

Bad Physical Conditions of Public Secondary Schools in the South East Zone of Nigeria

Christian Nwakanma PhD

Department of Business Education

Faculty of Education Art and Education

Madonna University Okija Anambra State

Abstract

This paper investigated bad physical conditions of Public secondary schools in the South East Zone of Nigeria. Imo state was chosen because, Imo state is among the states in the South east Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was used for this study. One research question and one hypothesis guided this study. Correlation research design was adopted for this study. Population of study is made up of 5,172, SS3 students in Government secondary school Owerri. Sample size of this study is 200 SS3 and SS2 students. Researcher developed instrument "titled bad physical condition of public schools in South East Nigeria" was used. Instrument was validated by experts in department of Business Education of Madonna University Anambra state. Reliability coefficient of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach alpha and the reliability indices were 0.76 and 0.77 respectively. Data were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. Hypothesis was tested using t-test. Findings from this study revealed that there was significant dilapidation of public secondary schools' facilities in the south east. It was recommended that the state Ministries of Education should carry out regular supervision to ascertain the level of dilapidation in public schools. Government should provide funds for building and maintenance of old public-school facilities in the south east, Nigeria.

Keywords: Dilapidation, School Culture, Poor facilities, South east Nigeria.

Introduction

This study is on public schools' dilapidation. Dilapidation is a gradual wear and tear of an edifice or object. It is a situation whereby buildings or objects are in very bad condition and un- safe for use. It is a situation whereby buildings and objects loss their value due to high penetration of the sun, rain, flooding, erosion and damp. Buildings can exist for long time especislly, when there are maintenance culture for their durability.

Maintenance Culture in public Secondary School Facilities

Maintenance is a practice designed to keep both human and non- human beings functioning. Maintenance can be used as culture for taking care of public buildings according to Hotfstedel (1984), "Culture is a collective programme of people designed restore practice of tradition, belief and conventions (Ehiametallor, 2001). Huge amont of nairas have been spent on building schools and purchase of teaching and learning equipment but, very little attention is given to public secondary schools maintenance. Public secondary school buildings have over stayed, and over used thus, their purview demands maintenance. Public secondary schools physical facilities needed to be

maintained or reshaped in order to have more extended durability on them. Everything that is on use in this earth require maintenance. Both human and non-human beings cannot function, when there are no maintenance culture carried out on them. Human beings eat food, take proper medications to be fit and function effectively. When buildings are maintained, they attract people that make use of them and induce respect on people that provided them (Earth man, 2002). Effective and efficient buildings maintenance are panaceas for quality academic delivery, good health of students and teachers. A posing dignity and a mark of identity to the government and communities whom their children are schooling on those schools. Quality and endearing physical facilities are means of developing societies with modern infrastructures. Effective and efficient building maintenance is sacrosanct for safety, adaptability, aesthetics and desirability of students. Effective and efficient buildings maintenance, makes buildings last longer and fulfill the purpose which they are built for (Shohet & Straub, 2013). Everything exist for a purpose and the purpose can be harnessed if there is maintainance culture carried out to keep them more functional or endearing. It is of no doubt that students feels unsecured and unhappy in the school when they observed that their buildings roofs are blown off, with cracked walls thus, endangering lives of people because of their eventual wreckage. Buildings that appears obscure and obsolent posses threats of disaster to students lives. However, students are unhappy uncomfortable in public secondary schools that their buildings are not inspiring or movating or stimulative.

Poor Maintenance Culture on Public Secondary School Facilities

A good maintenance culture is identified as they key to durability of school buildings, be it public or private buildings (Lackney & Pious, 2009). Poor maintenance on public school buildings , makes buildings unaccommodative and tantamount to wear, tear or destruction. Good maintenance culture on buildings helps to increases the long lasting of that building(Olagunji, (2011). lack of maintenance culture on buildings, destroys the life span of the building.

