

Influence of School Climate on Secondary School Students Academic Performance in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria

Ojukwu, Mercy Chiemenam

Department of Educational Management the University of America, Curacao

ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of school climate on secondary school students academic performance in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria influence of school climate on secondary school students academic performance in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. It specifically sought to ascertain the extent to which school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population consisted of the 13,060 students, that is, 4764 male students and 8296 female students; 8,991 students currently studying in the 31 Government owned secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone. To ensure that a representative sample was chosen, 10% of the population was drawn. Thus, giving the sample size of teachers to be 1360. 1137 out of 1360 copies of the instrument were retrieved, signifying 96.83% return of duly filled copies of the administer instrument. A self-structured questionnaire developed by the researcher called school climate and academic performance of students Scale (SCA-POSS) was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was face validated by three (3) research experts: one in Measurement and Evaluation and two others in Education Administration and Planning Department. Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate was used to ascertain the internal consistency of the entire instrument which is 97. The study utilized descriptive survey research design. Data collected for this study was used to analyze the one research question using mean, grand mean and standard deviation, the hypothesis was tested using t-test statistics. The result obtained from the analysis showed that school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent. The study revealed also that there is no significance difference in the mean scores of urban and rural students on the extent to which school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended, among others that government through the principal should establish friendly atmosphere in the school and eliminate all harsh statements because it can keep teachers from interacting, participating and exchanging ideas in discussing important issues in respect to academic excellence.

Keywords: School Climate, Secondary School Students and Academic Performance

INTRODUCTION

Education is the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits [1,2]. In the contemporary world and Nigeria to be specific, education is a very vital tool that is used to succeed. Why? Education inspires students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence [3]. The concept of school climate has received significant attention in educational research yet the definition remains imprecise. With the goal of identifying ways to improve student academic performance, it is critical to

develop a clear and commonly held understanding of the phenomenon of school climate [4]. Many practitioners and researchers have used a variety of terms to describe parts or all of school climate. These include school culture, school environment, ethos, school personality and more. The school climate influences student performance through students attachment, commitment, involvement and most importantly, through the schools' resources and climate [5,6,7] remarked that:

School climate refers to the intangibles that is the physical environment is conducive to teaching and learning, safe and welcoming; social environment which promotes interaction and communication among students, faculty, staff and the community; emotional which is an effective environment for students, faculty, staff and community that creates self-esteem and a sense of belonging and academic environment which is endorsed with learning and self-fulfillment for students, faculty and staff that comprises the physical and psychological aspect of a school that proved the environment necessary for teaching and learning to take place.

[8], quality of school in regard to school climate is based on patterns of school life, experiences, norms goals values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structure. Scholar such as [9] have as well asserted that school climate factors such as social economic status, parent involvement, attendance, school size teaching-learning resources and interpersonal relationships affect teachers' job satisfaction and this can affect student academic performance. [10], noted that there is low learners' performance due to lack of management, skills and capacities, non-upgrading of teachers based on qualifications and skills as well as a lack of teacher commitment. Education International Survey Report [11], also established that in East African countries, teachers had low morale due to lack of salaries, heavy teaching loads and poor conditions of service which is also applicable in Nigeria. [12], in his study opined that a positive, respectful school climate provides a solid foundation for supporting students' academic achievements and development of positive attitudes and behaviour. Students who are connected to school (i.e., feel safe, perceive themselves to be more treated fairly by adult are happy to be in school, feel they are a part of the school community, and feel close to people at school) experience less distress and engage in fewer risk taking behaviours. It was also asserted by some earlier researchers that the way a person perceives his surroundings influences the way a person actually behaves in those environments because some environment are more conducive than others. This

goes a long way to show that the surroundings or climate of a school would surely have a great influence on the people therein. A school environment or climate may indicate a great deal of cooperation among the various groups in the school setting while another might reveal a climate of tension, friction and even lack of cooperation among the groups. That is to say that the school climate of school could influence the performance of both teachers and students positively or negatively as the case might be. In one school, the principal and students may find pleasure in working together while in another school, it might be discontent among these schools functionaries. Also, in one school, teachers might appear well organized, competent and may exhibit confidence in whatever they do, whereas in another school, there might be tension as the principal losses control [8]. It has been perceived that the school as a social organization for learning and exchange of ideas should be conducive for learning and for the realization of academic excellence among the students. However in an attempt to realize the goals and aspirations of academic excellence in school, the relationship between the superordinate and subordinates (teachers and students) should be cordial. Such conducive work environments should ensure open, closed, controlled paternal, familiar and autonomies climate [11]. It has been observed that physical facilities especially classrooms are inadequate in many public schools in Enugu Education Zone. This resulted into overcrowded classes which is inimical to good academic performance. It is also

noticeable in most schools in Enugu Education Zone that some teachers are teaching some subjects that are not in their area of specialization due to lack of adequate qualified in their area of specialization due to lack of adequate qualified teachers and this may affect effective teaching and learning. Also, in some schools there are dilapidated buildings, ill equipped laboratories, obsolete equipments, empty libraries at times with archaic textbooks and unconducive learning environment. All these can affect teaching and learning and students' academic performance [9] discovered that a positive school climate can yield educational and psychological outcomes for students and personnel; whereas a negative climate can prevent optimal learning and development. [7], noted that facilities availability seems to be the most favourable followed by teachers' availability, physical appearance while security seems to be the least among all. He also noted that a positive, respectful school climate provides a solid foundation for supporting students' academic performance and development of positive attitudes and behaviour. Students who are connected to school (i.e., feel safe, perceive themselves to be more treated fairly by adult are happy to be in school, feel they are a part of the

