UNCONDUCTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AS A THREAT TO TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES AT BASIC EDUCATION LEVEL IN IMO STATE NIGERIA

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to ascertain how unconducive learning environment hinder effective teaching-learning activities at basic education level in Okigwe Local Government of Imo State. Three specific objectives were raised and three hypotheses that tested at 0.05 level of significance. A descriptive survey carried out ex-post facto research design was adopted. The study population is 150 teachers, with 32 taken as sample from 8 schools using simple random sampling. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire titled TRULETTLAQ. Validation was done by two experts in educational management. A test re-test method was used for the reliability test which was analyzed using PPMCC method. The reliability test yielded an index of 0.72. Chi-square was used to test the hypotheses. The finding of the study is that unconducive environment hinders effective teaching-learning activities. The researchers recommend that adequate instructional aides be made available in various basic education schools.

The safety and security in educational system is a trend in the educational industry which has not really been critically enforced for the purpose of effective outcome in the sector. The educational system is an industry that produces manpower or human resources that are most needed for recreating, restructuring, revitalization and running of the nation’s economy. As such, the safety of the teachers and the students should be held in high esteem. In essence, the school environment need to be safe and health oriented such that it will guarantee the teachers’ and the students’ security.

It is expedient to note that the environment in which one finds him/herself plays a vital role on the level of achievement to be made by such person. The issue of unconducive learning atmosphere has become a menace on the educational industry. As such, the security and safety of both the teachers and the students are ignored resulting to poor manpower productivity. It was the view of Nnachi (2009) that unconducive environments negatively affect cognitive growth of the learner. From this view point above, an environment that is devoid of safety, conduciveness, stimulation, and enriched resources tends to harbor insecurity for both the education provider and the client. The unconducive nature of the present day education system is a very big environmental problem which endangers the learning activities within the school settings. The safety of any environment is the concern for employers and workers health in any given firm. Macintosh & Gough in Ogwa (2015) aptly stated that the safety and health of a workplace is an integral component of the viability of business for employers and environmentalist generally. It is therefore imperative to say that every workforce in an organization including educational sector is entitled to safety of live and healthy living; this in essence will sustain the lives of personnel and ensure high level of productivity in an organization. Here unconducive environment is determined by poor state of school environment. This
includes inadequate classrooms, inadequate desks and chairs for learning, nearly collapsed and
dilapidated building, inadequate staff room, and other structural abnormalities seen in the school
system.

Ezeji (2008) opined that the safety of any environment is a planned precautionary measure
that is taken in relative ease to control injuries to personnel concern in the workplace. Deducing from
the above viewpoint, lack of security and safety measures in the 21st century education, is among the
factors that hinders productivity in the development of practical skill acquisition by the students.
More-so, the quality of educational outcome does not only depend on the teacher as the reflection of
the performance of their duties but also in the effective management and maintenance of school
environment. Quality school environment therefore assist in facilitating efficiency in attaining the
educational end product of quality manpower production in the society. Tsavaga (2011) asserted that
school environment plays a vital role in determining how students perform or respond to
circumstances and situations around them. Deducing from this viewpoint, it is imperative to mention
that no society is devoid of environmental circumstances or influence as such the nature of any given
environment determines the occupants’ behavior and interaction within the circle. Ejide (2002) opined
that the environment determines the future cognitive performance of the young organism. Supporting
this view, Idowu (2002) stated that the environment to a large extent influences the individual
capacity to learn. Put differently, quality environment is an essential aspect of safety in the
educational system. Most school environments appear so hazardous to both the learners and teachers
such that productivity and efficiency in the school system are hindered. Most institutions lack the
facilities to operate, keeping most of the school plants in poor functional and poor tenantable order.

The problem of poor location of school with erosion ridden, poor classroom facilities,
dilapidated and nearly collapsed buildings, inadequate learning equipments, poor ventilated
classroom, lack of emergency exit, unavailability of safety gadgets, poor walk way track that
constitutes major problem that leads to congestion of the school environment, poor safety orientation
and other insecurity activities that range from human and natural disasters and political factor
violence within the environment in which the school is located may hinder smooth and efficient
productivity in the educational world. Ihebereme & Maduewesi (2009) aptly stated that despite the
loaded curriculum provision, facilities for teaching and learning are inadequate. To Ibokun (2004)
the facilities provided in our schools are grossly inadequate. He further stated that many primary
schools do not have sufficient classroom blocks, library facilities, equipped laboratories and
instructional materials etc. It is therefore worth saying that schools which are devoid of conducive
learning atmosphere and materials are likely to operate unsuccessfully thereby hindering quality
teaching-learning outcome. There is therefore need for school environment to be healthy and safety
oriented such that all the human resources and material resources will feel secured in carrying out
teaching and learning exercise effectively. Awule in Aliade (2008) is of the opinion that learning
environment should posses a good infrastructural development, adequate trained teachers, good
leadership and adequate instructional materials. To Ajewole & Okebukola (2000), factors such as
poor school climate, inadequate facilities, poor study habit, lack of available learning materials and
type of environment available to both the students and teachers causes poor achievement among
students. Put differently from the view point above, poor academic performance of students is a
reflection of the nature of environment in which teaching-learning transaction takes place. Farombi in
Odeh, Oguche & Ivangher (2015) observed that school environment may have a negative influence on
students’ academic achievement especially if such environment lacks good school climate, physical
facilities, poor teacher quality and high ratio of students in the classroom. Based on the view of Farombi, it is worth saying that adequate availability of school facilities, qualified manpower to make use of these facilities and the conduciveness of the environment in which they operate remain a vital facilitator of efficient achievement in education industry.

