

School Facilities Maintenance Culture Prevalent in Public Primary Schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State

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Abstract

This paper investigated school facilities maintenance culture in public primary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. To achieve the purpose, four research questions were raised. The survey research design was employed to explore the issue. The population consisted of the twenty-nine public primary schools in Egor Local Government Area. The sample for the study was 12 school heads drawn from the 12 sampled public primary schools in Egor Local Government Area, Edo state. A 20-item questionnaire was the instrument for data collection for the study. The instrument was validated and the Cronbach alpha statistic was used to ascertain the reliability. The data collected were analysed using mean and, standard deviation as well as independent sample t-test for the hypotheses test at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed that the level of the maintenance culture of school facilities was low; and there was no significant difference in the school maintenance culture of school facilities irrespective of gender, experience and location of public primary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. Based on the findings, it was recommended that there should be training and retraining of school heads on effective maintenance of school facilities through seminars, workshops and conferences.

Keywords: School Facilities, Maintenance, Culture and Prevalent

Introduction

The major concern of government all over the world is the attainment and sustenance of development. In the early sixties (1960s), development economists emphasized education as the hub of the growth of every society and socio-economic. This is because economic growth is driven by the productivity of a society's labour force where the productivity of any labour force is dependent on its education. As a result, virtually all societies give priority to the education of their citizens, ensuring that as many as possible of her citizens have quality access to education. Education is seen as a human capital formation agent and remains the *raison d'être* for the supply to respective societies through conscious and deliberate planning efforts (Nwadiani,

1998). Education is an instrument for achieving socio-economic growth and national development. In Nigeria, the Federal Government, through the National Policy on Education, regarded education as the greatest investment that the nation can make for the quick development of economic, political, social and human resources (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

Primary education is the foundation of formal education. It is the core of development and progress in modern societies. It is an essential component in the echelon of the educational system of every nation. In order to qualify for other levels of education one must first pass through the primary school, an institution upon which all other levels of education and educational achievements are built. It prepares the mind and trains the child for higher and tougher academic pursuits. It provides young learners with the fundamentals of reading, writing, calculation, skill acquisition, information as well as attitudes necessary for proper adjustment into society. In order words, it helps to eradicate/reduce illiteracy which is one of the strongest predictors of poverty

The role of quality primary education cannot be over emphasized in the development of any society. To effectively deliver quality primary education, certain inputs have to continually be put in place. One of such inputs is the school facilities which constitute the major influence on primary pupils' academic performance. School facilities are the entire school plants which school administrators, teachers and pupils harness, allocate and utilize for the smooth and efficient management of primary education for the main purpose of bringing about effective and purposive teaching and learning experience. School facilities consist of the school buildings, equipment, libraries, tables, desks and instructional materials. They play a pivotal role in the actualization of educational goals and objectives by satisfying the physical and emotional needs of the teachers and pupils of the school. They are those non-human materials which enable the teachers to be effective in the teaching process, and help the pupils to learn effectively.

In Nigeria, a number of studies have generally been carried out on school facilities. While some of the authors emphasized on the need for school facilities maintenance culture, others investigated the relationship between school facilities maintenance culture and students' academic performance. School facilities maintenance culture involves routine and programme inspections of facilities in order to detect early signs of wear and rear and other depreciating situations that may shorten the life span of such facilities, thus allying the danger that such facilities may pose to the end users (teachers and pupils). It is providing a clean and safe environment for primary school pupils and equally creating a physical setting that is appropriate and conducive for learning (United States Department of Education, 2003). It is recognized that the maintenance of school facilities is crucial to preventing wastage in school organizations and ensuring the effective utilization that would enhance maximum pupil productivity. School facilities maintenance is necessary as it assists both teachers and students or pupils to meet their educational needs. The maintenance culture of school facilities is an integral part of the management of the school. No meaningful teaching and learning can take place in the school without maintaining the facilities. Therefore, the need for adequate maintenance of these facilities is vital to attain the goals and objectives of primary education.

In Edo State, especially in the rural areas, most of the school buildings are dilapidated. Taiwo (2000) noted that the physical environment in most primary schools in African countries was not conducive to teaching and learning due to poor

maintenance culture. Out (2002) submitted that it was common to see primary schools without classrooms, windows and doors, with collapsed ceilings, damaged roofs, cracked walls, faded paint as well as broken down furniture and damaged infrastructure.

