

Institutional Variables as a Determinant of Secondary School Effectiveness

¹Evans, G. U

Test & Measurement Unit,
Department of Educational
Foundations
Akwa Ibom State College of
Education, Afaha Nsit

²Usen, S. A.

Counselling Unit, Department of
Educational Foundations
Akwa Ibom State College of
Education, Afaha Nsit

³Ibok, U. S.

Department of Educational
Technology, University of Uyo

Abstract:- The effectiveness of secondary schools has continued to engage attentions of educational practitioners and policy makers. The paper investigated institutional factors as predictors of Secondary School effectiveness in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The study employs *ex post facto* type of research design, and made use of stratified random sampling technique in selecting 500 teachers from a population of 28560 teachers. The instrument used for data collection was school effectiveness questionnaire (SEQ). The reliability of the instrument was examined using split-half method, which yielded index that ranges from 0.71 to 0.87. The data collected was analysed using Multiple Regression statistical technique. The result obtained showed that institutional variables such as school facilities, teacher to students' ratio, home-school relationship, school leadership, teachers' interest and commitment, school plants and students' performance jointly and significantly predicted school effectiveness. The result also suggests that, school facilities exert the highest influence on school effectiveness. It was therefore recommended among others that there should be adequate provision of school facilities in secondary schools as this will serve to standardize academic and other school programmes and that will enhance school effectiveness.

Keywords:- Institutional Variables, School Effectiveness, Students Performance, School System, Teachers' Commitment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education has the greatest influence on every life on planet earth. This assertion explains the interest government, individual and increasing number of investors in education. For instance, the totality of human attitude can hardly be separated from his educational background, which can be formal or informal. Therefore, the core of education is to build strong and egalitarian society capable of driving development. In the Nigerian education policy, school effectiveness takes premium, with associated policy imperative to raise students to achieve targets at all levels of the educational system (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004.). The aforementioned policy broad goals demand secondary

education to be the preparation stage of individuals for useful living within the society and higher education.

In school systems, the secondary education mediates the basic education and tertiary education. Therefore, secondary school system is expected to provide sound foundation for tertiary education. This requires intentional periodic monitoring of the effectiveness of secondary school system (Bassey and Akpan, 2007; Inaja et al., 2010). School monitoring ensure that all components and processes of schools are functioning appropriately to realize the set goals of the schools and the society. The concern of some evaluators and researchers centered on what constituted an effective school, the indicators of school effectiveness and how effective school organization are. Researches generally lack consensus on what constitutes school effectiveness. However, school effectiveness enhancing condition at school level (Scheerens, 2004). Hence, a school is deemed to be effective if the outcome of its activities meets or exceeds its goals.

Ornstein and Levine (2006) noted that, there are many definitions accrued to school effectiveness as the various discussants on the subject. For instance, some people see school effectiveness in terms of very high academic achievements (Reynolds and Packer 1992; Ninan, 2006). Others people rate school effectiveness on ethical and religion standards of the students (Dodson, 2005; Elliot, 2006; Evans, et al., 2017). Generally, school effectiveness is a self-renewing school system that can identify and tackle internal problems; promote students' personal growth, with improve academic achievement and developing encouraging independent study, skill and love for learning. Assessment of school effectiveness also tend to have methodological problems which have left much of school effectiveness research vulnerable to criticism. For instance, school identified as effective in a given subject area during a given year may not be effective in other measures or in the next school year (Smith & Gorer, 2005). Therefore, school effectiveness could be influenced by a number of institutional variables.

Institutional variables are conditions within the school system which influence the management of institutions towards actualization of their mandates. According to

Uchendu et al. (2016) institutional variables are characteristics of the school environment like school buildings, class room and teachers that appear to influence learning. The school related variables can be assessed and improved upon. Nisar et al. (2017) sees institutional variables to include educational environment, curriculum, extent of physical amenities and teacher; competencies and behaviour with students. Some of the crucial institutional variables that may bring about changes in value system of students include leadership behaviour in the school system, provision of facilities to facilitate effective implementation of school programmes, the school climate and so on. This study examined the influence of seven institutional variables (school facilities, teacher to student ratio, home-school relationship, school leadership, teachers' interest and commitment, school plant and students' performance) in predicting secondary school effectiveness.

