ASSESSMENT OF THE PROVISION AND UTILIZATION OF DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES IN PUBLIC JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NORTH- CENTRAL, NIGERIA;

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Abstract

This study assessed the provision and utilization of digital infrastructural facilities in public junior schools in secondary North-Central Zone, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey design, two research questions and hypotheses were developed. The population of the study was 25,272, while the sample size of 384 was determined by research advisors sampling table (2006). The study adopted simple random and proportionate sampling techniques in selecting 28 public junior secondary schools in seven states in North Central Zone, Nigeria. The instrument used for the collection of data was a self-structured questionnaire titled, Provision and Utilization of Digital Infrastructural Facilities Questionnaire (PUDIFQ). The two instruments were made on a five-point rating scale of Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Undecided, Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed, and were scored 5, 4,3,2 and1 respectively, with a reliability coefficient index of 0.93. Data were analyzed using frequency and percentage for the demographic variables. The hypotheses were tested using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 mean score. The findings from the study revealed that; digital facilities were inadequately provided in public junior secondary schools in North-Central Zone, Nigeria. However, the available digital infrastructural facilities were properly utilized. The study recommended that government should collaborate with Parents' Teachers' Association (PTA), School Base Management Committee (SBMC) and Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) to ensure adequate provision of digital facilities in public junior secondary schools. Stakeholders in education sector should ensure proper training of staff and effective utilization of available digital facilities in Public Junior Secondary Schools in North-Central Zone, Nigeria.

Key Words: *Digital infrastructural facilities, public junior secondary.*

Introduction

The school digital infrastructural facilities are the cornerstone of contemporary school system. They are the school physical and software-based components designated to facilitate teaching and learning process in schools. According to Derder, et'al (2023) Technology is changing how teachers work, and it's crucial to understand how digital tools affect teaching and learning in public schools. This informed the relevant of digital technologies in teaching and learning in public junior secondary schools. Some of the germane digital tools used in our contemporary school system are computers,

laptops, internet, PowerPoint presentations, interactive whiteboards and communication teaching, etc. However these digital facilities does not have the potency for efficient service delivery without school plant, that is, the school buildings, classrooms, library, laboratories, toilet facilities, offices and other materials and infrastructures that would likely motivate students towards learning (Okomolate and Adesua, 2016).

In the views of United Republic of Tanzania URT (2013) physical facilities include classrooms, laboratories, libraries, ICT facilities, dormitories, health and kitchen facilities, as well as facilities for students with disabilities. Physical facilities are germane to effective learning and academic performance of students. School infrastructural facilities have been observed as a potent factor to quantitative education. Infrastructure refers to basic physical and organizational structures needed for the successful running of the institution. Bandele (2003) noted that the importance of physical facilities cannot be relegated. Facilities like modern laboratories, libraries and classrooms are to be put in place in all our schools. Adesola (2005) found out that the level of available resources is indeed a plus to the teachers and goes to show the level of ingenuity and commitment of the teachers toward effective delivery of lesson. There is the need for renovation of old buildings, chairs, desks, cabinets and acquisition of modern classrooms as earlier recommended by Alimi (2007). In support of this Odeh, Oguche, Angelina, Ivagher & Dondo (2015), identified facilities as the main factor contributing to academic achievement in the school system. They emphasized that the availability, relevance and adequacy of these facilities contribute to students' achievement while unattractive school buildings, crowded classrooms, non-availability of playground and flower beds and surroundings that have no aesthetic beauty can contribute to poor performance.

It is widely known that availability of infrastructural facilities in secondary schools particularly junior secondary schools, has a considerable impact on school environment and as such one of the important indicators for assessing whether the schools are providing a conducive learning environment for children. Adams (2004) submitted that, a quiet, cool, clean and beautiful physical environment makes the teacher and students happy and enhances their performance and productivity. The setting must be attractive enough to make students wish to spend long hours there. What we have presently in most of our secondary schools does not meet these requirements. The typical village classroom is part of an unattractive building. The roof may still be in place or may have been blown off by wind. If the latter is the case, students are forced to study without being protected from the effects of the weather. Wilson (2003), Okunuga (2005), Lawrence (2003) and Ijaduola (2008c) cautioned that with poor physical working condition, there are usually mental fatigue, truancy, frustration, discomfort, and poor health; all those consequently reduces students' academic performance. Summarizing Manabete and Makinde (2016), United States Department of Education (2002) emphasized that the availability of these resources is quite important to achieving effectiveness in instructional delivery and supervision in the school system. They further buttressed the fact that non-availability of basic facilities such as classrooms, office accommodation, workshops, sporting facilities, laboratories, library et cetera which is being experienced in secondary schools is a perfect reflection of what obtains in the university system.

