

www.unicrossjournals.com

Date Accepted:  
30<sup>th</sup> June, 2023

Pages 74- 83

**SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND STUDENTS-TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE IN TEACHING PRACTICE IN SOUTH-SOUTH EDUCATIONAL ZONE OF NIGERIA.**

**Agbor Cassidy Etta; Ukwetang, John Okpa; Abam, Oyobo-Gladys Tom**

Department of Environmental Education  
Faculty of Education  
University of Calabar, Calabar.

---

**Abstract**

The research was carried out on school environment and students-teachers' performance in teaching practice in South-South Educational Zone of Nigeria. Literature was reviewed based on the variables under study. A survey research design was used for the study. A systematic random sampling technique was used to randomly select students-teachers in selected schools in the South South Educational Zone. The instrument used for the study was a four-point Likert scale questionnaire, this four-point Likert scale questionnaire is designed to have two sections, sections A and B. The section A contains the respondents' demographic data while section B contains items with respect to the sub-variables under study. The result of the study shows that provision of conducive classroom enhances student-teacher's interests and performance. Well-equipped laboratory and provision of current and important library facilities improves knowledge and retention and student-teacher's performance in teaching practice. It was also observed that students-teachers in the urban areas perform better than their rural area counterparts because of required interactions with amenities the former enjoy. It was therefore recommended among others that the government should introduce a well-structured peace education both in a school setting and communities where the schools are located through workshops and seminars in order to bring back the lost cultural values which will ensure amicable conflict resolution.

**Keywords:** School environment, Knowledge, teaching practice, demographic data

**1. Introduction**

United Nations Educational, Scientific and cultural organization (UNESCO, 2012) observed that in today's world, education

system must constantly evolve in order to effectively respond to the rapidly changing demands of the societies they serve. To reach a common understanding of how much the

physical and social dimensions of learning environment affect the quality of learning process, an exploration of the relationship between place and process is needed. The teaching-learning process cannot take place in a vacuum in formal education settings. It occurs as result of interactions among components of the learning environment. In the learning environment, elements of the teaching and learning process include: teacher, students, content, learning process, and learning situation (Arul-Lawrence, 2012).

Students and teachers would work well in a school culture where academic success and the motivation to learn is expected, respected and rewarded. Such an atmosphere where students learn to love learning for learning sake results in better academic achievement. The school is a special social sphere where education, training and personality development of children who are a community's future assets are founded and run by proper training methods, appropriate physical space and favourable psychological environment (Raccoon gang, 2018). Students in the process of socialization require a healthy environment and models so as to increase their performance. Hence, a clean, quiet and comfortable environment is important components of the learning environment (Gilavand, 2016). Furthermore, creating an ideal learning environment ought to be a priority of every concern educationist because being comfortable should be a combination of several factors which include temperature, lighting and noise control etc. (Murugan and Rajoo, 2013).

For any student undergoing a professional course in education, teaching practice is inevitable. It is that aspect of the student-teacher's professional training programme during which they is exposed to the real school and classroom situation in order to help them develop their skills in the act of teaching. Teaching practice is designed to give the student-teachers an opportunity to put into practice, the theories relating to the principles

and practice of education, which they have learnt. It is also a basic professional requirement, the un-fulfillment of which the student-teacher cannot qualify as a teacher. It is therefore necessary that due attention is given to it and its aims to teacher training achieved.

The student-teacher should not just go through the process of teaching practice, teaching practice should also go through the student-teacher such that its aims and objectives are achieved rather than defeated. The student-teacher is also regarded as a part of the school system and thus expected to participate in all teaching activities within the school system until the expiration of the exercise. Teaching practice exposes the student-teacher to the real school and class situation where he acquires some practical experiences in the art of teaching, as well as get adapted or acquainted with the social settings of the institution. Although, the primary concern is passing useful educational knowledge over to the pupils using every achievable means until learning takes place in them, they still have to participate in all teaching activities within the school system.

## **2. The concept of learning environment**

According to study.com (2018), learning environment encompasses learning resources and technology, means of teaching, modes of learning and connections to societal and global context. The term also includes human behavioral and cultural dimensions including the vital role of emotions in learning. The learning environment is a composite of human practices and material systems, much as the ecology is the combinations of living things and environment (Balog, 2018). Contemporary learners deserve learning spaces that meet their individual and collective needs. To meet this challenge educational leader must provide physical and cultural environments that are empowering and engaging (Orlu, 2013).