➤ *Statement of the Problem*

The present state of institutional variables in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State is of great concern to students, parents and all educators. Most institutional facilities are inadequate, some of the available ones are in complete state of dilapidation due to poor maintenance culture, while others are not non-functional at all. Teachers find it difficult to carryout effective instruction in schools. Besides, most teachers encounter difficulties in the implementation of continuous assessment, which has been linked to problem of institutional variables. In addition, the continual increase in students' population arising from high enrolment rate tends to stretch available institutional facilities. A close observation of students' performance indicates lack of inadequate physical facilities and enabling learning environment that could motivate, secondary school students towards high performance. Where these facilities are lacking, students develop non-challant attitudes toward learning. The administrators on their own side could encounter much difficulties in the administration of the institution due to non-available ones. In recent times, the Nigerian secondary school system has been criticized by many educationists, parents, teachers, authors and even the students for ineffectiveness, as well as not been able to satisfied the yearning and aspiration of the people. Despite the numerical growth in secondary school in the State, school system is bedeviled with may irregularities such as inadequate funding, decay of existing structures and facilities, inadequate manpower, poor ambient (Nnadi, 2011). This study has been undertaken to predict school effectiveness using institutional variables such as school facilities, teacher to student ratio, home-school relationship, school leadership, teachers' interest and commitment, school plant and students' performance. Based on the aforementioned, it is pertinent to investigate the extent to which institutional variables could predict secondary schools effectiveness.

➤ *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of the study is to investigate the extent to which institutional variables such as school facilities, teacher to student ratio, home-school relationship, school leadership, teachers' interest and commitment, school plant and students' performance can predict secondary school effectiveness in Akwa Ibom State.

➤ *Research Hypotheses:*

- Institutional variables in terms of (School facilities, teacher to student ratio, home-school relationship, school leadership, teachers' interest and commitment, school plant and student performance) are not significant joint predictors of school effectiveness.
- There is no significant contribution of the institutional variables to the prediction of secondary school effectiveness.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

➤ *Student-Teacher Ratio:*

Bassi (2001) conducted a study on students under achievement in school and colleges and found that overpopulated classes, institutional materials for teaching and learning and teachers' pedagogy are significantly related to student academic achievement. Class size may be influence by government policy, enrolment situation, and adequacy of teaching staff. For instance, a classroom in primary school is considered to be large if the number of pupils is above 20 (NTI, 2011).

According to Agabi & Okorie (2002) class environment is very important to effective communication and school achievement. This environment encompasses the classroom space, classroom furniture and utilization. According to them, the classroom should be spacious enough for the number of students accommodate in it. Seat should be enough and arranged in neat rows with good space between the rows. Ogu & Odimba (2010) observed that a pleasant classroom environment make teaching and learning attractive, while a typical one makes it boring and uncooperative.

Bennett (1996) conducted a study on the perception of headteachers, chairs of governors, teachers and parent about the effect of class size in primary school in England and Wales. The sample size of participant groups used was 1935 comprising 160 headteachers, 100 chairs governors, 411 teachers and 1,264 parent; and regions covered were North, Midlands, south and Wales. A random sampling was adopted for the selection of 325 primary schools. The sample size was stratified on the basis of region, area (Metropolitan and non-metropolitan), school size (small, medium and large) and the school type (infant, junior JIM). The findings of the study were presented group by group and descriptive statistics were applied throughout. The data were collected through questionnaires. The result shows that class size has an effect on the quality of teaching and learning irrespective of the type of school and that the total amount of individual teacher attention would be adversely affected, as would

affect the assessment of children's work. Akinsolu (2010) had a contrary result when he found out that teachers' qualifications, experience and teacher-student ratio were significantly related to students' academic performance.

➤ *School Leadership:*

Adegoroge (2004) conducted an investigation on the influence of Nigerian secondary school principals personal attribute on teacher job fulfilment and satisfaction. He found that friendliness at work, grasp of organization policies, observing hierarchical structure, giving incentives for job performance are significantly related to the personal attribute of principal. The researcher used mean and correlation coefficient in data analysis, the findings of the study shows that when teachers are satisfied with their boss attitude and promotion prospect, they will put in their best and ensure student academic progress. Bassey & Akpan (2007) put it that a school supervisor is someone in a position of leadership who poses the skills and ability to provide effective supervision of schools in terms of perceiving, desirable, objective regarding teaching methods and other instructional problems that they encounter.

Inaja, Esua and Otu (2010) examined the influence of institutional supervision on teacher' effectiveness in secondary schools in Cross River State. They noted that effective teaching and learning is a measure of effective school. Three null hypotheses were formulated, one of which was on principal role in instructional supervision and teacher effectiveness. Expost facto design was adopted for the study, simple random sampling technique was used to select 200 teachers. Pearson product moment correlation (r) was used to analyze the relationship between principal instructional supervision and teacher effectiveness, at an alpha level of 0.05. At the level of 0.05, $r = 0.47$ with 198 df and the critical $r = 1.38$ which was interpreted that there was a significant relationship between principal supervisory role and teachers' effectiveness. The study concluded from its findings that the principal instructional supervision significantly related to teacher effectiveness and by extension school effectiveness.