Adewunmi (2000) corroborated Manabete and Makinde (2016) view; revealed that the availability of adequate number of physical facilities had significant influence on pupil's academic performance. He further stressed that adequate number of physical facilities should be supplied to state primary schools. Ademilua (2000), in his study observed that inadequate provision of school resources has been a major factor of poor students' academic performance in Ekiti State. He equally remarked that without adequate physical resources/facilities there would be a continuous decline in students' academic performance. World Bank publication cited in Owoeye and Yara (2011) linked performance of students to the provision of adequate physical facilities while referring to a survey of 51 primary schools in Botswana that students performed significantly better on academic tests when they had adequate classrooms, desks and chairs. Owoeye and Yara (2011) succinctly said that school buildings

are very vital input to educational system; emphasizing that even though they do not teach but their use may facilitate or impede learning.

Njoroge (2000) in a study on factors affecting availability, acquisition and utilization of resources in the teaching of English in selected secondary schools in Kenya found that unavailability of educational facilities hinders effective utilization. However, Kitheka (2005) noted that, schools with abundant resources may not always utilize them efficiently and consequently fail to raise student's level of performance. On the other hand, schools with limited resources may utilize what they have efficiently and this may boost learning thus students should be able to maximize and utilize available resources so as to adequately achieve educational objectives. Over usage of the facilities tend to make the facilities highly susceptible to constant tear and wear and hence their depreciation. The longer a school facility stays, the more the utility depreciates (Emetaron, 2004). Utilization of available facilities is more important than the quantity. This is supported by Cohen, Raudenbush & Ball (2003) who points out that, it is not making resources available to schools that matters, but getting those resources utilized by teachers and students to get academic content learned.

Akinsolu (2003) stressed the importance of physical facilities in the management of educational system. In her study on provision and management of facilities for primary education in Nigeria, she pointed out that there is a gross inadequacy in facilities for Nigerian primary schools with availability to required percentage ranging from as low as 1.5 to a maximum of 35.2%. She opines that all stakeholders need to ensure adequate provision of physical facilities in all educational system, be it primary, secondary and tertiary levels to enhance learning and for improved productivity.

The National Policy on Education (2004) stipulates that the school environment especially the physical environment should be made conducive to facilitate the learning process. The policy recommends that classroom should be well constructed and spacious and all types of physical facilities such as instructional materials, library, laboratory, playing ground, toilets and staff rooms should be provided for effective teaching and learning process. Good modern physical facilities in school could add significantly to the promotion of academic performance. According to Subair and Awolere (2006), there should be maximum presence of physical conditions such as lighting, ventilation, good building constructions, location, instructional materials, sufficient windows, doors, vents and fans to cool the heat during hot season. All these improve work and health of both the teachers and the learners.

Also, in recent study carried out by Okunamiri (2003), on the provision and utilization of school facilities in some selected secondary schools in Nigeria, his findings revealed that although facilities were adequately provided in some schools, they were not effectively utilized. He further emphasized on the need to ensure effective and efficient realization of the goals and objectives of the educational system. This implies that the availability of physical facilities alone does not enhance learning; rather it is the adequate utilization of these facilities that can only motivate students to learn and enhance their academic performance. One of the reasons why available materials are not used by many teachers in schools and colleges is that they lack the necessary skills to operate them.

Owuamanam (2005) noted that, the inadequacy of infrastructural facilities is one of the major problems facing the Nigerian education system. Nwadiani, (2012) is also of the opinion that infrastructural facilities in public schools in Nigeria are inadequate leading to poor utilization. Studies on physical facilities in public schools have revealed that what is on ground in most public schools, both at the higher and lower levels is a far cry from the recommended bench mark for the provision of infrastructural facilities in these schools.

