



INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

*¹Zubairu, Alfa Mohammed, ²Usman Abubakar, ¹Cecila F. Gana,
¹Idris Mohammed Abubakar and ²Yahaya Mohammed Baiwa

¹Department of Office Technology and Management, Niger State Polytechnic, Zungeru

²Department of Languages (Mass comm. unit), Niger State Polytechnic, Zungeru

*Corresponding authors' email: alfam.zubairu01@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of environmental factors on the academic performance of office technology and management students. Environment in which a child receives his/her upbringing can make or mar his psyche, which in turn affects academic performance in one way or the other. The environment may generally be considered to be the home and the school climate. Hence, the study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 150 students of ND1 levels in office technology and management, which formed the sample for the study as the researchers considered the population to be sizeable and manageable. A Structured questionnaire based on modified four point Likert rating scale of Strongly Agreed (4), Agreed (3), Disagreed (2) and Strongly Disagreed (1) was the instrument used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts in the field of Office Technology and Management, The Federal Polytechnic, Bida. The researchers administered 150 copies of the questionnaire to the respondents and retrieved only 123 copies representing 82% return rate. Mean and Standard Deviation were the statistical tools used to answer and analyze the data collected from the respondents. Based on the data analysis, findings revealed among others that; school location (Mean = 2.73 & SD = 0.89), facilities (Mean = 3.31 & SD = 0.62), positively influence academic performance of office technology and management students to a moderate extent in polytechnics in Niger state. It was concluded that location, facilities had influence on academic performance of office technology and management students in polytechnics in Niger state. Location and infrastructural facilities positively influence academic performance of office technology and management students in polytechnics to a moderate extent.

Keywords: Environmental Factors, OTM students, Academic Performance

INTRODUCTION

The environment in which a child receives his/her upbringing can make or mar his psyche, which in turn affects academic performance in one way or the other. The environment may generally be considered to be the home and the school climate. The general character of the child's home background can psychologically affect his/her poise and consequently his/her academic standing. Parents that are aggressive, and home characterized by quarreling and anger can cause a child to be emotionally imbalanced and it is again that may cause children losing confidence in themselves and their abilities (Jainbaje, 2011). On the contrary, a home front that is caring, compassionate and accommodating brews an environment that apparently, is concern with the psyche of members to face their endeavours with a calm conscience, a recipe for success in academic pursuits.

Concept of Environment

There have been different definitions of the concept of "environment" proffered by different scholars and organized bodies/agencies. However, from whatever angle one perceives the term; "environment", it simply means what surrounds us. Singh and Vyas, (2014), environment refers to the "sum total of all conditions that surround man at any point in time on the earth's surface". He further said environment simply means surrounding and everything that affect an organism during its lifetime is collectively known as its environment. In other words Environment is sum total of water, air and land interrelationships among themselves and also with the human being, other living organisms and property. It includes all the physical and biological surrounding and their interactions. Environmental studies

provide an approach towards understanding the environment of our planet and the impact of human life upon the environment. Recorded evidence has also shown that the environment represents a wide range of the external circumstances, conditions and the things that affect the existence and development of an individual, organism, group and/or society.

School Location

Location is environment in which a child received his/her upbringing at home and school which are located, some in the urban while others are in the rural areas. School located in the urban areas tend to have more facilities, human resources, government attention, etc. as against those located in the rural area (Gersmohl, 2017). The term location in geography is used to identify a point or an area on the earth's surface or elsewhere. The term location generally implies a higher degree of certainty than place, which often indicates an entity with an ambiguous boundary, relying more on human/social attributes of place identity and sense of place than on geometry (Gersmohl, 2017).

According to Wilson (2011), location or places where the everyday practice of life occurs. He further explained that a location or places are geographical units that are essential to people's lives. People connect these living environments to their identity and, thus, become personally meaningful. For these reasons, magazines feature location based on the activities, restaurants, or personalities of the people who live there. The media often set the context of news stories in a locality. Travel literature promotes locations to visit. Real estate marketing highlights houses for sale by location. Persons in a particular locality suffer or revel in the

availability and quality of housing, schools, jobs, businesses, health care, and human services. Persons in a given locality are subjected to every physical and social factor that may be imposed by such a locality. Thus, the characteristics of a locality create the background for people's life stories which can leave lasting impressions on residents about what life is like and what social problems exist in a living community (Wilson, 2011).

Influences on children's educational outcomes can be associated to geographic location and characteristics of residential neighborhood among other factors (Amoo, 2017). Students' educational performance and academic success is greatly influenced by their former schools. The school one attends is the academic environment that sets the parameters of a students' learning experience. Depending on the environment, a school can either open or close the doors that lead to academic performance (Considine and Zappala, 2012).