➤ *Home- School Relationship:*

The environment in which a child finds himself has a lot of impact on the child's physical and educational development. The home environment is the child's first point of contact with the world and it is the first educational unite for most children between the age of 0 to 6years (Ornstein, 2006) She observed that the child abuse is a vice which negatively influence school effectiveness Imona (2006) has identified some home practice that tend to hinder smooth home-school relationship and reducing school effectiveness. In her study to investigate the relationship between child abuse and academic performance of children in Southern Cross River State, Nigeria used a sample of 400 primary school pupils selected randomly from the population of 14,491 pupils. The findings reveal that child labour and other form of child abuse have high tendencies of lowering the child academics performance in school

• *Oyebola (2006)*

Investigated how parents assisted their children to develop good reading habits and suggested how parents can assist their children develop good reading habit in school. A total of 88 parents were employed out of which 55.68% were male and 44.32% were females in kwali Area council of Abuja, Nigeria. Survey method was used with one questionnaire instrument and data were analyzed by using percentages. The findings of the study revealed that a good number of Nigerians do not have a good reading habit and this negative attitude to reading lower literacy rate in the society.

➤ *Teachers' interest and commitment:*

An attitude is a tendency to react favorably or negatively to stimuli or referent. Oboanaya (2011) on his review of literature identified factors like status, information, educational preparation and training and environmental climate and other variables affect attitude as expressed by individual. Mortimore et al. (1988) in a study of junior schools found seven factors associated with school effectiveness beside children's achievement. These are purposeful leadership, involvement of the deputy head (delegation of power responsibilities) teachers' involvement in and attitude towards the overall life of the school, intellectually challenging teaching a work-oriented environment, positive climate and maximum communication between teacher and pupils.

• *Adetoro (1999)*

Investigated the institutional factor that affect student academics performance and found that variables such as peer group influence, home-school distance, age, experience of the learner. Learners and commitment to learning affect student's academic achievement. He adopted the expost facto research method for the study and documentary evidence and personal assessment were also used. The findings of the study reveal a significant relationship between teachers' qualification and student academic achievement. The study also showed that interest and commitment of teachers had highest correlation among urban and rural schools, followed by semi-urban and medium schools with the least correlation in the rural or small school.

➤ *School facility and school effectiveness:*

School facilities play strategic factors in organizational functioning of every academic institution (Farrant, 2000; Farombi, 2002; Oni, 2003). This is so because they determine to a very large extent the smooth functioning of any social organization or system including education. He further stated that their availability, adequacy and relevance influence efficiency and high productivity. In his words, Farombi (2009) opined that the wealth of a nation or society could determine the quality of education in that land; emphasizing that a society that is wealthy will establish good schools with quality teachers, learning infrastructures that with such, students may learn with ease thus bringing about good academic achievement. Vila (2009) state that infrastructure comprises the facilities through which communication, learning and transaction in the learning

environments occur. In a study on factors influencing unrest among secondary school students in cross River State. Bacco (2002) identified inadequacy of school facilities and equipment as a variable that leads to hostility (students' unrest) in school. The study adopted a survey design and a population of 12124 male and female students in senior secondary two (SS2) in 1997/98 school session. A sample of 30 schools from a total of 147 public and private schools was drawn through simple random sampling from six educational zone. Data were collected using questionnaire. Pearson product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship and student tendency toward unrest was applied. There was a significant relationship of $r= 0.45$ at 0.05 level and 898 degree of freedom(df). The study conclude that inadequate school facilities lead to students' unrest.

- *Udo (1990)*

holds consistent view with Fabyi and Fagbamiye (2001) who state that physical and material resources contributed significantly to student academic achievement. The findings are also in line with that of Ayodele (1999) who state that inadequate facilities for teaching and learning may leads to low student achievement.

- *School Plant and School Effectiveness:*

The school climate can be viewed as the social and interpersonal relationship that exist among the members of a school. Good school environment is an essential ingredient in the attainment of quality education. Conducive learning environment improve students' performance in class work and examination. Ellett and Teddle (2003) in their research on teacher evaluation. Teacher effectiveness and school Effectiveness presented perspective from U.S.A identified a number of effective schools' characteristics among them was a productive school climate and culture. Adeyemi (2007) posited that in public schools, pupils learning environment typically has few facilities, and that many classes had up to 50 pupils which is higher than the 30 to 40 pupils as indicated in the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004).