Statement of the problem

The school physical facilities particularly digital facilities in most public junior secondary schools in North Central States have not been in good shape. It was observed by the researcher that in some cases, students sit on the ground to receive lessons, also many of the classrooms, laboratories, libraries, playing grounds are in a terrible state of despair; that in most of the public junior secondary

schools, there are no computers, laptops, internet, PowerPoint presentations, interactive whiteboards and communication teaching. The major factors responsible for the problems of facilities in Nigerian secondary schools today could be related to issue of inadequate provision of facilities, inadequate financial support, lack of effective utilization of facilities and lack of maintenance culture.

Evidences abound that many of the studies that attempt to shed light on this subject matter in Nigeria have dwell either on polytechnics, colleges of education, primary schools and partially secondary education. While some focuses on the availability, adequacy and maintenance of infrastructural facilities, others on provision and management of school plant outside the purview of instructional facilities and students' academic performance and goals achievement of the schools. The few studies in Nigeria that attempt to address this matter only dwell on the availability, adequacy and management of infrastructural facilities or school plant without addressing the area of provision, utilization and maintenance of digital facilities in secondary schools, and also studies of this nature have not been addressed in the North Central Zone, Nigeria despite being homogeneous and sharing of common boundaries virtually in all areas of school experience and ideology in life. It is in this light that this study attempts to assess the provision, utilization and maintenance of digital facilities in public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The study was set to

1. ascertain the provision of digital infrastructural facilities in public junior secondary schools in North- Central Zone, Nigeria;
2. assess the utilization of digital infrastructural digital facilities in public junior secondary schools in North- Central Zone, Nigeria;

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. How adequate is the provision of digital infrastructural facilities in public junior secondary schools in North- Central Zone, Nigeria?
2. To what extent are the digital infrastructural facilities utilized in Public Junior Secondary Schools in North- Central Zone, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study and tested at 0.05 levels of significance.

Ho_1. There is no significant difference in the opinions of the principals, teachers and supervisors on the provision of digital infrastructural facilities in public junior secondary schools in North- Central Zone, Nigeria;

Ho_2. There is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents on the utilization of digital infrastructural facilities in public junior secondary schools in North- Central Zone, Nigeria;

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was used to describe the attitude, opinions, behaviors or characteristics of a population based on the data collected from a sample or population. The population of the study consists of all the principals, teachers and supervisors of public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria which comprises Benue, FCT, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau. This category of respondents was selected to assess the provision, utilization and maintenance of digital infrastructural facilities in secondary schools in the study area. The population of the study was approximately 25, 272 made up of 1, 724 principals, 22, 825 Teachers and Supervisors 723.

The sample size of the study is 384 which was obtained from the six states and FCT of the North Central Zone, Nigeria. The sample size of the states was reached after using Research Advisor (2006).

The researcher chooses proportionate sampling technique which gives the researcher the opportunity to select a sample size based on the respective population of each state. Based on that, 95 principals, 217 teachers and 72 supervisors were chosen from the sampled schools. This gave a total sample size of 384 teachers and supervisors were chosen based on their respective population.

A structured self- designed questionnaire developed by the researcher was used based on the issues highlighted in the research questions and hypotheses using the data obtained through the review of literature. The closed- ended type of questionnaire was used mainly to elicit responses as it provides control over the participant's range of responses by providing specific response alternatives. The questionnaire was based on Likert scale format which has five points rating scale which will determine the extent to which the respondents agree or disagree with a particular issue. It was divided into five-point rating scale as follows: A pilot test was conducted to find out the reliability of the instrument of the research. The reliability coefficient of about 0.93 at 0.05 level of significance; meaning that the instrument can be reliable and internally consistent for the study.

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and post Adhoc Scheffe test were used to analyze hypotheses one to three. ANOVA was considered as the most suitable statistical tool because of the involvement of three or more variables in the study. Therefore, a mean score of 3.0 and above indicates positive responses to the research question indicating acceptance; while a mean score below 3.0 indicate negative response to the research questions, implying rejection.

Research Question 1: How adequate is the Provision of Infrastructural Facilities in Public Junior Secondary Schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean score of respondents on provision of digital infrastructural facilities in public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria.

