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REVIEW ARTICLE

UTILIZATION OF EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL FACILITIES AMONG STUDENTS IN A SELECTED TERTIARY INSTITUTION IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Background: Educational school facilities are indispensable in the teaching and learning process because they enhance understanding, application and retention of knowledge. Despite the importance of these educational facilities in increasing the performance of students, studies assessing their utilization are scarce. **Objectives:** The objective of the study was to assess the utilization of educational school facilities among students of a Nursing training institution in South East Nigeria. **Methods:** The study was a cross sectional, descriptive, non-experimental, questionnaire based study. A stratified sampling technique was used to select 130 students from first, second and third year who participated in the study. **Results:** There was poor utilization of the demonstration room partly due to the poor equipment of the laboratory and the school policy of insisting that the student replaces any damaged item. There was poor utilization of the computer laboratory for learning mostly due to the non-availability of internet services. **Conclusion:** We recommend that government and Non-Governmental agencies join hands in re-equipping the educational facilities and provide the needed manpower so as to make the facilities suitable and conducive for students.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a means of transmitting the culture of the society, establishing the present and improving or changing the future from one generation to another. It is the key factor in the development and advancement of the society (McCowan, 2019). To a very large extent, national development has been pioneered by those who are professionals in their field of practice and this would not have been possible without the instrumentality of the educational system. Higher education system plays a vital role in the overall development of the country which encompasses aspects such as social, economic and industrial progress (Ramli, 2018). Learning is the act of impacting knowledge, skills and ideas to the learner which will lead to permanent change in behavior of the individual in the society (Esien, 2019). For students to effectively learn, there must be adequate educational school facilities to enhance learning. Educational facilities are the material resources that are used by learners and teachers so as to aid the teaching and learning process. The educational school facilities include the school buildings like the classrooms, assembly halls, libraries, laboratories as well as teaching aids like charts and models.

School facility is one of the factors that ensure quality education by enabling the teacher to do his/her work well and helping the learners to learn effectively (Ramli, 2018; Lawanson, 2011). The teachers have to make effective use of the facilities in order to make learning interesting, it helps teachers in preparation and delivery of their lectures effectively. The condition of educational school facilities has an important impact on student performance and teacher effectiveness (Ibrahim., 2016). On the other hand, educational facilities enhances learning and academic performance among students. Educational facilities are a major factor in ensuring quality education (Yangambi, 2023). They are indispensable in the teaching and learning process because it enhances understanding, application and retention of what is being discussed. Effective utilization of educational facilities makes the learners employ most of their senses so as to make learning easier. A growing body of research has found that educational school facilities can have a profound impact on the performance of both the teachers and the students (Penn State University, 2015). Study by Ramli and Zain noted that educational facilities among other factors affect the academic performance of students (Ramli and Zain, 2018). Both Ekundayo, 2008 and Akomolafe and Adesua, 2016 demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between educational school facilities and students' level of motivation and achievement in the affective and the psychomotor

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domains. This suggests that when the school facilities are put in place and are being used, better performance are expected from the students in both the affective and psychomotor domains of learning. Both Adigeb *et al.* (2017) and Ahmodu *et al.* (2018) agree that school facilities and their components were significantly related to students' performance, they recommended that stakeholders in education should continue to lay more emphasis on these facilities in order to improve the academic performance of students. According to Walberg's theory of educational productivity, environment in which learning takes place is a fundamental element to consider when evaluating a student's performance.⁷ This entails that the school facilities (which includes the environment) play an important role in determining the student's performance. When the school environment is not conducive, the students are likely not to study well and this affects their performance negatively. Whereas, when the school environment is conducive for learning, the students study well and their level of performance increases. This further buttresses the fact that the educational school facilities can have a profound impact on both the teacher and the student outcomes (Penn State University, 2015). The conditions of the school facilities are very important because they greatly impact on learners' educational outcomes (Yangambi, 2023; Olugbenga, 2019). When educational facilities are in good conditions, their utilization increases. In keeping with the Thorndike's law of effect when the students make use of the school facilities and there is improvement in their academic performance and increase in their level of knowledge, they continue using the facilities repeatedly.

A cross-section of the public students, teachers, educational authorities, curriculum planners and government officers express growing concern over the alarming rate of students' low performance in school. Parents blame teachers, teachers blame parents and government and policy makers have their share of blame on students' academic and learning process (Adigeb *et al.*, 2017). Despite the importance of educational school facilities in increasing the performance of students, there are few studies done on the assessment of the use of educational school facilities by students. The few studies were among secondary school students. To the best of the knowledge of the researchers, there is no research done on assessment of use of educational school facilities by students of College of Nursing in South East Nigeria. It becomes therefore pertinent that a research on utilization of school facilities by this population is carried out. This study was carried out to assess the utilization of educational school facilities among students of a Nursing training institution in South East Nigeria. Specifically, the researchers sought to identify the educational school facilities that the Nursing students use, determine the frequency of using the facilities and determine the reasons for which the nursing students use or do not use the facilities.