Learning environment vary from classroom to classroom and context to context, each with unique elements. According to study.com (2018), learning environment can be learner-centered, knowledge centered, assessment centered and community centered. Learner-centered are designed for the active construction of knowledge by and for learners (Federal University, 2018). Knowledge centered learning environment are those which support students' deep investigation of deep ideas through generative learning activities. Assessment centered learning environments provide frequent, ongoing and learning opportunities for assessment including opportunities for revision and self and peer assessment (Alvaro, 2010). Community centered environment value collaboration, negotiations of meaning, respect for multiple perspectives around which knowledge is constructed and connections to the local community and culture (Raccoon gang, 2018).

Learning environment is composed of some components that influence the students' performance in teaching practice. These components according to Balog (2018) include; people, teaching materials, teaching tools and learning resources, curriculum, training and institution, and physical environment/learning space. The people are the individuals that affect the students directly or indirectly through connection or relationship which can contribute to students' growth and success in their career aspect. The teaching material, technical tools and learning resources are the teaching materials, highly advanced tools or other instructional resources that are align with the curriculum as a part of students learning support. The curriculum, training and instruction are the core foundation of the learning process.

The influence one another and play vital roles to facilitate the flow of knowledge and delivery of instructional content/curriculum. The physical environment/learning space refers to the physical settings of the learner's environment

which should evoke positive responses and hold the interest of those who inhabit it (Balog, 2018). Modal (2012) identified some important factors that may affect learning process to include intellectual factors which refers to the individual mental level. Learning factors are factors owing to faulty methods of work or study and narrowness of experimental background which may affect learning process.

### **3. Conducive environment and students' performance in teaching practice**

The student teacher as well as the learners need conducive classroom for teaching and learning to take place effectively, which is part of school environment. Okwelle (2017) sees environment as the facilities available for instruction which poses a strong influence in teaching learning process. Such facilities are: adequate classroom building with good sitting arrangement, availability of well-equipped school workshops and laboratories with modern machines, tools and materials for practicals.

Faladun (2010) perceived the structure of the building as an important factor in the school environment as an important factor which influences the health, happiness and academic performance of the students. The construction of a building can be so ill adapted to the purpose for which it was built, meaning that no satisfactory scheme of ventilation can be possible. Owwoeye (2020) observed that an unhygienic classroom could deteriorate the health conditions of students, which will affect their academic performance. According to him there is a great relationship between learning and sound health of an individual. Barbetta, Norona and Bicard (2015) expressed that teachers must realize that there is a close infirmity between the physical environment and the emotional climate of the classroom and the morals of the whole class. He later noted that classroom should be made to spring alive with the works of pupils and the collections of attractive articles from the vicinity.

Adeyemo (2012) opined that people acquire most of their knowledge through interactions with facilities provided in the classroom for learning. He went further to state that learning is influenced by the environment people are exposed to and the facilities provided in such environment lead to experience and experience gained during classroom environment plays a major role in the performance of students and in the world of work. Toby (2003) states that adequate planning can help to ensure that the facilities are functional, economical and even attractive and are design to meet the need of the individual instruction.

#### **4. Well-equipped laboratory and library and students' performance in teaching practice**

Wordu and Igweagbara (2011) observed that for students to perform in the real work situation and for science education to be effective, the training tools and equipment must be at least similar to that being used in the industries. He added that the use of equipment with the right school environment and tools to teach practical lessons to students will no doubt reinforce the theoretical lessons and make teaching and learning more effective. This will also assist in ensuring that correct type of manpower is developed for greater need of the private and public sector of Nigeria economy. It was established in the study of Chindah (2019) that effective teaching and learning in secondary schools require more equipment and hand tools as well as training materials.

Reaffirming the study of Chindah, Barth (2019) recognized the role of equipment and training materials when he stated that one begins to wonder whether lack of equipment is not one of the factors responsible for continuous poor performance of science students when compared to arts students. He therefore declared that equipment must be effectively managed in order to achieve better results in science education

programme. Considering the need for adequate supervision of laboratory equipment, Puyate (2007) was of the opinion that effective supervision will be necessary to achieve a quality science education programme in secondary schools. Stressing further, Puyate (2008) acknowledge that the laboratory environmental factor such as: lighting, seating arrangement and laboratory setting, need to be carefully planned and supervised for effective teaching, learning and development of students' skills performance. It is therefore observed that lack of laboratory equipment contributes to catalogue of problems in acquisition of practical skills in science education.