S/N	Item statement	Respondent	SA	A	UD	D	SD	N	MEAN
1	Computer supply is available in the school	Principals	29	30	-	30	6	95	3.4
		Teachers	163	15	-	37	2	217	4.3
		Supervisors	30	10	-	22	10	72	3.4
2	Computers are provided for principal and staff in the school	Principals	20	37	-	30	8	95	3.3
		Teachers	100	30	-	70	17	217	3.6
		Supervisors	20	10	-	28	22	72	3.0
3	Internet facilities are provided in the school	Principals	5	10	-	72	8	95	2.4
		Teachers	9	8	-	160	40	217	2.8
		Supervisors	10	10	-	42	10	72	3.3
4	Digital laboratories and workshops are provided in the school	Principals	20	16	-	51	7	95	2.9
		Teachers	20	10	-	187	-	217	3.4
		Supervisors	10	20	-	20	22	72	2.6
5	Communication teaching is provided in the school	Principals	31	29		30	5	95	3.5
		Teachers	8	57	2	109	41	217	2.5
		Supervisors	27	13	-	20	12	72	3.3
6	Interactive platforms are provided for teaching and learning in the school	Principals	16	49	-	23	7	95	3.5
		Teachers	41	41	-	105	03	217	2.7
		Supervisors	30	7	-	23	12	72	3.3
7	The school is well fenced	Principals	15	16	-	37	27	95	2.7
		Teachers	27	5	-	85	100	217	2.5
		Supervisors	17	26	2	10	17	72	3.2
8	PowerPoint presentation for teaching and learning in the school	Principals	28	12	1	40	15	95	3.0
		Teachers	31	47	3	104	35	217	2.7
		Supervisors	17	15	-	22	20	72	1.7

9	Laptops are provided to staff in the school	Principals	25	5	-	40	25	95	2.7
		Teachers	3	2	-	170	45	217	1.8
		Supervisors	20	15	-	20	17	72	3.0
10	e-library facilities are adequately provided	Principals	17	26	-	32	20	95	2.8
		Teachers	50	86	-	100	51	217	3.8
		Supervisors	23	4	-	30	15	72	2.8

Table 1 revealed the views of principals, teachers and supervisors on provision of Infrastructural Facilities in Public Junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria. From the responses of the respondents, items have mean ratings in the region of 2.7 to 4.0. This revealed that the respondents agreed to all the items stated. The result further revealed that digital facilities were adequately provided in public junior secondary schools in North-Central Zone, Nigeria.

Research Question Two: to what extent are the digital infrastructural facilities utilized in public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean score of respondents on utilization of digital infrastructural facilities in public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria

S/N	Item statement	Respondent	SA	A	UD	D	SD	N	MEAN
11	Computer facilities in the school are properly utilized	Principals	20	27	5	20	23	95	3.0
		Teachers	20	107	-	40	50	217	3.0
		Supervisors	20	10	2	25	15	72	2.9
12	Computers are properly utilized by Principals and staff	Principals	25	20	5	15	30	95	
		Teachers	87	20	-	60	50	217	3.3
		Supervisors	10	14	-	16	32	72	3.2
									2.4
13	Internet facilities are utilized in the school	Principals	20	31	5	21	18	95	3.1
		Teachers	100	17	5	70	25	217	3.4
		Supervisors	10	23	-	24	15	72	2.6
14	Digital laboratories and workshops in the school are properly utilized	Principals	20	8	2	27	33	95	2.4
		Teachers	70	5	10	35	100	217	2.6
		Supervisors	10	26	-	17	7	72	2.7
15	Communication teaching in the school are properly utilized	Principals	38	12	1	29	10	95	3.4
		Teachers	131	4	6	44	52	217	3.8
		Supervisors	16	15	-	22	19	72	2.8
16	Interactive platforms in the school are properly utilized	Principals	38	12	5	30	10	95	3.4
		Teachers	81	104	6	31	2	217	4.0
		Supervisors	25	15	-	12	20	72	3.6
17	The school fence is properly utilized	Principals	10	60	5	15	5	95	3.6
		Teachers	80	27	-	100	10	217	3.3
		Supervisors	22	15	-	15	10	72	3.3
18	PowerPoint presentation in the school is properly utilized	Principals	32	10	5	40	8	95	3.2
		Teachers	60	96	8	45	8	217	3.7
		Supervisors	20	19	2	24	7	72	3.1
19	Laptops provided to staff in the school are properly utilized	Principals	35	23	5	22	10	95	3.5
		Teachers	8	63	2	100	40	217	2.0
		Supervisors	26	11	6	17	12	72	3.7
20	e-library facilities are adequately utilized	Principals	19	36	5	33	7	95	3.4
		Teachers	109	31	-	54	5	217	3.6
		Supervisors	25	14	-	21	12	72	3.3

Table 2 was on utilization of Infrastructural Facilities in Public Junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria. From the responses of the respondents, items have mean ratings in the region of

2.7 to 4.0. This revealed that the respondents agreed to all he items stated. The result further revealed that there was proper utilization of available infrastructural facilities in most public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria except Laboratories and computers that were not properly utilized in most of the schools.

