant planning that is very important and should be taken seriously by the educational administrators. The school site/location should be such that is accessible for students and teachers for effective teaching and learning. The school site/location is an essential part of school plant planning as well as educational planning because of its significant influence on effective and efficient teaching and learning process, the adequacy of school site/location is established by determining the accessibility of the site or location to students and teachers. The location of the school affects the students and teachers performance. Schools that are located in urban areas perform better than their counter parts in the rural areas (Adesine, 2022).

Effective teaching and learning of science can only take place in a school that has a well equipped and maintained laboratory. According to Ada (2016) school laboratory is an inseparable part of teaching and learning in both secondary and tertiary institutions and should be properly planned to serve the purpose of its existence in the school. The contribution

of the school laboratory is enormous if the laboratory is properly planned, maintained and managed; it encourages students' interest in learning of science while it helps the science teachers in teaching, carrying out experiment, research and professional development.

The proper care of building, lighting, effective ventilation and attractive furniture should be paramount in the mind of all state holders in education. However, Nwachukwu (2017) states that most safe health measures to be taken in schools should be proper care of buildings, number of lighting, effective ventilation suitable and attractive furniture. Other important considerations include ample-supply to safe drinking water, accident free and clean play fields, adequate storage facilities especially first aid box and other health facilities, insect free and control measures and food hygienic. This is because the performance of an individual in an educational organization depends on the level of health care that is given to such a person. School management is concerned with formulation of plans programs and policies. According to Asemah (2020) school management involves activities as planning, organizing, programming, staffing, budgeting, coordinating, reporting and evaluation. Management is the effective organization and utilization of the human and material resources in a particular school or system for the achievement of identified objectives in educational organization. It is also a social process which is designed to ensure the cooperation, participation, intervention and involvement of others in the effective achievement of given or predetermined objective.

Educational management is a variety of sequential and related activities carried out in order to effectively and efficiently meet the goals of teaching and learning in relation to the needs of the society, since the management of education in the state is in different levels, school administrators must develop certain strategies for carrying out their duties. In doing this, certain administrative strategies are used by school managers to enhance the proper maintenance of school plant in secondary schools.

Statement of the Problem

It is clear that the Nigeria government has good motives to fulfill secondary school educational policy. It has been observed that secondary education has experienced critical environmental issues

in attaining the educational goals in Abia State of Nigeria. These include; school site/location, medical facilities, provision of functional school laboratories, provision of instructional materials and among others. If only education is the process of bringing desirable changes into the behavior of human beings for self use and the society, then this educational goals can only be achieved through effective and efficient management. This can be achieved when there are adequate school facilities, functional laboratories, libraries, instructional materials, medical facilities among other educational resources. It has been observed that there seems to be no enabling environment to enhance the management of public secondary schools in Aba Education zone of Abia State of Nigeria. In view of the above the staff may not be eager, encouraged or willing to teach due to inadequate infrastructural facilities and inadequate enabling environment. This greatly affects teacher's morale because is not located in a convenient environment, and also the essential facilities such as medical facilities, laboratories and libraries are insufficient for both teachers and students to achieve effective teaching and learning process. This is because inadequate provision of infrastructural facilities for an enhanced school learning environment has manifested in most schools today and their ineffective use lead to poor academic performance. It is a fact that teachers' moral is likely to affect the students either positively or negatively because of inadequate provision of equipped laboratories and provision of health care in secondary schools in Aba Education zone of Abia State of Nigeria. This is because observations by the stakeholders and educational administrators revealed that the Nigeria educational institutions are faced with the problem of insufficient funds necessary to carry out their educational activities. It is against this background that the problem of this study is to assess the influence of school plant on the management of secondary schools in Aba Education zone of Abia State in areas of school site/location, medical facilities and provision of functional laboratory facilities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of school plant on the management of secondary schools in Aba Education zone of Abia State of Nigeria. Specifically the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the influence of school site/location on management of secondary schools in Aba Education zone of Abia State of Nigeria.
2. Determine the influence of medical facilities on management of secondary schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. In what ways do school site/location influence management of secondary school in Aba Education zone of Abia State of Nigeria?
2. To what extent do school medical facilities influence management of secondary schools?