As before, human beings had at various times, procured foods, water and other resources to care about their lives. It is very sadening that some human beings have high neglect to some of their buildings, be it their personal or public buildings they owned collcetively. Maintenance culture is expected to be carried out on buildings from the day the building are built till the day the architectural designs has started phasing out of those building. Buildings are maintained up to their old age. This is to ensure their long lasting and functionality(Zubairu, (2003). Increase in dilapidated public secondary schools facilities, could result to public secondary schools facilities extinction if necessary measures are not taken to forestal and ensure their renovation caused by erosion, floods, blown roof and dust colouring on them (Kowaslski, 2019). Buildings that have stayed for over 50 years needed to maintained to avoid constituting fear or danger to people that takes refuge on them. A good number of public secondary schools buildings facilities in the south east part of Nigeria have dilapidated. A cursory look at them shows a tale of woe. They are existing towers of rust that are at the verge of destroying human lives. Majority of public secondary school classroom walls and their roofs have been bown off and wrecked down by floods,

and winds. Also, public secondary school classrooms are without doors, windows and padlocks. It is also very emphatic that apart from the destructions of public secondary schools buildings by natural causes, human beings have continued to destroy secondary school buildings especially during field events, track events organized by sports men from nearby villages and those carried out by human bad wishes on those buildings. It is very unfortunate that intruders play inside most of the secondary schools classrooms with bad intentions of destroying desks chairs, ceilings and walls of classrooms. Some intruders waid into public secondary schools after school hours. They use paints to deface walls of the classroom on every dawn of the day and during weekends(Fenker, 2019) averred that safety, security, good health of learners, and other school staffs of secondary schools are important and inevitable in a schools. This is why learners feels safe and secured in comfortable, attractive and inspiring school buildings. Several factors contribute to deplorable state of public properties in Nigeria especially, public secondary and primary schools. Those factors include: inadequate maintenance culture, inadequate funding by government and supervision (Mojela, 2020). Pleas by community leaders at various times, for renovation of their community schools are not mitigated due to selfish attitudes of people at the helm of affairs in government establishments whom their selfish and dubious actitudes are to cheat the masses and put them in hails of sufferings and confusion. Principals of public secondary schools had at various times, expressed their ordeals for teaching in under leakage classroom roofs and cracked classrooms to secondary education management board and state ministry of education though, their request are to no avail.

Government has continued to pay lip service to public schools maintenance. Some entrance roads to most of the public secondary schools in Imo state especially in Owerri zone have been a thorny issue to cross due to clustered erosion spots and undulated spots. Those roads, are spotted with gullies and erosions and are unsafe for motorists and students who make use of those roads on daily basis.

Dilapidated Condition of public secondary Schools in the South East Zone of Nigeria

Lack of maintenance have caused majority of public school buildings to wallow in total dilapidation. Students are shamefaced when people identify them as students or products of some dilapidated public secondary schools in the south east especially, public secondary schools in the rural areas. Poor condition of public secondary schools in the south east part of Nigeria, have caused majority of students to stay in overcrowded classrooms during teaching and learning. Some students have no classrooms. The available classrooms are leaking during rainy season. There are no teaching and learning facilities such as desks, chairs, tables, white marker boards. It is evident that school libraries and laboratories roofs have been destroyed by winds and high handedness of the sun, walls of laboratories, libraries in the public secondary schools have dilapidated. Intruders visit the school premises when students have vacated to constitute mayhem. Attractive school environment may not only stimulate learners interest in learning but, it enkindles sense of pride and appreciation of the schools by students(Giriffin, 2003). Griffin explained that school should be maintained for durability arsthetic values and safety for students. It is evidennt that students crowed

themselves with few seats and desk during teaching and learning in the in public secondary schools classrooms. The reason for poor condition of public secondary schools in the south include: inadequate funding, inadequate provision of equipment's. The worst among these challenges is that some of the funds and other resources that should be procured to public schools are hijacked or plundered for selfish reasons due selfish personal interest. Some students that are desperate for schooling suffer without desks, chairs during teaching and learning. Students suffers a lot in the school especially, during rainy season and hot weather conditions. During hot weather conditions, students feels very uncomfortable, because of the high heat waves penetrations, students feels very disinterested to learn. Issues of public secondary schools dilapidations in the south east are sad. They are not agreeable to the ear. Vast number of public secondary schools in the whole communities in Imo state are not electrified and no improvized electricity to pave way for laboratory practicals and crafts in public secondary schools workshops. The worst are students learning without desk and chairs. These makes learning very uneasy for students because, learning cannot be receptive and endearing when students are not well seated and comfortable in the classroom. Some students who cannot withstand these misnomers, develop recorded absence in the school for weeks and months, before returning to school at their convinient times. The zeal or interest to learn have faded in the lives of students due to poor condition of their schools. These are reasons why some students have formed the habit of reporting to their schools very late, while some totally refuse to go to school. Some students that decides to go to school, do not report to their classrooms. They hung around at school corridors engage in