Concept Infrastructural Facilities

Infrastructural facilities are very germane in educational institutions, particularly in the teaching-learning process (Singh & Kumar, 2017). It is unfortunate that inadequacy of infrastructural facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, libraries, staff offices, workshops among others characterized the public polytechnics in Niger state (Ejiro, 2011). To worsen the situation, most of the available infrastructural facilities are in deplorable condition, which has been having negative effect on the training of students in the polytechnics (Singh and Kumar, 2017). The situation could be attributed to the poor funding of polytechnics by Government. Over the years, financial allocations to polytechnics have consistently been inadequate in quantity and epileptic in supply thus making it difficult for polytechnics administrators to put in place adequate and reliable infrastructural facilities for effective teaching of students.

Nwabueze (2011), sees infrastructural facilities as those things that enable a skillful teacher to achieve a level of instructional effectiveness that far exceeds what is possible when they are not provided. He stated further that the value of facilities in education becomes tangible when viewed in terms of their adequacy to the programmes they are designed for. The implication of this is that the physical facilities of the polytechnics must satisfy both qualitative and quantitative conditions to achieve an excellent learner outcome. Okoroma, Okrike (2019), see infrastructural facilities as embracing permanent and semi-permanent structures on the school site as well as machines, laboratory equipment, blackboards, white-boards, teaching equipment and even the cleaners' tools. Some examples of physical facilities in tertiary institutions include: the space (premises), buildings, infrastructure (road, landscape), equipment (computers, furniture, chalk board, instructional materials etc.). Enefu & Okarforcha (2017) classified facilities into: instructional facilities, infrastructures and school physical environment. Instructional facilities include all instructional materials and equipment used to facilitate the teaching and learning process that will enhance students' academic performance. Studies have shown that learning takes place better and faster in a school environment with adequate infrastructures and facilities like buildings, accommodations, furniture(s), and equipment, then in an environment where all these items are lacking.

Concept of Academic Performance

The significance attached to academic performance has raised a lot of definition from different academic bodies, and scholars. Academic performance according to the Cambridge

University Reporter (2013) is seen in terms of examination performance. It refers to what the student has learned and is usually measured through assessments like standardized tests and performance assessments. In tertiary institutions, Polytechnics for example, students' academic performance are usually translated through grading system such as Grade Point Average (GPA), Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) and course grade. According to Ma, Phelps, Lerner, and Lerner (2009), the indicators for academic performance include standard test scores, grade point average (GPA), and self-perceived academic performance. Academic performance which is measured by the examination results is one of the major goals of a school. Bossaert (2011) opined that schools are established with the aim of imparting knowledge and skills to those who go through them and behind all this is the idea of enhancing good academic performance

Concept of Office Technology and Management

Office Technology and Management is nomenclature that has replaced Secretarial Studies Programme in Nigerian Polytechnics as introduced by the National Board for Technical Education (2004). This was as a result of an extensive review of Secretarial Studies Curriculum in order to make its recipients to be information communication technology compliant and fit in appropriately in handily his application in the world of work, most especially, in modern offices that are characterized by various types of state-of-the-art communication and technology, Gaji, Alfa & Ibrahim (2022). Polytechnic education in Nigeria is recognized as part of tertiary education whose aim is to provide middle-level manpower to man the various sectors of Nigerian economy (Ikelegbe and Odede, 2012). According to the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004), Polytechnics in Nigeria shall maintain a two tier programme of studies; namely, the National Diploma (ND) and the Higher National Diploma (HND) with one year period of industrial experience serving as one of the pre-requisites for entry into the HND programme. Office Technology and Management programme is designed to equip students with the competencies required to work in a modern office environment. The broad objectives of OTM programme, according to National Board for Technical Education (2004), in Zubairu, Usman Bawa & Ndanusa (2022) are: (i) Acquisition of Secretarial Skills, (ii) Acquisition of Modern Information Technology Skills, (iii) Acquisition of Business and Entrepreneurial Skills.

It is on this note that the researchers want to examine the influence of environmental factors on the academic performance of office technology and management Students in Polytechnics in Niger State.

Tertiary level of education is the meeting point of students from diverse education background which significantly influence the current higher education performance and success. The most important components of tertiary students' backgrounds are home or parental influences and the kind of educational environment from which the students obtain the earlier primary and secondary education. Since students from deferent homes and school environment backgrounds are usually expected to sit for standard national examinations that assess their level of educational attainment, tertiary education systems are of the view that their new intakes have equal educational ability. However, deferential home background and the environment of previous education significantly affect the performance of students in tertiary institution in such a way that students of different environmental countless show

significantly difference levels of their performance and success in educational attainment.