Toby (2013) revealed that library is another indispensable factor in school environment as it contributes to students' academic performance. According to him school library is a force and a source of education excellence. Library is therefore defined as a room or building where books, pamphlets, magazine, newspapers, cassettes and videos are kept together. These items are known as library stocks; in the stock all kinds of information can be found. A library is also seen as a center of materials. Library is a media resources, information, instructional, educational and cultural institution for the collection, preservation and transmission of human intellectual expression (Nwezeh, 2011).

According to MacEachern (2004), library is a foyer of living ideas that permeates and animates all aspects of national life. Jekayinfu (2009) sees library as a place where the dead may be said to be alive, which is where ideas, knowledge and experiences of great men and women are fully documented and preserved and continue to move the world, even though these people may be no more. Akinniyi (2003) and Alhari and Middleton (2012) noted that library is supposed to develop in pupils the skills and habits in observing, listening, communicating ideas and thinking which they will build on as they further their education career. To achieve this, the children need to be exposed to a whole

range of books. They went further to opines that children should feel that books are indispensable to a full appreciation of life, they should be able to find them easily, handle them, look at them, read them and intimately study them.

Dange and Praveen (2009) agreed with the Federal Republic of Nigeria by stating that library tends to promote the education process of the society, accelerate the transition of knowledge in action which enables the students or individual to obtain spiritual, inspirational and recreational activities, preserve the cultural heritage and affects the transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next. In essence libraries are repertoires of knowledge sourced by library users.

#### **5. Location of school and students' performance in teaching practice**

Hornby (2015) defined location as a place where something happens or exist and school as a place where people go to learn a particular subject or skill. Thus, location of school has to do with the communities either rural or urban where a particular feature/establishment is being cited for the purpose of teaching and learning of a particular skill. Since the community where the school is located forms integral part of the school environment, this means that the community equally play a major role in the students' academic performance.

Mangibo, (2005), pointed out that environment is that which surround individual or community both physical and cultural surroundings. He observed that environment is used to denote a certain set of circumstances surrounding particular occurrences. Maxwell and Evans (2000) indicated that environment could be seen in three perspectives- physical, social and abstract. Physical environment according to him is made up of objects, materials and infrastructural resources and structures from home, school or community. Meanwhile the three perspectives of environment have great

influence on the academic performance of students, he noted.

Okwelle (2017), in his own view observed that the community where the school is located is influential to teaching and learning process. He further opined that the community can positively influence the objectives of the education programmes by being supportive and friendly to the school environmental condition. Thus, community helps to ensure that the goal of such school is attained. Okala (2005) perceived community as that which has to do with culture and belief of a particular society. He went further to opine that the school helps to develop the culture and ways of life of the people in a particular community which become unique to every school.

Chaba (2003) in another dimension opined that life in the village or rural communities can never be the same with that of the city or urban communities. According to him this is basically of the differences between two communities in terms of awareness. Israel, Beaulieu and Hartless (2001) noted that in urban areas, it is seen as mechanism for community cohesion and continuity. Daini (2008) in his study on the effect of school location on students' academic performance recorded that distance of school from most communities has effects as it may lead to truancy and laziness among students. According to him, most students may not reach school until noon and this affect their academic performances.

#### **6. Research methodology**

The survey design method was adopted for the study. It was used to collect available data to investigate school environment and students-teachers' performance in teaching practice in South-South Educational Zone of Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of selected students-teachers in the study area. The systematic random sampling technique was used to select randomly students-teachers in selected

schools from the South South Educational Zone. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the which was designed to have two section, section A and section B.

**7. Data analysis**

**Research question 1:** To what extent do conducive classrooms affect students-teachers performance in South South Educational Zone?

Table 1 showing the frequency and percentage distribution of response on the effect of conducive classroom on students-teachers performance in South South Educational Zone

S/N	ITEMS	Respons
1.	Provision of furniture in classroom has a positive effect on students-teachers interest in teaching.	100
2.	Provision of proper ventilation in the classroom enhances retention of learning and improve performance of students-teachers.	100
3.	Electrical facilities in the classroom improve cognitive ability of students-teachers.	100
4.	Provision of chalkboard facilities has a positive effect on students-teachers interest and their overall performance.	100
5.	Students taught in classrooms with ceilings perform better than students taught in classrooms without ceiling.	100
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

**Research question 2:** How do well-equipped laboratory and library facilities enhance students-teachers performance in South South Educational Zone?