outrageous discussions without recourse to enter their classrooms. On the other hand, teachers have resorted to use of flimsy excuses to duldge from clasroom activities, due to poor condition of their schools. These infractions have caused majority of students to defect to private secondary schools very close to their homes where they can comfortably stay and learn. It is truism that some teachers in private secondary schools are not qualified like teachers in public secondary schools. The reason why some student's defects to private secondary schools include: poor condition of infrastructural facilities and lackadaisical attitude of teachers in public secondary schools.

Some important school properties such as reagents, bursen burner, burettes pipettes, retort stands, microscopes that are very important for teaching and learning are hijacked or stolen by intruders. In the same vein, a good number of public secondary schools have been covered with bushes with overgrown trees that constitutes growth of reptiles in the school premises. It is very clear that public secondary schools are headed by principals, public school principals are daunted by the lacadaizical attitude of the state Ministry of Education for allowing school facilities to drift to bad conditions(Uche, , 2020) averred that poor conditions of public secondary schools buildings are also, observed in public universities in Nigeria. Efficient and effective school facilities and equipment are imperative for continued existence of public schools.

Statement of the problem

It is disheartening that vast majority of public secondary schools in the south east have dilapidated. Vas majority of public secondrsy schools in Imo state especially in the south east are un- attractive for teaching and learning.

Many classrooms and administrative buildings in Imo state public secondary schools are observed as towers of rusts. The whole public secondary schools in Imo state are abandoned for many years without good repairs on them. Doors, glasses, wires, laboratory and sports equipment's have been vandalized and stolen by unscrupulous individuals while, roof tops have been blown off by winds. Public secondary schools fixtures have over stayed, some of them not functioning. They are abandoned without repairs for more than ten years.

Vast number of public secondary schools chemistry and physics teachers have devised alternative to practical due to no reagents. Home economics, food and nutrition subjects are abandoned because no funds to renovate the buildings in those departments. A good number of classrooms are without chairs and desks. Most of the subjects taught in secondary schools have no teachers. These have cast several doubts on quality of graduates produced in most of the public secondary schools in Imo state. Continuous dilapidation of school buildings without maintenance, have caused mass defection of school aged children to private secondary schools in Imo state and south east in general.

Concept of Public Secondary School Facilities dilapidation

It is evident that one of the criteria for quality learning is good condition of physical facilities and good school environment. Good school facilities arouses teacher's interest to teach and students' interest to learn. Bad school facilities triggers sudden defection of students to private schools. Most of the public schools in the south east are covered with bushes, no chairs tables, desks. Some classroom walls have cracked

some have failed down, while some are about to fall. Some of the classroom roof tops are blown off by winds. In Nigeria, especially in the south east states, walls of classroom buildings and administrative offices have been defaced by dusts and posters. Many classroom have no modern white boards for writing. Students study under leaking roofs. Laboratory halls are destroyed by rain and heavy blowing winds. A good number of apparatus and reagents are destroyed, students reverts to alternative to practical during physics, chemistry and biology classes. During heavy rainfall students suffer colds due no windows and doors in those classrooms.