Statement of the Problem

It has been observed that lots of renovation work has gone into the public secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone. Government has improved in the renovation of infrastructure, ensured prompt payment of salaries, approval of study leave with pay and training and retraining of teachers through seminars, workshops and have given allowances to teachers to make the school climate to be

school community, and feel close to people at school) experience less distress and engage in fewer risk taking behaviours. With respect to location as a variable that influences academic performance, [12] opined that school location is known to influence the student learning through quality of teaching staff, class size and availability of infrastructure. Rural-urban location has been found all over the world to be an important indicator or difference in performance both for teachers and students academic performance. Urban schools, located in towns enjoy social amenities like good road, electricity, pipe borne water and good means of transportation, with all these available will influence the academic performance of the students. In the rural schools the lack of social amenities in remote rural area will result in opposite of what is obtainable in the urban areas. Therefore, it can be stated that school climate, if possible can provide an enriching environment, both for personal growth and academic success. Considering all these issues, this study examined the influence of school climate on the students' Academic performance in secondary schools in Enugu Education zone.

receptive. Despite all, there is still poor academic performance among secondary school students within the zone. This is very worrisome. It is the dwindling performance in relation to school climates that constitutes the problem which this study intends to examine in knowledge and learning. In addressing the problem, the following questions were raised:

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to examine the influence of school climate on secondary school students academic performance in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. ascertain the extent to which school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria

Research Question

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent does school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu

Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was formulated and tested at .05 level of significance.

H0₁: There is no significant difference in the mean rating scores of urban and rural students on the extent

to which school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria

Research Methodology

The researcher adopted descriptive survey research design for this study because it permits the collection of original data and describes the condition as they exist in their natural setting. The population for the study consisted of the 13,060 students, that is, 4764 male students and 8296 female students; 8,991 students currently studying in the 31 Government owned secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone (Source: Planning, Research and Statistics Department, Post Primary School Management Board (PPSMB), Enugu. 2018/2019 Session, 2018 Enugu State Annual Schools Census). To ensure that a representative sample was chosen in accordance with [11], 10% of the population was drawn. Thus, giving the sample size of students to be 1360. The instrument for data collection is a self-structured questionnaire developed by the researcher called school climate and academic performance of students Scale (SCA-POSS). It has 1 cluster with 11 items developed to assist the researcher provide clues that helped raise much needed data that were used to address the 1 research question and test the 1 research hypothesis formulated to guide the study. The response format of the

instrument is a 4 point scale of very great extent, great extent, little extent and very little extent. Each response option has a numerical value assigned to it as follows: Very great extent (VGE)----4 points; Great extent (GE)-----3 points; Little Extent (LE)---2 points and Very little extent (VLE)—1 point. An introductory letter was attached to the instrument stating the purpose of the study for the respondents easy of reference. The instrument was validated by three experts (one in measurement and evaluation and 2 others in Education Administration and Planning Department) with the estimated overall reliability coefficient of 0.97 for one cluster using Cronbach Alph Reliability tool. Finally out of 1360 copies of instrument distributed, 1317 copies of the instrument were retrieved, signifying 96.83% return of duly completed copies of the instrument school climate and academic performance of students Scale (SCA-POSS). The one research question formulated to guide the study was answered using mean, grand mean and standard deviation; t-test statistics was used to analyze the one research hypothesis. A cut-off was determined by using real limit of numbers as stated below:

- 3.50 - 4.00 VGE
- 2.50 - 3.49 GE
- 1.50 - 2.49 LE
- 0.00 - 1.49 VLE

For the null research hypothesis, the decision rule is that if the critical t-value is greater or equal to t-table value at a given degree of freedom (n₁ + n₂- 2) the null hypotheses of no significant different

was rejected, if on the other hand the calculated t-value is less than the value of the t-critical from the table, then the null hypotheses was not rejected.

