

INFLUENCE OF PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL RESOURCES TO THE ATTAINMENT OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

With increasing drive towards quality education in Nigeria, it has become imperative that quality inputs of education be developed and maintained; in other to ensure that education goals are attained. Education in the 21st century as a matter of necessity must adopt a globalize outlook in its content and practice to produce self-reliant and well adjusted citizens. Until educational goals are achieved, attaining national development will remain a mirage. As focus on teachers and curriculum are emphasized, the environment and atmosphere where those education programmes take place should be adequately developed in line with curriculum demands. This paper is therefore concerned with the importance of physical and material resources which make up the environment of learning in realizing educational goals in Nigeria. The quality and quantity of content developing and outcomes is predicated beside others to be a large extent on the quality of the learning environment.

National development is a sum total of individual development synthesized and integrated into a social, political and economic system for benefit of citizens. The pursuit of national development leads to the conception of education philosophy. Education philosophy is further translated into specific educational goals and objectives. Thus, every institutions of learning from the primary school level to higher education level are established with the specific task of realizing the goals and objectives of education, thereby achieving the philosophy of education and ultimately attaining national development in all its multifaceted aspects.

The extent to which these goals are achieved may be linked to the learning environment. Appropriate physical and material resources serve as silent instructor and stimulant to pupils and teachers, so that planned goals as well as objective could be achieved. This is very important use of physical and material resources in facilitating the process of education within the schools cannot be overemphasized.

There has been a tremendous advancement in education in Nigeria through policy renewal and curriculum innovations amongst others, which has not fully yielded the expected result in realizing stated goals for education in Nigeria. This informs the need to undertake a careful study of school environment, which constitute the physical and material resources, as it relates to attainment of stated goals of education.

Concept of Physical and Material Resources

Beside financial and human resources in the school, all other resources that distinguish an educational environment fall into the category of physical and material resources. Physical resources are concrete and fixable resources which include building, furniture, equipment, electricity, water, fence, play ground and others, while materials resources constitute all consumable and replaceable materials like books, writing materials, audio and visual materials. Education is accepted as a purposeful development of the whole personality within appropriate environment. The idea of building a school is to create environment for educating the individual separate from all other environments.

The design, planning and construction of any school is based on the knowledge that physical facilities and equipment influence the overall learning climate. The ability of the school to meet the educational requirement is vital for continual existence of the school system. Conducive environment beside teachers and curriculum is a prerequisite for the operation of the school system. Thus, for the school system to satisfy the requirements and expectations placed on it, the provision of the right environment is necessary and relevant. The essence of physical and material resources is for the purpose of providing qualitative environment for learning.

According to Wragg (1999), the school learning environment is a combination of several factors paramount of which are facilities and materials. Physical and materials resources perform the functions of enhancing learning, improving skill, ability and achievement of students or learners. To adequately match the sophisticated development in contemporary society, schools must be high performing. To rate a school as high performing, such a school must cater for the whole personality in such a way that the ends of education are evident. Miller (2005) viewed high performance schools as that type of school that offer superior indoor-environmental conditions for health, safety and academically stimulating, where the physical and material resources provided are in tune with the curriculum and education programmes pursued in the school. The environment where formal education take place should meet the physiological needs, safety, visually balanced and self-fulfillment needs of the learners.

The educational institutions should provide needed facilities and material such as laboratories, science equipment, technical equipment, engineering equipment, ICT facilities and equipment materials; materials for various

craft, as well as avenues for self expression, development of skills and hidden potentials. These requirement are for practical, exploratory, experimental and creative activities for both learners and teachers at all the levels of education.

Analyses of Nigerian Education Goals

While introducing the national policy on education, the government stated that for the benefit of all citizens, and the country's, the educational goals shall be clearly set out in terms of their relevance to the needs of the individual and those of the society, in consonance with the realities of our environment and modern world" (National policy on education, 2004) the review of the curriculum was informed by the dissatisfaction of the existing education system because of its growing irrelevance to national needs, aspirations and goals (NPE, 2004).

The education system is therefore designed to satisfy the goals of education without which it is irrelevant. The education goals are derived from the nations overall philosophy and goals. The national educational goals states the following:

- (a) The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity.
- (b) The inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society
- (c) The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around, and
- (d) The acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society.

Subsection 8 of section 1 in consequence says, the quality of instruction at all levels of education shall be oriented towards inculcating the following stated values.