It is of no doubt that some secondary schools in Imo state and south east in general are in a state of disrepair due their reckless abandon by different successive governors of the south east. Majority of secondary schools in Imo state are built since 50 years ago. If those building were human beings they would have been crying for medical treatment but, the eyes that looks at them have it that those schools are not fit for teaching and learning. Insufficient planning, lack of funding, inadequate monitoring and lack of maintenance are factors that constitutes deplorable condition of public schools in the south east (Tehobo, 2000). Despite the long stay of those buildings (facilities), teachers and students still teach and learn under lack of comfortable places for teaching and learning. Majority of students are grouped together in an overcrowded hall provided as classroom. Most of the overcrowded halls and classrooms can as well be destroyed by rain and winds. Some times, students are left without classrooms. Delegates from Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education to public secondary schools in the south east reveals that some secondary schools in the urban and rural areas in Imo state are

threats to students and teachers that make use of them in public secondary schools. Factors responsible for bad physical condition of public secondary school buildings include:

1.Lack of maintenance: lack of maintenance is a problem constraining smooth functioning of most secondary schools in Nigeria, these are reasons why parents have overlooked most of these public secondary schools and developed second thoughts of sending their children to private schools where good health and serene environment are achieved. Most public secondary schools lack proper maintenance due to the fact that they are overlooked as no man's property (Segun and Onoghakpor, 2014). Some public secondary schools are symbols of identity in some communities, but they are left to fallow in a state of disrepair for a very long time and no government intervention to repair them(Adejimi, 2005) opined that infrastructural development is very essential for every state or nation. Ineptitude of the government to put up maintenance culture on those public secondary schools infrastructures have caused their eventual decay.

2.Inadequate funding: Funding is a yard stick that can move unmovable train. Funding is a fulcrum for setting things in a good standard. When funds are not channeled for a good yield or output the resultant effect is poor yield or harvest. School facilities demands adequate funding. A cursory look at most public secondary schools in Imo state reveals that public secondary schools facilities have been abandoned and funds mapped out for their steady maintenance are plundered or diverted to other use. Students and teachers inside most of these secondary schools continues to suffer without succor from the government (Wordsworth, 2001). Poor conditions experienced in most secondary schools are lack of funding.

Wordsworth further explained that capital projects are overlooked in public secondary schools especially primary and secondary schools and that was the reason why some primary and secondary schools are in a state of disrepair. It is also, observed that most of these secondary schools are places where some notable dignitaries in Imo state are trained and educated, still the bad condition of those public secondary schools continues to beg for renovation and was none.

3.Over usage. The significant features observed on everything created by man is wear and tear. In this case, when a building has overstayed up to its age of maintenance, what can be observed from it, is cracking, wreckage, fickle appearance, blown roof and leakage. If proper cares are not taken to renovate it, its continued existence could be a threat to human lives. When building is over used, it depreciates rapidly and could possess danger people that make use of them (Sharma &Gahlot, 2000).

Maslow theory of (1943)

Human needs theory of Abraham Maslow of (1943) was glued to this study

The theory of human needs was propounded by Abraham Maslow in (1943). Abraham Maslow classified human needs into five human needs. From the five human needs, the upper human needs are need for food, thirst, hunger, oxygen, sleep and muscular activity. The second needs is need for protection, shelter, for avoiding extreme temperatures. Other needs that are considered secondary needs include: need to love and to be loved, need for association and need for reaching the potentials one could deserve and working towards them. Out of those basic human needs, the basic human needs that depicts this study is need for shelter

or protection from extreme temperatures. The relevance of this theory to this study is that Human beings just as this study has conveyed reveals that students, teachers and principals deserve to be protected from high handedness of the sun, rain and cold. When there is neglect to any of these factors and students and teachers continue to study in dilapidated classrooms it could result to sickness and diseases to both students and teachers. Also, some of those buildings could possess physical dangers to students and teachers lives especially, when there is sudden wreckage of classroom blocks during school hours and high winds blows that blow roof to out of their fixed edges.

Review of related literature

School dilapidation has caused academic setbacks to students. Majority of public schools looked obscure and unattractive to eyes that glanced at them. Reason why public schools dilapidate are as a result of poor maintenance culture of school building and lack of supervision by the ministry of education. Ehiemetallor (2001), observes that billions of naira have been spent on building schools and purchase of teaching and learning equipments since 50 years ago but, no thought have been given to their continuous maintenance. Olagunji (2011), stated that lack of maintenance culture on buildings, destroys the live span of those building. Fenker, (2019) averred that safety, security and good health of the learners, teachers and other school staff are reasons for effecting policies of building public schools with building plan. Learner's feels safe and secure when there are comfortable, attractive and inspiring school buildings.