Where family background is supported with a more favourable environment for students' education dissemination, the product of such school environment shows significant performance benefitted from the double advantage of home and school counted (Farooq, 2011). This example is common where the educated members of the society clusters in urban area where education facilities and infrastructures are of higher quality and standard, enjoying quality teachers who also are of higher or middle class and prefers to live in urban areas. This development produces students of diverse homes and education backgrounds which tertiary education attempt to train as homogeneous product of the same qualification assessed by the standard national education assessment bodies like WAEC, NECO and NABTEB. However, there is need to find out the extent these students from different family and education background equal in their academic performance capabilities and how would tertiary education system equalize the abilities of these students from different background. This is imperative in explaining the wide performance disparities between students in ND1 class.

The influence of education environment is more apparent in the situation where the rural areas lack necessary infrastructures in their educational institutions and where facilities are not available, certainly not motivating or even lack of awareness to buy necessary educational materials like textbooks for their children. To compound the problem of the rural students and educational institutions, higher qualified teachers prefer to stay in urban schools while rural areas are mostly dominated unqualified teachers in public schools where teachers are poorly paid and not motivated.

Another strong caveat that seeks to hide the disparity in the ability of these two different sets of students in a tertiary education class is the assessment results of WAEC, NECO and NABTEB which seek to equalize the education academic performance, (Zubairu, 2022). It is this assumed equalization in students' academic performance that this research seeks to investigate among students of various educational background in ND1 Office Technology and Management students in Polytechnics in Niger state in their first academic session. The year one students are considered appropriate because the influence of these variables (location and facilities) can still be observed since the impact of the tertiary education has not been properly felt.

It is against these reasons that the researcher attempts to investigate the influence of environmental factors on

academic performance of office technology and management students in Polytechnics in Niger state, Nigeria.

The major purpose of this study was to assess the influence of environmental factors on academic performance of office technology and management students in Polytechnics in Niger State, Nigeria. The specific purposes were to: (i) examine the influence of location on the academic performance of office technology and management students in Polytechnics, (ii) ascertain the influence of infrastructural facilities on the academic performance of office technology and management students in Polytechnics.

In line with each specific purpose, the following research questions were raised: (i) what is the influence of location on academic performance of Office Technology and Management students? (ii) what is the influence infrastructural facilities on academic performance of Office Technology and Management students?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopted descriptive survey research method. The population of the study comprised 150 students of NDI levels in office technology and management in both federal and state polytechnics. A breakdown of the population shows that there were 15 ND1 students in office technology and management in the Federal Polytechnic, Bida and 135 ND1 students in office technology and management in Niger state Polytechnic, Zungeru, which bring total population of 150 students formed the sample for the study as the researchers considered the population to be sizeable and manageable. A Structured questionnaire based on modified four point Likert rating scale of Strongly Agreed (4), Agreed (3), Disagreed (2) and Strongly Disagreed (1) structure questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts in the Department of Office Technology and Management, The Federal Polytechnic, Bida. The researchers administered 150 copies of the questionnaire to the respondents and retrieved only 123 copies representing 82% return rate. Mean and Standard Deviation were the statistical tools used to answer and analyze the data collected from the respondents. The decision rule for the mean was set at any mean point equal to or greater than 3.50- 4.00 were regarded as Strongly Agreed; items with mean ratings of 2.50- 3.49 were considered as Agreed; and those with 1.50-2.49 were considered as Disagreed; while items with means scores of 1.00- 1.49 were regarded as Strongly Disagreed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Analysis and results

Research Question 3: What is the influence of location on academic performance of Office Technology and Management students?

Table 1: Responses on the influences of school location on academic performance of Office Technology and Management students

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
1	Our school is in urban areas and as such we have conducive learning environment which has assisted my academic performance.	2.54	1.03	Agree
2	Our school is in urban areas and as such we have qualified teachers and this has assisted my academic performance.	2.67	0.98	Agree
3	Our school is in urban centre and as such we have constant electricity light in school which has helped to improve my academics	2.60	0.91	Agree
4	Our school is in urban area and as such we have good relationship with our teachers and this has assisted my academic performance.	2.95	0.58	Agree

5	Our school is in urban centre and as such we have good board which has assisted my academic performance.	2.87	0.82	Agree
6	Our school is located in rural areas which we have conducive learning environment and assisted in my academic performance.	2.56	0.96	Agree
7	Our school is located in rural areas and we have qualified teachers which helping to improved academically	2.69	0.91	Agree
8	Our classrooms are conducive for learning in rural areas which has assisted my academic performance.	2.87	0.82	Agree
9	The teachers we have in our rural schools always utilize good teaching methods and assisted in my academic performance.	2.79	0.93	Agree
10	We are taught with relevant instructional materials in our rural schools and helping to improved academically	2.71	0.99	Agree
Weighted mean		2.73	0.89	Agree