Adedokun (2011) stated that the non-maintenance of school facilities obstructed effective actualization of educational curriculum. In recent years, enrolment of students in Edo State public primary schools has continued to increase without the corresponding increase of school facilities thus encouraging much pressure on the available facilities. A cursory look at public-school structures in Edo State reveals that majority of the constructed school buildings have deteriorated and require urgent maintenance thus encouraging one to assume that the poor maintenance culture of school facilities could be due to the economic situation in the country and poor financial policy of the Government (Ehiamentolor, 2001). The resultant effects of poor maintenance of facilities on students and pedagogy cannot be over emphasized. When the environment is stimulating, teaching and learning are effective and motivating. But if the reverse is the case, students' personality and emotion would be adversely affected. Therefore, it becomes imperative to establish the level of the maintenance culture of primary school facilities in Edo State.

Statement of Problem

It has been observed that public primary schools especially are dotted with dilapidated classrooms and toilets. They are akin to death traps, thus, giving the impression that primary school maintenance culture in Egor Local Government Area is non-existent.

It appears that the lackadaisical attitude of the custodians of the facilities in the school has really resulted to the poor maintenance of the primary school facilities as the money meant for maintenance purposes was diverted for other uses. Unused materials are often abandoned and some are locked up in ware houses for months and sometimes years. Policies on the utilization of facilities are not effectively implemented in primary public schools in Egor Local Government Area and this has negatively affected the facilities maintenance culture. This study therefore, examined the maintenance culture of public primary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State

Purpose of the Study

This study sought to determine the level of the maintenance culture of public primary schools with particular reference to Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. The specific objectives were to:

- determine the level of the maintenance culture of school facilities in public primary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.
- find out if there was any difference in the maintenance culture of school facilities between rural and urban school in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.
- Establish if there was any difference in the maintenance culture of school facilities between experienced and inexperienced head teachers in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.
- ascertain if there was any difference in the maintenance culture of school facilities between male and female head-teachers in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

1. What is the level of the maintenance culture of school facilities in public primary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State?
2. Is there any difference in the school maintenance culture of school facilities between rural and urban schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State?
3. Is there any difference in school maintenance culture of school facilities between experienced and inexperience head teachers in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State?
4. Is there any difference in the school maintenance culture of school facilities between male and female head teachers in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State?

Hypotheses

Research questions 2, 3 and 4 were hypothesized

1. There is no significant difference in the maintenance culture of school facilities between rural and urban school in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.
2. There is no significant difference in the maintenance culture of school facilities between experienced and inexperienced head teachers in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.
3. There is no significant different in the maintenance culture of school facilities between male and female head teachers in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

Methods

This study employed the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consisted of twenty-nine (29) public primary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. A sample size of 12 public primary schools representing 41%, was randomly selected using the simple random sampling procedure. The instrument for they study was a 20-item questionnaire titled “School Facilities Maintenance Culture Questionnaire (SFMQ)” which was designed by the researchers to explore the opinions or views on school facilities maintenance culture. The instrument had two Sections, A and B. Section A focused on the demographic data of the respondents such as name of school, sex, location, experience, among others, while Section B dealt with the issues relating to school facilities maintenance culture which was a four-point Likert scale, In that regard, the respondents were requested to record their responses on a four point continuum of the scale ranging from good condition to dilapidated bad condition, with weighted points of 4 to 1 respectively.

The validity of the instrument was determined by experts in the field of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, University of Benin. Their comments and suggestions led to the modification of some of the items raised initially and the addition of a few other items. 30 copies of the instrument were administered to primary school teachers in Egor Local Government Area who were not part of the sample schools. The Cronbach alpha reliability statistics was used and it gave an alpha value of 0.78.

The data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation for research question one. A normative mean of 30.00 which was the product of the number of items in the cluster and 2.50 (arithmetic mean of the 4point Likert scale) was used to

ascertain the level of school facilities maintenance culture. A mean value of 30.0 and above was seen as high while less than 30.00 was regarded as low. The hypotheses were tested using the independent sample t test at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: The level of maintenance culture of school facilities in primary schools

Facilities	X	SD	Level of Maintenance Culture
Classroom	22.43	3.56	Low
Toilet	21.93	3.63	Low
School playground	32.51	3.68	High
Pupils chairs	21.95	4.65	Low
Pupils desk	21.95	6.68	Low
Chalkboard	31.98	3.78	High
Charts	33.31	4.78	High
Doors	22.13	5.65	Low
Windows	22.42	7.75	Low
Teachers chair	22.63	4.78	Low
Teachers Table	22.81	4.79	Low
Grand mean	28.43	5.70	Low

The result presented in Table 1 showed the description of the level of the maintenance culture of school facilities in public primary school in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. It further showed that the respondents rated school playground, chalkboard and charts maintenance as high. However, the maintenance of classrooms, toilets, pupils' chairs, pupils' desk, doors, windows, teachers chair and teachers' table was low. The grand mean of 28.43 and standard deviation of 5.70 indicated that the level of the maintenance culture of school facilities by head teachers in public primary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State was low.