METHODOLOGY

The study is a cross sectional, descriptive, non-experimental, questionnaire based study carried out among level 1, 2 and 3 students of a Nursing training institution in Anambra State, South-East Nigeria. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics committee of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Teaching Hospital Nnewi before commencing the study. Using the Taro Yamane's formula, the minimum sample size was calculated to be 119 (after inclusion of 10% attrition). A stratified sampling technique was used to select the students from first, second and

third year who will participate in the study. A total number of 153 consenting students participated in the study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire which has four sections. The questionnaire passed face and content validity for appropriateness, clarity and relevance to the study. To test the reliability of the instrument, a split half test was conducted using 10 nursing students of another nursing training institution with similar characteristics with the study population. The test was used to look out for internal reliability of the instrument. Data collected was presented using frequency tables. The analysis was done using simple statistical methods (tables and percentages).

RESULTS

A total of 153 questionnaires were shared while only 130 copies of completely filled questionnaire were returned making it a return rate of 84.97%. Table 1 shows the socio-demographic variables of the respondents. It shows that 47.69% of the students are between the ages of 15-20 years, 46.15% are between 21-26 years and 6.15% are ≥ 27 years. Our study shows that only 66.15% of the students often used the library, while only 36.43% of the students used the demonstration room (practical lab) often (Table 2).

Table 1. Socio-demographic features of the study participants

Socio-demographics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age group		
15-20 years	62	47.69
21-26 years	60	46.15
≥ 27 years	8	6.15
Gender		
Female	107	82.31
Male	23	17.69
Level of study		
First Year	42	32.31
Second Year	38	29.23
Third Year	50	38.46
Total	130	100.0

Most (70.00%) of the students rarely used the computer lab. The reasons for not using the different educational school facilities are as follows: 60.77% of the students do not use the library because it is overcrowded, 55.38% stated that there are outdated textbooks in the library, 60.77% stated that the demonstration room is crowded, 60.77% stated that there are few models for practical, 88.46% stated that one is required to pay for any item one spoils in the demonstration room, 50.77% stated that there are few computers in the lab (Table 3). The reasons for using some of the school facilities include: 91.53% stated that they use the library in order to gain knowledge, 83.85% stated that they use the demonstration room in order to gain knowledge, 38.46% stated that they use the computer lab in order to gain knowledge, 33.85% stated they use the computer lab in order to get internet access, 86.92% use the demonstration lab in order to gain practical knowledge (Table 4).

DISCUSSION

Findings of the study revealed that the educational school facilities with the highest level of utilization was the library. All the students reported having used the school library. As much as 66.15% of the students uses the library often. A lesser utilization of the library was reported by Bernard and Dullein which they revealed that only 77.9% of the respondents use the school library (Bernard and Dulle, 2014). Contrary to our

study where 66.15% of the respondents used the library often, the study by Bernard and Dullerevealed that only 40% of the respondents use the library often (Bernard (Bernard and Dulle, 2014).

77.50% of the students do not use the computer for learning (Dei, 2018). Outlined reasons for poor utilization of the computer laboratory facility included the unconduciveness of the computer laboratory as it is hot and crowded.

Table 2. Frequency of Utilization of educational facilities by the study participants

School facilities	Frequency of Utilization				Total frequency (%)
	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
Sick bay	8 (6.15)	3 (2.31)	90 (69.23)	29 (22.31)	130 (100.0)
Computer lab	13 (10.00)	9 (6.92)	91 (70.00)	17 (13.08)	130 (100.0)
Demonstration room	47 (36.15)	66 (50.77)	16 (12.31)	1 (0.77)	130 (100.0)
Library	86 (66.15)	39 (30.00)	5 (3.85)	0 (0.00)	130 (100.0)
Lounge	12 (9.23)	9 (6.92)	71 (54.62)	38 (29.23)	130 (100.0)
Canteen	39 (30.00)	22 (16.92)	44 (33.85)	25 (19.23)	130 (100.0)
Football field	26 (20.00)	20 (15.38)	55 (42.31)	29 (22.31)	130 (100.0)
Basketball court	7 (5.38)	14 (10.77)	76 (58.46)	33 (25.38)	130 (100.0)

Table 3. Reasons for utilization of the educational facilities by the study participants