Mojela (2020) identified that several factors contribute to deplorable state of public properties in Nigeria especially, public

secondary and primary schools. The factors include: inadequate maintenance culture, inadequate funding by government, inadequate supervision and fund diversion. Isyaku (2003), observed that lack of maintenance on public school building is tantamount to it wear and tear perhaps, total destruction.

Research question one

What are the relationship between public school dilapidation and poor maintenance culture in public secondary schools in Imo state?

Hypothesis one

H01: There is no significant difference in the opinion of male and female students on bad condition of public secondary schools in the south east zone of Nigeria.

Method

This study investigated bad condition of public secondary school facilities in the south east zone of Nigeria. Imo state is chosen as one of the states in the south east zone of Nigeria. Therefore Imo state is used as a case study in the south east. One research question and one hypothesis guided this study. Correlation research design was adopted for this study. This study is a correctional research project because its main aim is to define the relationship between poor condition of public secondary schools and poor maintenance cultures on public secondary schools in the south east zone of Nigeria. The population of study is made up of 6,172, SS3 students in Government secondary school Owerri. The sample size of this study is 200 SS3 and SS2 students. Instrument for data collection was a researcher developed instrument "titled, bad condition of public schools facilities in the South East zone of Nigeria: The Instrument was validated by

experts in department of Business Education of Madonna University Anambra state. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach alpha and the reliability indices were 0.69, 0.76 and 0.77 respectively. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation

Findings

Research question one:

1. What are the bad condition of public secondary schools in the south east zone of Nigeria ?

Table 1:

Pearson r and dependent t- test correlation between school dilapidation and poor maintenance culture on public schools in the south east zone of Imo state.

n	r	L.S	df	t-cal	t-tab	Decision	n
200	0.67	0.05	198	2.80	1.960	Sig	200

Hypothesis Testing

H01: There is no significant relationship between public school dilapidation and poor maintenance of public-school building in the south east zone of Nigeria.

Table 2

N	r	L.S	df	t-cal	t-tab	Decision	N
200	0.58	0.05	198	2.42	1.960	Rejected Ho	200

Table 2: Shows that t- calculated 2.42 is greater than t- tab of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance with a degree of freedom of 198. The hypothesis which states that there is there is no significant relationship between school

dilapidation and poor maintenance of school building in Government secondary school Owerri was therefore rejected. This presupposes that there is significant relationship between school dilapidation and poor maintenance of school building in Government secondary school Owerri.

The following are the discussions for the study: School dilapidation has caused academic setbacks to students. Majority of public schools looked obscure and unattractive to eyes that glanced at them. Reason why public schools dilapidate is as a result of poor maintenance culture of school building. Ehiametallor (2001), observes that billions of naira have been spent on building schools and purchase of teaching and learning equipments but no good thought have been given to their continuous maintenance. Olagunji (2011), stated that lack of maintenance culture on buildings, destroys the live span of those building. Fenker, (2019) averred that safety, security and good health of the learner, teachers and other school staff are reasons for effecting policies of building public schools with building plan. Learner’s feels safe and secure when there are comfortable, attractive and inspiring school building.

Mojela (2020) identified that several factors contribute to deplorable state of public properties in Nigeria especially, public secondary and primary schools. The factors include: inadequate maintenance culture, inadequate funding by government, inadequate supervision of schools and fund diversion. Kowalski (2019), observed that lack of maintenance on public school building is tantamount to it wear and tear.

Recommendations

1. Public school principals should ensure that songs which emphasizes care of school facilities are composed and taught to students.

2. Government should provide funds for maintaining school facilities in Imo state. This would reduce wreckages and blown roof on public secondary school buildings.

3. Prompt identification of any fault in school facilities should be channeled to the Ministry of Education by principals. This measure would ensure the speedy intervention on dilapidated public-school buildings.

4. The state and Federal government of Nigeria should formulate policies aimed at addressing the poor condition of school buildings in public schools in Imo state.