Hypothesis I (HO_1): there is no significant difference in the opinions of the principals, teachers and supervisors on the provision of digital infrastructural facilities in public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria.

Table 3: summary of analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the provision of infrastructural facilities in public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria

Staff office	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.226	2	2.409	1.202	0.011
Within Groups	589.956	382	1.630		
Total	**597.182**	**384**			

From table 3, the F-value is 1.202 and the P-value is 0.011 at 0.05 levels of significance. Since the P-value is less than the level of significance set for the study, the hypothesis is therefore rejected, thus, there is significant difference in the opinions of the respondents on the provision of digital Infrastructural facilities in public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria**.**

Hypothesis II (HO_2): there is no significant difference in the opinions of the principals, teachers and supervisors on the utilization of digital infrastructural facilities in public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria.
Items covering this section were collected from items 1-10 in the Questionnaire. Details are captured in table 5

Table 4: Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANOA) on the Utilization of digital infrastructural facilities in public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria

Staff quarters	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.161	2	0.387	1.239	0.064
Within Groups	511.619	382	1.690		
Total	512.780	384			

From table 5, the F-value is 1.229 and the P-value is 0.064 at 0.05 levels of significance. Since the P-value is more than the level of significance set for the study, the hypothesis was therefore retained, thus, there is no significant difference in the opinions of the principals, teachers and supervisors on the utilization of digital infrastructural facilities in public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria**.**

Discussions of the Findings

This section presents the discussions of findings on the opinion of respondents on all the issues related to the three research questions and hypotheses. The main objective of the study is to assess the provision and utilization of facilities in public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria. The data collected through the administration of questionnaire was analyzed using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). This presents the discussion on the finding of the study.

Finding from research question one revealed that infrastructural facilities were inadequately provided in Public Junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria (Aggregate mean of 2.7) on table 1. This implies that most junior secondary schools were not adequately fenced and there was not internet system and e-library provided in the school. This finding agrees with Ademilua (2000) who observed that inadequate provision of school resources has been a major factor in poor student's academic performance in Ekiti state. Similarly, Okunamiri (2003), on the provision and utilization of school facilities in some selected secondary schools in Nigeria, find out that although facilities were adequately provided in some schools, they were not effectively utilized. Also, Owuamanam (2005) and Nwadiani (2012) noted inadequacy in the provision of infrastructural facilities in public secondary schools in Nigeria, Wilson (2003), Okunuga (2005), Lawrence (2003) and Ijaduola (2008c) cautioned that with poor physical working condition, there are usually mental fatigue, truancy, frustration, discomfort, and poor health; all these consequently reduces students' academic performance.

Finding from research question two revealed that available infrastructural facilities were properly utilized in Public Junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria except e-library, interactive whiteboard and PowerPoint facilities that were not provided in most of the schools (Aggregate mean of 3.6) on table 4.6. This implies that computers facilities in most of the school were properly utilized. This finding is in contrast with study carried out by Okunamiri (2003), on the provision and utilization of school facilities in some selected secondary schools in Nigeria, his findings revealed that although facilities were adequately provided in some schools, they were not effectively utilized. Supporting this, Yusuf and Akinniranye (2011) observed that, most schools are often under-utilized. Similarly, Nwadiani, (2012) said that infrastructural facilities in public schools in Nigeria are inadequate leading to poor utilization. However, Kitheka (2005) noted that, schools with abundant resources may not always utilize them efficiently and consequently fail to raise student's level of performance.

Conclusion

Digital infrastructural facilities computers, laptops and communication teaching were inadequately provided in most of the schools and the available ones were properly utilized in most public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria.

Recommendation

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

1. Government should ensure adequate provision of digital infrastructural facilities like computers, laptops, internet systems, PowerPoint, interactive whiteboards and communication teaching in public junior secondary schools through the involvement of Parents' Teachers' Association, School Base Management Committee and Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs);
2. Government should ensure there are functional e-libraries, laboratories and workshop and staff should be properly trained to utilize the facilities effectively.

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