Concept of School Climate

The school climate is a broader term that reflects the perception or view of teachers on the general environment of the school. The work environment therefore accommodates both formal and informal groups. By school climate, we mean relatively the quality of the school nature that is experienced by its participants and how such environment affects their behavioral outcome. Angus, Doris, Prater & Steve (2009) agreed that school climate is the heart and soul of the school. This in its implication connotes that the environment plays a nurturant role in determining the level of success to be achieved in the teaching-learning activities. To pekins (2006) school climate is a social atmosphere of a setting or learning environment in which the students have different experiences depending upon the type of protocol set-up by the school administration and the teacher.

Impact of Conducive Environment on Cognitive Development of Basic Education Students

The school environment has a significant influence in determining the personality of an individual. This shows that environment posses some influence on the cognitive development and improvement of every learner. Nnachi (2009) is of the view that an organism’s environment could be internal or external. The external environment he regarded as the totality of the individual’s surroundings such as trees, houses, property of different types and human beings. From this view point, the cognitive development of a child could be enforced only when those life assisting facilities are made available and accessible to the child. More-importantly, an unconducive learning environment is one that is not suitable for carrying out educational transactions of teaching and learning process. Unconducive learning environment could be likened to acrimony, rancour, dilapidated and partly collapsed building, poor sitting, inadequate man power and conflict oriented environment which may hinder teaching and learning activities.

An environment that is conducive for learning involves availability of adequate facilities that facilitate and enhance quality learning outcome. Here the classroom size matters, the emergent teaching and learning technologies, quality manpower available in the school, accessibility of those available technologies by both the students and the teachers and peaceful learning atmosphere remains an essential drive to students’ cognitive empowerment and development. Balogun (2002) asserted that effective science education programme cannot exist without equipments for teaching. Environment therefore is a major determinant of what one learns.

Statement of Problem

One of the major problems confronting the education system in Nigeria remains poor learning environment and insecurity of both human and material resources in the system. The ideal situation in the school system should incorporate strategic planning towards maintaining conducive, stimulating, good classroom structure, adequate manpower, safety environment free from environmental hazards that hinder teaching-learning activities, provision of adequate learning resources and safety environment. However, the problems of poor classroom structures, non-stimulating and non-resourceful environment, inappropriate selection of digital instructional facilities, lack of qualified
manpower, nearly collapsed and dilapidated school buildings and lack of safety orientation amongst students and teachers constitute major problems that necessitated the study.

**Purpose of the Study**
The purpose of this study is to ascertain how unconducive learning environment affects teaching-learning activities at basic education level. More specifically, the objectives of the study are to:
- determine those unconducive factors that hinder effective teaching learning activities at the basic education level
- determine the perception of teachers on the relevance of conducive environment in the teaching-learning process
- determine if unconducive environment of the school has any insecurity threat on teaching-learning activities at the basic education level.

**Hypothesis**
The following hypotheses were formulated to guide this study and tested at 0.05 level of significance.
- **H01:** There is no significant relationship between unconducive environment and hindered teaching-learning activities caused by inadequate facilities.
- **H02:** There is no significant relationship between the response of male and female teachers on relevance of conducive learning environment and teaching-learning process.
- **H03:** There is no significant relationship between poor teaching-learning outcome and risk oriented environment at the basic education level.

**Methodology**
A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study, more specifically ex-post facto design. Ex-post facto design is ideal for conducting social research when it is not possible or acceptable to manipulate characteristics of human participation. Cohen, Manion and Morison (2000) opined that ex-post facto is a substitute for true experimental research and can be used to test hypothesis of cause and effect or correlational relationship, where it is not practical or ethical to apply a true experimental or quasi-experimental design.

**Population**
The study population consists of 152 teachers in Okigwe Education zone of Imo State. This population comprises of basic education teachers from 8 secondary schools in Okigwe zone. (Education Management Board Okigwe Zone)

**Sample and Sampling Techniques**
Sample size for this study is 32 teachers. Simple random sampling was used to randomly select 4 teachers from each secondary school of study. The instrument for data collection titled Teachers Response on Unconducive Learning Environment as a Treat to Teaching Learning Activities Questionnaire (TRULETTLAQ) was used to solicit information from the respondents. The instrument was face validated by two experts in educational management; their corrections and criticisms were effected on the final questionnaire used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was determined through tests re-test method. By this method, a trial test was administered to 20 teachers in basic education level in Umunneochi local government of Abia State; this was re-administered again
Data Analysis:

**Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between unconducive learning environment and hindered teaching-learning activities caused by inadequate facilities.