- *Sucharita (2004)*

Carried out a study on the effect of school climate on social intelligence and found that qualities of the school environment interacted with general intellectual ability of the students in the process of development of the social intelligence. He employed the usage of 2by2 factorial design. In his research where two level of intelligence interacted with the two types of school environment. The findings of the study shows that average student in enriched climate score Significantly higher on school intelligence test than average students in non-enriched school climate.

- *Student/School Performance:*

When studying school effectiveness, the very first requirement is the outcome of the achievement by its student. School effectiveness which usually limits effectiveness to student result on standardize exams, particularly in math and reading (Murphy, Hallinger and Mesa (1985) McEwan (2000 used academic achievement of student and school attendance on high school completion and college attendance among others variables to compare

the effectiveness of public and private schools. He found that when based on the same income level of parents, student in catholic (private school have a rather small advantage over those in public school in their achievement in Mathematics.

- *Nwegwu (2003)*

Asserted that one of the criteria the public use in measuring scholastic attainment of school and students is the performance of the learners in public examination. For instance, in the year 1996 SSCE out of the 519,667 who registered for English Language, only 11.3% passed at credit level or higher, in 1998 it was 8.3%. For the 51,656 who enrolled for Mathematics only 19% passed with credit or higher grade (The Nation, 2010)

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopted the ex-post facto research design. This design is considered appropriate because the researcher deal with non -manipulative independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulated.

- *Area of the Study:*

The study was carried out in Akwa Ibom State is located within the South -South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The State is among those classified as educationally advantage States in the country, as many of her citizens are exposed to all levels of education with literacy rate of 78.84% (National Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

- *Population of the Study:*

The population of the study consisted of 28,560 senior secondary school teachers in the 31 local government Area of in Akwa Ibom State. This comprises of 15,320 male and 13,240 females in the public Senior Secondary School in the State.

- *Sample and Sampling Technique:*

The sample size for the study was 500. This consist of 282 male teachers and 218 female teachers randomly drawn from 30 secondary schools in the three Senatorial Districts of Akwa Ibom State. The statistical basis for using the above sample size is in accordance with Krejcie and Morgan (1970), Idaka (2015) which provided scientific means of computing the minimum sample size (n) to justify the precision of any study of a known population as

$$n = \frac{x^2 NP(1 - P)}{d^2 (N - 1) + x^2 P(1 - P)}$$

where x^2 is table value of Chi-Square at 1degree of freedom for desired confidence level (0.05), N is population size, P is population proportion (assumed to be 0.50) and d is degree of accuracy (expressed as a proportion (0.05). According to them, for a population of 15,000 the minimum sample size of 375 is enough to produce valid results. The study adopted stratified sampling approach to select the

sample size. The bases for the stratification were adopted. The three Educational Zones were considered as the bases for the stratification.

➤ *Instrument for Data Collection:*

The instrument design to collect data for the study was questionnaire of School Effectiveness questionnaire (SEQ), which was developed by the researcher. SEQ had two sections (section A and B). Section A contains background (demographic) information with sis items, while Section B of the SEQ Apart from Teacher to student ratio which was converted into percentage. Others were structured to gather information on the seven variables namely School facilities, Home-school relationship, school leadership, teachers’ attitude to their profession, school climate and student /school performance. The overall scale used in section “B” of SEQ was the four-point scale” Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) (Inaja, Esuasbana & Otu, 2010).

➤ *Validity and Reliability of the Instrument:*

For the purpose of establishing validity of the instrument. The instrument was inspected and certified by expert in educational measurement and evaluation as having an outward appearance (face validity), and for measuring what it intended to measure. The observation and input of

the expert were considered and incorporated relevant part of the instrument. The reliability of SEQ was achieved through pilot survey. Where the instrument was administered to forty respondents, who were not part of the study population. Test reliability of the instrument was determined using split- half method and it yield an acceptable correlation coefficient, which ranged between-0.87 and 0.71. This gives the researcher the confidence that the instrument was reliable enough to collect data that could elucidate the causal effect of institutional variable and school effectiveness.