Conclusion

It is inspiring when government and school managers restore sustain good maintenance culture on school building. Good maintenance culture on school building ensures that school building is well utilized effectively and efficiently. It is the duty of school head to inculcate school maintenance culture on both staff and students. Songs and slogans should be made imperative restoring the objective of keeping viable and comfortable school buildings. Public school buildings are symbol of identity to communities where they are located therefore; they should be maintained by both the government and communities which owns them. When public schools look uninspiring, it means that government, principals, teachers, students and communities have refused to play their role in maintaining public schools. The reason why students in private secondary schools have outnumbered those in public secondary schools is because of

dilapidated classroom and unsecured school environment in

References

1. Adejimi, A. (2005). Poor Building Maintenance in Nigeria: Are Architects free from Blames? ENHR International conference on "Housing; New Challenges and Innovation in Tomorrows Citie," 2005. (pp. 1-16). Iceland.
2. Ehiemetalor, E.T. (2001). School facilities: Management practice in Nigeria. In N.A.Nwagwu, E.T. Ehiemetalor, M.A. Ogunu and Nwadian, M. (e.ds). Current Issue in Educational management in Nigeria, Benin City: Nigerian Association for Educational Administration and planning.
3. G.I. Earthman, G.I. (2002). "School facility Condition and Student Academic Achievement. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA's Institute for Democracy, Education and Ideas.
4. M. Fenker, M. (2019). "Organizational Change: Representations and Facilities. In K. Alexander (ed). Facilities Management: Innovation and performance.
5. Taylor. Francis, U.K & Giffriin, R.W (2020). Fundamentals of Management: Core concepts and Applications. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.
6. Giffriin, R.W. (2020) "Fundamentals of Management: Core Concepts and Applications. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.
7. T. J. Kowalski, T.J. (2019). "Planning and managing School Facilities. Portland, OR: ABC- CLIO Inc.
8. Lackney, J.A. & Pious, L.O (2009). "School Facilities – Overview, *Maintenance and Modernization. available at <http://education.stateu.2009>.*
9. R.E.Olagunji, R.E (2011). "Development of Mathematical Models for the maintenance of Residential Buildings in Niger state, PhD

- thesis, Federal University of Technology Minna, Niger state, Nigeria.
10. S. Sharma, S & Gahlot, P.S (2006). Building Repair and Maintenance management. New Delhi; CBS Publishers.
 11. Shohet, I.M. (2003). Building Evaluation and Methodology for maintenance priorities in hospital buildings. *Journal of Construction Management and Economics* (October, 2003) 21, Pg 681 -692.
 12. Segun, Y.A & Onovughakpor. G.(2014). Maintenance Neglect of public Secondary Schools Buildings in Nigeria. "A cause for Concern. *Education and Science Journal of policy review and Curriculum Development (ESJPRCD) Volume 4, No. 1, 111-121.*
 13. . M. Teboho, M. (2011)."Nigerian Education Sector Analysis: An Analytical Synthesis of performance And Main Issues. New York.
 14. Mojela, T.W. (2020). "Assessment of the effectiveness of public schools infrastructure maintenance system in the Gauteng province. M. Tech Thesis
 - in Construction management of the department of management and Quantity surveying of the University of Johannesburg.
 15. Hotfstede, G. (1984). "National cultures and corporate cultures. In L. A. Samovar and R.E. Porter (eds). *Communication between Cultures.* Belmont, C.A: wads worth.
 16. Uche, C.M. (2020). *Concept of higher education: Models, Practices and Contemporary Issues.* Emhai Publishers Port Harcourt, River state.
 17. Wordsworth, P. (2001)."Lee's Building Maintenance Management (2001), 4th edition, oxford: Blackwell Science.
 18. Zubairu, S.N.(2010). 'The National Building Maintenance Policy for Nigeria: The Architects perspectives. *Compilation of Seminar papers presented at The 2010 Architects Colloquium - Architecture and national development*

Corresponding Author: Christian Nwakanma PhD

E-mail: christiannwakanma6@gmail.com

Received: 01 March, 2025; Accepted: 12 March, 2025. Available online: 30 March, 2025

Published by SAFE. (Society for Academic Facilitation and Extension)

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 International License