Table 2 showing the frequency and percentage distribution of response on the effect of well-equipped laboratory and library on students-teachers performance in South South Educational Zone

S/N	ITEMS	Response	Y
6.	Regular use of hand tools and equipment in the laboratory makes teaching more concrete.	100	8
7.	Regular use of laboratory and performing practicals enhances learning retention and understanding of concepts.	100	7
8.	Students-teachers' exposure to the regular use of laboratory and library usually have high performance in subject area.	100	9
9.	Loaning textbooks from cooperative school library to students enhance students-teachers' interest and their performance.	100	7
10.	Well furnished school library stocked with textbooks improves students-teachers' performance	100	9
Total		500	4

Source: Field Survey, 2021

**Research question 3:** To what extent do locations of school affect students-teachers performance in South South Educational Zone?

Table 3 showing the frequency and percentage distribution of response on the effect of location of school on students-teachers performance in South South Educational Zone.

S/N	ITEMS	R
11.	The setting of the community where the school is located has a positive effect on students-teachers' interest and performance .	10
12.	Basic amenities where the school is located has a positive effect on students-teachers interest and performance.	10
13.	The occupation of students-teachers parents enhance their performance and interest.	10
14.	Students-teachers from urban communities not prone to communal crises perform better than students-teachers from rural communities prone to communal crises	10
15.	Neglecting PTA meetings in communities where the school is located has effect on students-teachers interest performance.	10
Total		50

### 8. Discussion of result

The aim of the study was to examine school environment and students-teachers performance in teaching practice in South South Educational Zone of Nigeria. The result from the data analysis showed that there is a position significant relationship between conducive

learning environment, well-equipped laboratory, and students-teachers' performance in teaching practice in South South Educational Zone. This is in agreement with the findings of Okoro (2004) who observed the importance of conducive learning environment and noted that it was unfortunate that the total secondary school's environment is no longer conducive for learning. This ugly situation has reduced the academic performance of chemistry students and the past glory of secondary schools.

The result also agrees with the findings of Puyate (2007) who emphasized that there is need for a good laboratory environment in secondary schools. He stated that well-planned or organized facilities tend to develop students' creative interest to which cognitive and psych motive learning is possible in secondary schools.

Eraikhuemen (2003) also noted that children in urban environment perform better academically than their rural counterpart, this is because the urban setting has different types of occupation and amenities that lead to more required interactions. In other words, the study is also in consonance with the observation of Ezegbe (2001) who stated that no nation can attain national growth in the atmosphere of war, bicker and rancor among its citizens. For this reason, the researcher observed as at the time of this research work two schools among the ten secondary school sampled were in partial existence due to inter-communal and intra-communal crises.

### 9. Summary

This study was undertaken to find out the extent to which conducive classroom, well-equipped laboratory and provision of library facilities and location of schools affect students performance in teaching practice in South South Educational Zone of Cross River State. Three research questions were posed and data was collected through questionnaire. Findings were made through the analysis of the data and the research

questions were answered. The following were the summary of the findings:

1. Provision of conducive classroom enhances students-teachers' interest and performance in teaching practice.
2. Well-equipped laboratory and provision of current and important library facilities improves knowledge retention and students-teachers performance in teaching practice.
3. Students-teachers in the urban areas perform better than their rural area counterparts because of required interactions with amenities the former enjoy.

### 10. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the data that were gathered during investigation, the researcher concludes that conducive classrooms, well-equipped laboratories, library facilities and location of schools affects students-teachers' performance in teaching practice to a very high extent.

### 11. Recommendation

In the light of the findings of the study, the following measures were suggested to bring about improvement in the system:

1. The government through the ministry of education at the state and the federal level should provide adequate laboratory equipment and facilities, library facilities to meet with the students projected enrollment figure in all schools.
2. The ministry of education should improve the standard of infrastructural facilities in all schools in South South Educational Zone of Nigeria.
3. The government should introduce a well-structured peace education both in a school setting and communities where the schools are located through workshops and seminars in order to bring back the lost cultural values which will ensure amicable conflict resolution.