Table 1: Contingency Table for Relationship between Unconducive Learning Environments and Teaching-Learning Activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
<th>Q5</th>
<th>Q6</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>6(2.6)</td>
<td>0(2.6)</td>
<td>3(2.6)</td>
<td>0(2.6)</td>
<td>7(2.6)</td>
<td>0(2.6)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>18(13.5)</td>
<td>2(13.5)</td>
<td>15(13.5)</td>
<td>15(13.5)</td>
<td>17(13.5)</td>
<td>14(13.5)</td>
<td>81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>8(12.1)</td>
<td>13(12.1)</td>
<td>11(12.1)</td>
<td>15(12.1)</td>
<td>8(12.1)</td>
<td>18(12.1)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0(3.6)</td>
<td>17(3.6)</td>
<td>3(3.6)</td>
<td>2(3.6)</td>
<td>0(3.6)</td>
<td>0(3.6)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>192</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: X² Analysis on Unconducive Learning Environment and Hindered Teaching-Learning Activities Caused by Inadequate Facilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X²-cal</th>
<th>x²-tab</th>
<th>L/S</th>
<th>Df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>96.29</td>
<td>43.77</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings of this analysis revealed that x²-cal (96.29) > x²-tab of (43.77). We therefore reject the null hypothesis thus conclude that there is a significant relationship between unconducive learning environment and hindered teaching-learning activities caused by inadequate learning facilities at basic education level.

**Ho2:** There is no significant relationship between response of male and female teachers on the relevance of conducive learning environment and effective teaching-learning outcome.

Table 3: Contingency Table For Relationship Between Response Of Male And Female Teachers On Conducive Learning Environment And Teaching-Learning Activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Q7</th>
<th>Q8</th>
<th>Q9</th>
<th>Q10</th>
<th>Q11</th>
<th>Q12</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>30(23.1)</td>
<td>15(23.1)</td>
<td>15(23.1)</td>
<td>28(23.1)</td>
<td>20(23.1)</td>
<td>31(23.1)</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>0(5)</td>
<td>14(5)</td>
<td>8(5)</td>
<td>4(5)</td>
<td>4(5)</td>
<td>0(5)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>2(2.3)</td>
<td>3(2.3)</td>
<td>4(2.3)</td>
<td>0(2.3)</td>
<td>4(2.3)</td>
<td>0(2.3)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0(1.5)</td>
<td>0(1.5)</td>
<td>5(1.5)</td>
<td>0(1.5)</td>
<td>4(1.5)</td>
<td>0(1.5)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: $X^2$ Analysis on Mean Response of Male and Female Teachers on Relevance of Conducive Learning Environment and Teaching-Learning Activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>$X^2$-cal</th>
<th>$X^2$-tab</th>
<th>L/S</th>
<th>Df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>63.99</td>
<td>43.77</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings above revealed that $x^2$-cal (63.99) > $x^2$-tab (43.77). We therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis thus concludes that relationship exist between the male response and female response on the relevance of conducive environment and effective teaching-learning outcome at basic education level in Okigwe.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between poor teaching-learning outcome and risk oriented learning environment at basic education level.

Table 5: Contingency Table for Poor Teaching-Learning Outcome and Risk Oriented Learning Environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Q13</th>
<th>Q14</th>
<th>Q15</th>
<th>Q16</th>
<th>Q17</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>15(12)</td>
<td>16(12)</td>
<td>10(12)</td>
<td>12(12)</td>
<td>7(12)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>17(15.8)</td>
<td>16(15.8)</td>
<td>20(15.8)</td>
<td>20(15.8)</td>
<td>6(15.8)</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>0(2.2)</td>
<td>0(2.2)</td>
<td>2(2.2)</td>
<td>0(2.2)</td>
<td>9(2.2)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0(2)</td>
<td>0(2)</td>
<td>0(2)</td>
<td>0(2)</td>
<td>10(2)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: $X^2$-Cal Analysis on Poor Teaching-Learning Outcome and Risk Oriented Environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>$X^2$-cal</th>
<th>$X^2$-tab</th>
<th>L/S</th>
<th>Df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>43.77</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The finding above revealed that $x^2$-cal (72.6) > $x^2$-tab (43.77). We therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis thus concluding that relationship exists between poor teaching-learning outcome and risk oriented learning environment.

Based on the result of the findings, the following conclusions were made:

- That unconducive learning environment hinders effective teaching and learning activities.
- That such hindrance occurs as a result of inadequate teaching and learning facilities.
- That conducive learning environment is relevant in facilitating teaching and learning outcome.
- That risk oriented environment for learning causes insecurity of both the teachers and the students.
**Recommendations**

- There should be provision of adequate teaching and learning facilities to help in effective teaching-learning transaction at the basic education level.
- There should be effective maintenance culture of the existing school plants such that the case of dilapidated and nearly collapsed buildings may be avoided.
- Proper installation and wiring of the school building and laboratories should be ensured in the school.
- Funds should be made available for the purchase of proper and relevant teaching-learning aids.
- Safety course and guide should be introduced in the basic education level.
- Government should ensure that enabling environment should be designed for teaching-learning transaction.

**References**