Data Analysis and Results

This section presents the results of the study in accordance with the research question and hypothesis that guided the study. The analyzed data were

presented in Table 1-2. Research Question 1: To what extent does school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school

students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean \bar{X}) Rating with Standard Deviation of the Extent to which School Climate Influence the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria

S/N	Items	Urban Students N=853		Rural Students N=464		Overall		Decision
		X_1	SD_1	X_2	SD_2	X_3	SD_3	
1.	Teachers positive relationships enhances their job satisfaction	2.77	1.11	3.26	1.29	3.02	1.20	GE
2.	Students certainty of their security influences their academic performance	3.29	0.81	3.34	0.94	3.31	0.88	GE
3.	Low morale due to lack of salaries affects students academic performance negatively	3.47	0.99	3.69	0.29	3.69	0.64	VGE
4.	Respectful school climate provides a solid foundation for supporting students' academic performance	3.56	0.95	3.65	0.88	3.61	0.91	VGE
5.	Respectful school climate provides a positive attitudes and behaviour	1.78	1.31	3.22	0.96	2.50	1.13	GE
6.	Heavy teaching loads makes students indisposed for serious academic exercise	1.15	0.44	3.29	0.71	2.22	0.93	LE
7.	Presence of security makes students engage in fewer risk taking behaviours.	3.39	0.92	2.71	1.49	3.05	1.21	GE
8.	Poor conditions of service makes teachers not to avail oneself to impart knowledge	2.99	1.13	3.29	0.95	3.14	1.04	GE
9.	Overcrowded classes is inimical to good academic performance	2.31	0.73	2.27	0.68	2.29	0.70	LE
10.	Dilapidated buildings, ill equipped laboratories, provide unfavorable environment for studies	3.62	0.71	2.72	0.69	3.17	0.70	GE
11.	Empty libraries with archaic textbooks and unconducive learning environment hinders students learning	3.88	0.48	1.14	0.52	2.51	0.52	GE
	Grand Mean	2.93	0.87	2.98	0.86	2.96	0.87	GE

Data in Table 1 indicates that of the 11 items of the extent to which school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria, the respondents agreed with 4 of the items (3 and 4) as they recorded mean scores of (3.69 and 3.61) to a very great extent, 7 of the items (1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 11) to a great extent with mean scores of (3.02, 3.31, 2.50, 3.05, 3.14, 3.17 and 2.51) and the remaining two items (6 and 9) to a little extent with mean scores of (2.22 and

2.29). The standard deviation for all the items raised is 0.88 which is small signifying that the responses are loosely clustered around the mean. The Table also shows that the respondents grand mean score for the overall items raised is (2.96). Following the guideline for the interpretation of the respondents data, the answers to research question one is that school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent.

Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant difference in the mean rating scores of urban and rural students on the extent to which school climate influence the academic

performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Table 2: t-test Result of the Mean Response Scores of Rural and Urban Students on the Extent to which School Climate Influence the Academic Performance Secondary School Students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Location	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Urban	853	2.93	0.87	1315	1.00	±1.96	NS Do not reject H ₀
Rural	464	2.98	0.86				

Significant at P < .05, df = 55, critical t-value = ±1.96

The t-test analysis in table 2 above indicates that the calculated t- value is 1.00 while the critical t-value is ±1.96 at .05 level of significance. This implies that the calculated t-value is less than the critical the critical t- value. Hence, there is no significant difference between the

mean response scores of urban and rural students on the extent to which school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria

DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY

For the discussion of the findings inherent in this study, research question 1 and the hypothesis that is related is treated together. Result of data analysis in Table 1 showed that school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent. The hypothesis tried to investigate if there is a significant difference between the mean response

scores of urban and rural students on the extent to which school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. The analysis of the t-test comparison according to Table 2 showed that the computed t (1.00) is less than the critical z-value (± 1.96) at .05 level of significance. With regard to the decision rule, hypothesis 1 shows that there is no significant difference between

the mean response scores of urban and rural students on the extent to which school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. This finding corroborates with [10] who opined that a positive, respectful school climate provides a solid foundation for supporting students' academic performance and development of positive attitudes and behaviour. For him, students who are connected to school (i.e., feel safe, perceive themselves to be more treated fairly by adult are happy to

be in school, feel they are a part of the school community, and feel close to people at school) experience less distress and engage in fewer risk taking behaviours. The finding further revealed that dilapidated buildings, ill equipped laboratories, obsolete equipments, empty libraries at times with archaic textbooks and unconducive learning environment can affect teaching and learning and students' academic performance. [12] with respect to located noted that school climate, if possible can provide an enriching environment, both for personal growth and academic success.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively from the above analysis and interpretations done and the information from related literature, it implies that school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent.

Hence, there is no significant difference between the mean response scores of urban and rural students on the extent to which school climate influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria

Educational Implications

The finding of this study holds implication for students and Educational Administrators in Enugu Education zone. As a result of exposure to poor learning environment, students would no longer want to study in rural areas because rural areas have no electricity, water supply, less teachers, less learning facilities and

infrastructure. Hence, efforts must be geared towards ensuring educational administrators to update their skills in order to effectively utilize administrative skills for learners in order to make them actualize their academic potentials so that students will not be at risk dropping from school.

RECOMMENDATION

On the basis of the implications of the study, the following recommendation is made; Government through the principal should establish friendly atmosphere in the school and eliminate all harsh

statements because it can keep teachers from interacting, participating and exchanging ideas in discussing important issues in respect to academic excellence.

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