### References

- Adeyemo, S. A. (2012): The Relationship between Effective Classroom Management and Students Academic Achievement. *European Journal of Educational Studies*, 4(3), 367-381.
- Akinniyi, A. R. (2003): Provision of Library Services in Secondary Schools in Ife East and Central Local Government in Osun State, Nigeria. *Ife Journal of Theory and Research in Education*, 1(2), 41-52.
- Alharbi, A. And Middleton, M. (2012): The Relationship between Academic Library Usage and Educational Performance in Kuwait. *Library Management*, 33(1&2), 86-94
- Alvaro, J. A. (2010): An Investigation of an Assessment-Centered Learning Environment with Formative Use. *Pearson Assessment Bulletin* 18.
- Balog, N. (2018): Impact of the Learning Environment on Developers Progress.
- Badu, J. B. (2019): Home Environment Variables as Correlates of Attitude to School and Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students. *Benin Journal of Education Studies*, (1& 2): 12 & 13.
- Ceynowa, K. And Corners, A. (2013): Cost Management in Academic Libraries. Munchen: Saur.
- Chaba, F. (2003): Education: A Concern for Rural Youth in Nigeria. *Journal of Education Studies*, 9(1), 49-53
- Daini, A.B. (2006): The Effects of School Library on Students Academic Performance. *Sokoto Education Review*, 6(3), 25-31.
- Dange, J. K. And Praveen, R. (2009): Library Facilities and Academic Achievement



of Secondary Students. *West African Journal of Education*, 8(3), 256-267.

- Duruji, M. M., Azuh, D. And Oviasogie, F. (2014): Learning Environment and Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in External Examinations: A Study of Selected Schools in Ota, Nigeria. Proceedings of EDULEARN 14 Conferences, Barcelona, Spain.
- Emmanuel, O. E. And Hogan, U. S. (2011): Occupational Work Ethics and Vocational/Career Education. *Journal of Technical, Technology and Vocational Education*, 2(1), 75-81
- Eraikhuemen, L. (2003): The Influence of Gender and School Location on Students Academic Achievement in Senior Secondary Mathematics. *Ife Journal of Theory and Research in Education*, 7(2), 99-112.
- Falodun, S. A (2010): Classroom Interaction between Pupil and Teachers as Determinant of Academic Performance.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004): National Policy on Education (4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Revised). Yaba Lagos: NERDC Press.
- Israel, G. D., Beaulieu, L. J. And Hartless, G. (2001): The Influence of Family and Community Social Capital on Educational Achievement. *Rural Sociology*, 66(3), 43-68
- Jekayinfa, A. A. (2009): Effect of Instructional Resources on the Academic Performance of Students in History in Nigeria. *WestAfrican Journal of Education*, 8(3), 211-212.
- Maceachern, R. (2004): Measuring the Added Value Library and Information Services. *International Federation of Library Association (IFLA) Journal*, 27(1), 26-30.
- Mangibo, N. A. (2005): Enforcement of Environmental Pollution Laws or Ethics InNigeria: Liabilities against Companies. *Journal of Pedagogy and Education Development*, 2(1), 13-15
- Maxwell, L. E. and Evans, G. W. (2000). The Effects of Noise on Pre-School Children's Pre-Reading Skills. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 20(1), 91-97.
- Murugan, A AndRajoo, L. (2013): Students 'perception of Mathematics Classroom Environment and Mathematics Achievement: A Study in Sipitang, Sabah, Malaysia: Proceedings of the International Conference on Social Science Research, ICSSR.
- Nwezeh, C. M. T. (2011): Libraries and Literacy Development: A Librarian View. *Ife Journal of Theory and Research in Education*, 6(1), 169-177.
- Okala, O. F. (2005): Peace Education for Curbing Youth Unrest in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. *Journal of Pedagogy and Educational Development*, 2(1), 1-10.
- Okorie, J. U and Ezeji, S. C. O. A. (2004): Elements of Guidance, Vocational and Career Education. Onitsha: Summer Educational Publisher.
- Okwelle, P. C. (2017): Instructional Strategies for Technology Education Teacher, Unpublished Monograph. Faculty of Technical and Science Education. RUST, Port Hacourt.
- Owoeye, J. S. (2020): The Effect of Interaction of Location, Facilities and Class Size on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Ibadan.

Raccoon Gang (2018); What Makes Good Learning Environment, from <http://raccoongang.com/blog/what-makes-good-learning-environment>.

Umoh, U. E. (2011): Maintenance of Laboratory Facilities for Teaching and Learning Agricultural Science in Secondary Schools: Implication for Adequate Exposure to Practical Instructions. *Journal of Technical, Technology and Vocational Educators*, 2(1), 187-192.

Wordu, C. C. R., Igweagbara, S. N. And Nwakanma, S. (2011): Provision of Cognitive Classroom Environment: A Necessity for Improvement of Quality Technical Education. *Journal of Technical, Technology and Vocational Educators*, 2(1), 30-34.

Wordu, C. C. R.(2012); Evaluation of Students Utilization of Library Facilities in Technical Colleges in Rivers State. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 3(1),.