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- (a) Respect for the worth and dignity of the individual
- (b) Faith in man’s ability to make rational decisions;
- (c) Moral and spiritual principle in inter-personal and human relations;
- (d) Shared responsibility for the common good of society
- (e) Promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological development of all children; and
- (f) Acquisition of competencies necessary for self-reliance (NPE, 2004)

These explicit goals and core values of instruction implies that the right environment needs to be provided to actualize; inculcating national consciousness, unity and right type of values demand an environment where mutual co-operation, team spirit, self worth and tolerance can be taught directly through instruction and indirectly through environments where interaction with human and material resources can be enhanced. Acquisition of appropriate skills is necessary for a life of self reliance and active contribution to the development of society.

Effects and Relationship Between Physical and Material Resources and Education Goals

If education is to achieve the aforementioned education goals, the places where this education is carried out is of utmost importance. As perceived from the stated education goals and values, learning is both oral and practical activities leading to the development of appropriate skills and competence necessary for the survival of individual in the contemporary world. The emphasis on the individual learner at all levels is intended to produce a wholesome personality having the right values and skills for survival in a dynamic society.

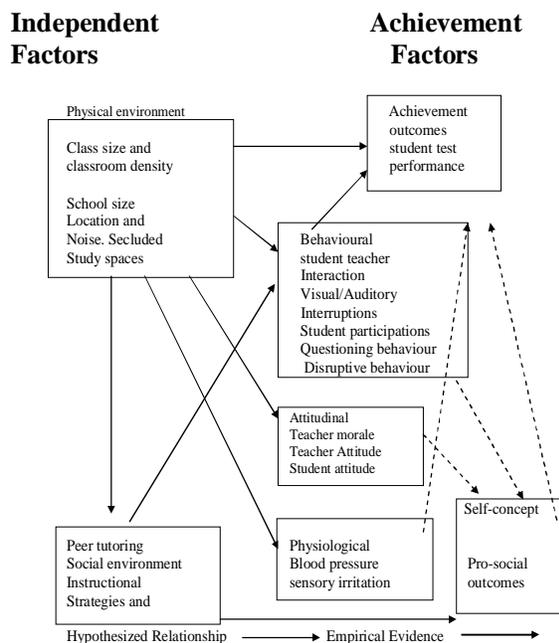
As observed by Moore and Lackney (1993) the public do not believe that improving

schools building themselves will lead to improvement in educational performance. However, many researchers and educational proponents agree and completely assert that physical and material resources are very important to education. This importance has been demonstrated by the development of models on the relationship between school facilities or physical resources and educational outcome.

Moore and Larckney (1993) developed a model to show the relationship that exist between physical environment and its effect on non-achievement and attitudes.

This model below depicts the relationship between physical environment (sum of physical resources) as mediating factors, that produce the outcomes.

A Mediational – Interactional Model of Physical Environmental Affecting Educational Outcomes



Source: Moore, G. and Lackney, J.A (1993)

school design: crisis, educational performance and design applications: electronic version retrieved September 7, 2007 from <http://www.colovadoedu>.

It can be gleaned from this model that physical school environment which is a combination of physical and material resources produces in learners and teachers attitudes and behaviour referred to as mediating, which in turn leads to educational outcomes of school test performance, achievement, prosocial outcomes and self concept. Teachers no longer constitute the main source of pupils' learning, rather the materials and facilities around the classroom and the school aid the pupils as they manipulate, see and interact with one other another.

Each facility and materials within the school is designed to actualize aspects of the curriculum and when not available, it creates avoid in the teaching learning process. A sterile and impoverished learning environment makes teachers and pupils frustrated. Where frustration occurs, there is every possibility it will lead to diminishing achievement.

The essence and value of school facilities and structures is to provide an adequate environment. The physical and materials resources provide the learner with physical, safety, emotional and psychological comfort. For the teacher, the worth and value of educational facilities to the effective performance of the job of teaching is huge and unquantifiable, as it sets the tone of the value, motivation, ingenuity and effectiveness of the teacher, classroom processes and school activities. Also, the learners are deprived of the opportunity to develop skills needed for self-reliance through practice and performance of such skills.

Conclusion

The importance of physical and material as input indices cannot be over emphasized in the attainment of over all education goals.

Without necessary facilities and materials to use, the teacher cannot effectively translate the curriculum into actual learning experiences especially in area of science and technology. A delightful environment is capable of producing a positive self-image. A healthy mind can only be cultivated in a healthy environment. The educational system is responsible to produce, a healthy and active mind through training. The three vital factors for this are the teacher, curriculum and physical material resources. Summarily, education primary role is a re-orientation of the mind and the personality of the recipient towards a better life that is productive and satisfying in line with modern needs of society.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- There should be adequate and committed funding of physical and material resources at all levels of education in Nigeria by the government
- Government should deliberately harmonized provision of physical and material resources with the content of the curriculum at all levels by engaging experts in the field.
- There should be a judicial policy on the development of physical and material resources to ensure continuity by successive government as there is need for continuous renewal and renovation of these resources.

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