Reason	Yes	No	Total frequency (%)
I use the library in order to gain knowledge	119 (91.53)	11 (8.46)	130 (100.0)
I use the demonstration room in order to gain knowledge	109 (83.85)	21 (16.15)	130 (100.0)
I use the computer lab in order to gain knowledge	50 (38.46)	80 (61.54)	130 (100.0)
I use the computer lab in order to get internet access	44 (33.85)	86 (66.15)	130 (100.0)
I use the demonstration lab in order to gain practical knowledge	113(86.92)	17 (13.08)	130 (100.0)

Table 4. Reasons against utilization of the educational facilities by the study participants

Reason	Yes	No	Total frequency (%)
Library is too hot	36 (27.69)	94 (72.31)	130 (100.0)
Library is overcrowded	79 (60.77)	51 (39.23)	130 (100.0)
Library is noisy	34 (26.15)	96 (73.85)	130 (100.0)
There are outdated textbooks in the library	72 (55.38)	58 (44.62)	130 (100.0)
There are few textbooks in the library	64 (49.23)	66 (50.77)	130 (100.0)
The demonstration room is crowded	79 (60.77)	51 (39.23)	130 (100.0)
There are few models in the demonstration room	79 (60.77)	51 (39.23)	130 (100.0)
One pays for any spoilt item in the demonstration room	115 (88.46)	15 (11.54)	130 (100.0)
The computer lab is too hot	36 (27.69)	94 (72.31)	130 (100.0)
There are few computers in the lab	66 (50.77)	64 (49.23)	130 (100.0)

There is high utilization of the library in the current study. This is in spite of the poor state of the library as noted by the respondents. Notable among their complaints are the overcrowding of the library (60.77%) and the non-availability of books in the library (49.23%). Even when the books are available, they are out dated (55.38%). Ekundayo made similar observation when he reported in his study that 56.2% of his respondents complained that their school library was poorly stocked with books (Ekundayo, 2008). Contrary to the use of the school library, the demonstration room or practical laboratory did not enjoy widespread utilization as only 36.15% used it often. Similar poor utilization of the laboratory facility was reported by Dike and Salisu where it was noted that only 23.50% of the respondents use the laboratory facilities (Dike and Salisu, 2015).

Most (88.46%) of the respondents identified that the school policy of insisting that the student replaces any damaged item or equipment in the laboratory is the main discouragement for the use of the demonstration room or practical laboratory. Besides this, 60.77% stated that there are few models for practical in the laboratory as one of the reasons for not using the demonstration room. This is in line with the findings of Ekundayo which revealed that 50.3% of their respondents complained of poor equipment of the laboratories for learning (Ekundayo, 2008). The analysis showed that there is poor utilization of the computer laboratory for learning. More than half (70.00%) of the respondents do not use the computer lab. This is in line with the findings of Dei which showed that

Some of the students noted that internet services are rarely available in the computer laboratory while in contrast, they can access the internet through their phones. This is in line with the findings of Ugwuogo and Udu (2019) where it was reported that the respondents rarely utilize the computer.¹⁶ This may be related to the widespread availability of the more user friendly android phone. From the findings of the study, it is recommended that the government at various levels, non-Governmental Organisations and other Stakeholders in education should from time to time re-equip the educational facilities and provide the needed manpower so as to make the facilities suitable and conducive for students to learn. These will help to improve the academic performance of the students. The school authorities should in turn ensure proper maintenance of the available facilities. The researcher also recommends that the research should be done using a larger and more heterogeneous population.

CONCLUSION

Sound education is needed in development of human resources for the development of the country. The citizens of every country are important assets because their contributions to the society helps the nation to progress and develop. Schools are responsible for educating the students and developing them in to responsible citizens that will contribute positively to the growth of the country. Thus, it is essential that the facilities in school which are all important for imparting of knowledge should be made available and be of high quality and also be

up- to- date and students should be encouraged to use them. Education is an indispensable instrument in the growth of human community. In every educational setting, there is need for effective utilization of the school facilities so as to enhance learning. School facilities are one of the basic educational requirements that must be maintained in terms of safety and quality. Students cannot acquire knowledge alone only through text books or classrooms. The use of educational school facilities is of great importance in ensuring that the students get other information needed by them in their academic pursuit and thus increase their academic performance.

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Ethical approval: The research related to human use has complied with all the relevant national regulations, institutional policies, and in accordance with the tenets of the Helsinki Declaration, and has been approved by Nnamdi Azikiwe University Teaching Hospital Ethics Committee (Approval number: NAUTH/CS/74/Vol.15/VER.3/140/2023/117).

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