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Analysis of data in Table 1 reveals that the respondents agreed that schools in urban area have conducive learning environment (mean = 2.54), that schools in urban areas have electricity light (mean = 2.60), that schools in urban area have qualified teacher (mean = 2.67), that students in urban area have good relationship with their teacher (mean = 2.60), that schools in urban area have good teaching board (mean = 2.56), that schools in rural areas have conducive learning environment (mean = 2.48) also, said schools in rural areas do

not have qualified teachers. (mean = 2.43), that teachers in rural areas schools do not always utilize good teaching methods (mean = 2.47), that schools in rural areas does not have conducive classrooms (mean = 2.89) and that schools in rural areas have relevant instructional materials (mean = 2.71). The weighted mean score in the table reveals that environment has positive influence on academic performance of students in polytechnics with the weighted (mean = 2.73 - 0.89)

Research Question 2: What are the influence infrastructural facilities on academic performance of Office Technology and Management students?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of responses on the influences of infrastructural facilities on the academic performance of office technology and management

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1	We have many good conducive lecture rooms in the department influence students academic performance	3.32	0.79	Agreed
2	We have good ICT library in the department influence students academic performance	3.27	0.53	Agreed
3	We have standard Account laboratory in the department influence students academic performance	3.28	0.71	Agreed
4	We have fully and well equipped language laboratory in the department influence students academic performance	3.14	0.54	Agreed
5	We have good internet facilities in the department influence students academic performance	3.56	0.52	Agreed
6	We have standard and well functional word processing studio in the department influence students academic performance	3.40	0.70	Agreed
7	We have fully and well equipped E-library in the department influence students academic performance	3.25	0.66	Agreed
8	We have good relationship with lecturers in the department influence students academic performance	3.20	0.40	Agreed
9	We have standard micro-teaching laboratory influence students academic performance	3.30	0.71	Agreed
10	We have standard model office in the department which influence students academic performance	3.40	0.65	Agreed
Weighted Mean		3.31	0.62	Agreed

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 revealed that the respondents agreed that infrastructural facilities have influence on the academic performance of Office Technology and Management students Polytechnics in Niger State, Nigeria: respondents We have many lecture room in the department (mean = 3.32), We have good ICT library in the department (mean = 3.27), We have standard Account laboratory in the department (mean = 3.28), We have fully equip language laboratory in the department (mean = 3.14), We have good internet facilities in the department (mean = 3.56), We have standard word processing

studio in the department (mean = 3.40), We have fully equip E-library in the department (mean = 3.25), All academic staff have standard office accommodation in the department (mean = 3.20), We have standard micro-teaching laboratory in the department (mean = 3.30) and We have standard model office in the department (mean = 3.40). All the 10 items have their standard deviation ranged from 0.40 to 0.79 which are below the fixed value of 1.96. This means that the responses of the respondents were not too wide spread, the responses are slightly clustered to the mean.

Discussion of the findings

Research question one revealed that school location influenced academic performance of Office Technology and Management students in Polytechnics in Niger State. The probability value of Regression analysis ($t_{4,254} = 52.342$; $P = 0.000$) is less than 0.05 level of significance, This indicated that there is significant relationship between school location and student's academic performance. The result therefore shows that school location influenced academic performance of students. This finding agreed with the result obtained by Alokun and Arijesuyo (2013) who observed that there is significant difference in the academic performance of students from urban and rural environment.

Research question two revealed that infrastructural facilities influenced students' academic performance. That Infrastructural facilities have influence on the academic performance of Office Technology and Management students in polytechnics in Niger State, Nigeria with (mean = 3.31, SD = 0.62) and ($r = -8.705$; $P > 0.021$) which showed that infrastructural facilities has significant influence on the academic performance of performance of Office Technology and Management students in polytechnics in Niger State, Nigeria. This finding agreed with the finding of Chuktu, (2021) observed in his study that infrastructural facilities have influence on student academic performance if there are provided with these facilities physical building, teaching aids internet facilities libraries are students predictive factor for academic achievement.

CONCLUSION

Based on the two objectives that the research study addressed, the researcher concluded that inference of the study is that the possibility of conducive environment on Students' academic performance does depend on where school is situated because rural areas lack good teachers and facilities while, schools located in urban areas provide students with all the basic facilities such as teachers, library, laboratory, internet facilities, conducive classroom in study environment. The implication of this study is that office technology and management students from urban areas perform better academically because of guide and learning materials they got from their learning environment. And infrastructural facilities are available in urban areas schools while, rural areas schools are neglected.

Government should put adequate measures such as serenity, distance and noise to mention but a few that would hamper learning should seriously considered and adhered to when putting up an institution. And Resources (such as equipped libraries, functional internet facilities) that facilitates students' academic performance should be made available by the respective institutions at all times in order to make up for any form of differences that may exist between students whose parents can easily afford learning materials and those who cannot.

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