IV. RESULTS

The result for the study were presented based on the stated research questions

HO₁: Institutional variables in terms of school facilities, teacher to student ratio, home-school relationship, school leadership, teachers’ interest and commitment, school plant and students’ performance are not significant joint predictors of school effectiveness. Using multiple independent variables that were measured continuously to predict dependent variable that was also measured continuously, multiple regression was applied as the statistical technique and the result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Multiple Regression Analysis of Seven Institutional Variable as a Predictor of School Effectiveness in Secondary School (N= 500)

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std Error of Estimate		
.229 ^a	.052	.047	.0488		
Source of variance	SS	DF	MS	F	Sig
Regression	6.562	3	2187	9.160	.000
Residual	118.430	497	293		
Total	124.992	500			

*P< 0.05, df=3&497

Table 1 indicates that at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom 3 and 497. The calculated F-ratio obtained in establishing the prediction of the seven aspects of institutional variables on secondary school effectiveness is 9.16 (p<0.05). This result leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, which imply that there is significant joint prediction of seven aspects of institutional variables: school facilities, teacher to student ratio, home-school relationship, school leadership, teachers’ interest and commitment, school plant on secondary school students’ performance. The R value which is the multiple correlation coefficient between the seven predictors and the dependent variable is 0.23, indicating a significant positive relationship between the seven independent variables and the dependent variable. The

coefficient of determination, R square, which shows the strength of the independent variables in predicting the dependent variable is 0.052. This specify that, 5.2% of the variance in secondary school effectiveness was accounted for by the collective contribution of the seven independent variables.

HO₂: There is no significant relative contributions of the institutional variables to the prediction of secondary school effectiveness. The relative contributions of each of the predictors to variation in the dependent variable is explained by the regression coefficient as presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Result on Multiple Regression of Relative Contributions of Institutional Variables to the Prediction of Secondary School Effectiveness

	Unstandardized Coefficient B		Standardized Coefficient Beta	T-Value	SIG
	B	Std Error	Beta		
Constant	0.670	.188		3.562	.000
SF	.260	.037	.276	7.010	.000
HSR	.181	.036	.186	5.080	.000
SL	.072	.014	.232	5.256	.000
TA	.072	.014	.232	5.200	.000
SP	.074	.014	.238	5.344	.000
SSP	.118	.031	.143	3.760	.000
STR	-.247	-.138	.088	-2.804	.005

Dependent variables: School Effectiveness

P < 0.05 probability level

Table 2 shows that at 0.05 level of significance, each of the seven predictor variables (school facilities, teacher to student ratio, home-school relationship, school leadership, teachers’ interest and commitment, school plant and students’ performance) has significant contribution to the prediction of secondary school efficiency. The value of standardized coefficients shows the important of each independent variable in predicting the dependent variable. and t-values. The higher the absolute β value of variable, the more its importance. Therefore, the important and significant predictor variable is school facilities (SF), contributing 27.6% to secondary schools’ effectiveness. This is followed by school plant (SP), 23.8%; school leadership (SL) and teachers’ attitude (TA), 23.2%; home-school relationship (HSR), 18.6%; students’ performance (SSP), 14.3% and the least, students-teacher ratio (STR), 8.8%.

V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings from the study are obvious that, institution variables, such as school facilities, teacher to student ratio, home-school relationship, school leadership, teachers’ interest and commitment, school plant and students’ performance collectively predict secondary schools’ effectiveness. The study has shown that, the seven institutional variables when taken together contribute significantly to the variation in the dependent variable.

Among the seven independent variables, school facilities are seen to have significant contribution to the variance in the dependent variable. This is a pointer to the importance of facilities such as instructional facilities, infrastructural facilities and recreational facilities as key players in determining effective of any school. When the teachers are provided with adequate and appropriate facilities, they can deploy the facilities to ensure that quality knowledge and laboratory skills are imparted to the students. Besides, with adequate and appropriate facilities in schools, distractions on the school Management and Proprietors would be reduce to an optimal level.

VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that institutional variable such as, school facilities, principal leadership, teacher to student ratio, teacher interest and commitment, student/school performance, home-school relationship, school plant can predict secondary school effectiveness. This is based on the fact that when school facilities are well provided in school, it creates enabling learning and working environment for students and teachers respectively. This could enhance effectiveness of the secondary school system. Good relationship of principals with the teachers will arose the teachers’ interest and commitment to their profession.

Among the seven predictors of secondary schools’ effectiveness, school facilities have the highest weight, followed by school leadership and thirdly teachers’ interest and commitment. While students’ performance was the least influence on school effectiveness.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- There should be adequate provision of school facilities in secondary schools as this Weill serve to standardize academic and other school programmes and that will enhance school effectiveness.
- Moderation should be the watch word for principal leadership and general supervision of schools’ activities by principals, as extreme case of any activity have some negative effect.
- Monitoring of schools to ensure that all the school component are functional should be emphasized, such monitoring activities by government and non-government agencies should be organized on regular basis. This will help to improve the school system.
- Policy makers should make acquisition of professional certificate prerequisite for employment of would-be teachers. This will likely reduce the negative attitude to work and motivate teachers especially the untrained ones who find their way into teaching for lack of other job

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