Table 2: Independent sample t test of difference in school maintenance culture base on school location.

School Location	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p-value	Remark
Urban	7	2.52	0.92	1.52	0.08	Not significant
Rural	5	1.92	0.78			

Table 2 showed a t value of 1.52 and a p value of 0.08. Testing at alpha level of 0.05, the p value was greater than the alpha level. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained. It implied that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of urban and rural school head teachers in relation to the maintenance culture of their school facilities.

Table 3: Independent sample t test of the difference in school maintenance culture based on head teachers' experience

Experience	N	X	SD	t	p-value	Remark
Less than 10 years	6	2.35	0.58	1.81	0.05	Not significant
Above 10 years	6	2.75	0.72			

Table 3 showed a t value of 1.81 and a p value of 0.05. Testing at alpha level of 0.05, the p value was equal to the alpha level. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained. It implied that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of experienced and inexperienced head teachers in relation to the maintenance culture of their school facilities.

Table 4: Independent sample t test of the difference in school maintenance culture based on head teachers' sex

Sex	N	X	SD	t	p -value	Remark
Male	4	2.89	0.61	1.73	0.06	Not significant
Female	8	3.17	0.73			

Table 4 showed a t value of 1.73 and a p value of 0.06. Testing at alpha level of 0.05, the p value was greater than the alpha level. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained. It implied that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female head teachers in relation to the maintenance culture of their school facilities.

Discussion of Results

The analysis of the data collected revealed that the level of the maintenance culture of public primary schools in Edo State was low. The situation could be partly due to the head teachers' perception of their responsibility as regards the maintenance of school facilities as government property and so some school heads would not be bothered.

The findings agreed those of Yusuf and Adigun (2012) which opined that the non-challant attitude of school heads, teachers and pupils to government property was an issue in the maintenance culture of school facilities. The findings also supported the view by Ojo (2013) that Nigeria was generally adjudged to have a long history of poor maintenance culture of public utilities. The results also agreed with the findings of Asigal (2012) that facilities in public schools were generally in a state of disrepair due to inadequate maintenance. The finding agreed with Ejie and Fadape (2010) that the school head might not be knowledgeable in some aspects of school plant management.

The study also revealed that there was no significant difference in the maintenance culture of school facilities between rural and urban schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. The findings agreed with the study by Tanimowo (1995) which revealed that the maintenance culture of school facilities between urban and rural schools lacked planning and inefficiency. The findings confirmed the observation by Asinbaka (2008) and Ehiemtor (2001) which confirmed that money was an issue in managing facilities in schools. The situation is not unexpected because the head teachers of rural and urban schools have about the same background. However, the findings disagreed with those of Ogbodo (1995) which revealed that many urban schools were in a terrible state of disrepair and lacking basic facilities when compared with their counterparts in rural areas. Generally, our poor attitude to government property affects both urban and rural schools. The lack of provision of security facilities such as gates and keys for classroom doors also contribute to the non-protection of the facilities which are now prone to damage.

The study also showed that there was no significant difference in the maintenance culture of school facilities between experienced and inexperienced head

teachers in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. The findings were in agreement with those of Nakpodia (2009) which revealed that there was no significant difference between the leadership style of more experienced and less experienced principals in managing school facilities. The findings were in line with the view by Ehiametalor (2001) that the issue of maintenance culture was neglected. It is not enough to pump money into the provision of school facilities, their maintenance is very important. There is the need to invest in creating a culture of maintenance in schools. Little wonder Okey (2006) acknowledged that there was no clear government policy on maintenance culture of school facilities. However, the findings disagreed with those of Ogungbola and Abiodun (2007) which showed that there was a significant difference between experienced and inexperienced school heads in managing school facilities.

Another revelation from the study was that the sex of school heads was not a determining factor in the maintenance culture of school facilities. The findings of this study corroborated those obtained by Omoike and Idogho (2001) who, in their studies, revealed that there was no significant difference between male and female heads of department in managing school facilities. However, the findings disagreed with those of Ibrahim and Al-Tanaji (2012) which revealed that in school heads level of administrative effectiveness, according to gender, female school heads were more effective than 'their male counterparts' own. This situation is not the best. The male and female school heads are exposed to the same conditions of service, training and lack of maintenance training. So, whatever features in the male head teacher is likely to be seen in the female head teacher. Both sexes require training in maintenance culture.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that school facilities maintenance culture in public primary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State was low. There was no significant difference in the maintenance culture of school facilities in urban and rural schools among experienced and inexperienced head teachers, and between male and female head-teachers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that there should be adequate training and retraining of head teachers in effective maintenance of school facilities through seminars, workshops and conferences. Also, school heads should be held accountable for any damage done to school property. This will serve as a deterrent to others and hence, develop a culture of maintenance

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