Method

S/N	ITEMS	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	N	Σfx	\bar{X}	Decision
1	school plant management does not influence teaching and learning	80	30	10	80	200	510	2.55	Agree
2	Conducting effective school plant management is a waste of time and only complicate learning.	100	60	25	15	200	645	3.23	Agree
3	The implementation of checking of lesson note for classroom instruction improves the cognitive abilities of students.	54	55	28	13	150	450	3.0	Agree
4	Using school plant approach makes teaching/learning activities concrete.	48	52	28	22	150	426	2.84	Agree
	Cluster Mean							2.67	Agree

Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. This research was conducted in Aba Education Zone of Abia State. The population of the study was *two thousand, seven hundred and forty-nine (2749)* teachers, out of which two hundred students (200) teachers constituted the sample of the study using simple random sampling. The instrument for data collection was structured self constructed questionnaire titled Assessment of School Plant Management for Quality Delivery of secondary education Questionnaire (ASPMQDQ). The questionnaire was validated by experts in Department of Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation. All were from the Faculty of Education, Abia State University. For the reliability of the instrument, the data collected was analyzed using Cronbach Alpha Correlation Co-efficient which yielded 0.84. The coefficient indicated high internal consistency which proved that the instrument was reliable to be used for field work. The data collected was analyzed using mean.

Results

Research Question 1: In what ways do school site/location influence management of secondary school in Aba Education zone of Abia State of Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean responses on the ways school site/location influence management of secondary school in Aba Education zone of Abia State of Nigeria

Table 1 shows that all items, have mean score that is above the mean cut off point of 2.50. Precisely, items 1, 2, 3, and 4 have mean scores of 2.55, 3.32, 3.0, and 2.84. This implies that respondents agree that: school site/location influence management of secondary school in Aba Education zone of Abia State of Nigeria.

Research Question 2

How does a school medical facility influence management of secondary schools in Aba Education Zone of Abia State?

Table 2: Mean responses on how medical facilities influence management of secondary schools in Aba Education Zone of Abia State.

S/N	ITEMS	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	N	Σfx	\bar{X}	Decision
5	Teacher managing without Infrastructural might not achieve the desired aim.	100	60	25	15	200	645	3.23	Agree
6	Selection of school plant method by the principal should be based on its appropriateness for the intended learners.	80	30	10	80	200	510	2.55	Agree
7	The incompetence of Principal ad Head of Departments to improvise school plant is responsible for poor performance of learners.	100	60	25	15	200	645	3.23	Agree
8	Teaching has not been optimal because teachers are not Supervised.	80	40	20	60	200	540	2.70	Agree
	Cluster Mean							2.70	Agree

Table 2 revealed that items 5, 6, 7 and 8 have mean scores above the cut off point of 2.5. Precisely, they have 3.23, 2.55, 3.23, and 2.70 which implies that respondents agree that, school medical facility influences management of secondary schools in Aba Education Zone of Abia State.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding of this study revealed that there is a significant influence of school site/location on management of secondary schools in Aba Education zone of Abia State of Nigeria. The finding agrees with the views of Adesina (2012) who stated that the school site/location influences the students and teachers academic performance. Schools that are located in urban areas perform better than their counter parts in the rural areas. The site for the building of the school should be considered as important to educational programmers as the classroom and other instructional activities. Adebayo (2018) observes that the level of negligence of school plant planning in Nigeria educational system and in Aba Education zone of Abia State in particular is rather appalling. Adebayo further maintained that a casual visit to any of the secondary schools in the study area would reveal the extent to which these educational institutions decayed. The educational facilities at all levels are in a terrible condition due to lack of planning.

The second finding of this study revealed that there is influence school medical facility on management of secondary schools in Zone 'B' Senatorial Districts of Abia State, Nigeria. This finding is in agreement with the opinion of Nwachukwu (2017) who stated that most safe health measures to be taken by Educational administrators should be proper care of buildings, number of lighting, effective verification, suitable and attractive furniture and among other. Other important considerations include ample supply of safe drinkable water, accident free and clean playfield, adequate storage facilities especially first aid box and health facilities, insect free and control measures and food hygiene, this is because the performance of students and teachers of educational organization depends on the level of good health care. This implies that the provision of good health care services by educational administrators for students and teachers will motivate them to work harder and increase their performance. This is so because their families would no longer suffer going to hospital where they may not given proper attention mostly when there is no fund at hand.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that, school site, medical facilities, instructional materials and recreational facilities have significant influence on students' academic performance in Aba Education Zone of Abia State. Many people have withdrawn their wards from public school because of the problem of school plant. Most buildings are death traps, school

compound overgrown with weeds, school fence have all fallen off, roof of building are leaking, no pipe borne water, no bore-hole in most schools, no functional library, laboratory, security is lacking in most school, the list is unending and no end is in sight because the teachers working in this public schools are owed. The stack reality is that something urgent has to done to restore confidence in the mind of parents and students alike.

Recommendations

Based on these findings the study is making the following recommendations;

1. Specialized school buildings, rooms and workshops location should also take into consideration, distances and time required for teachers and students to shift from them to regular classes or vice versa.
2. School recreations/playgrounds should also be re-designed in a way that all sporting activities are centralized. It will be easier for teachers and students' officers on duty to promptly direct students to their classes after break periods or at the end of school activities that have to be done on the playgrounds.

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