

Effective School Plants Maintenance: Issues and Approaches in Nigerian Schools

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Abstract. This paper examined the approaches for effective school maintenance in Nigerian schools. It is observed that most of the schools have been destroyed during the crises which had left most of school plant at varying level of dilapidations and for the fact that government alone cannot shoulder the responsibilities of school plant maintenance and provision. It is based on that that the paper x-rayed the concepts of school plants and the approaches that can be adopted by the educational managers to enhance effective school plant maintenance in their schools in Nigeria. Suggestion was also made for quality maintenance in Nigerian schools.

Keywords: Approaches, School plant maintenance and schools.

1. Introduction

Nigeria is facing a lot of crises in the educational industry and the crises were attributed to inadequate funding, students population explosion, acute scarcity and under-utilization of resources, shortage of school plants and inadequate number of educational facilities and equipment that are needed for effective teaching-learning processes and for educational goal attainment. (Ogundele, 2008)

The current population explosion coupled with the high exodus of teachers, as a result of poor teachers condition of service couples with poor teacher morale and inadequate number of available education facilities and school plants had made the use of the available school plants

to be over stressed. However, the quality of the available school plant is one of the potent indicator for measuring how standard and quality educational activities in the schools and for the fact that provision of education in the country is a joint responsibility of the government and every citizen. Government alone cannot provide all the needed school plants and at the same time maintain them, it has to be complemented by everyone.

In view of this, teaching – learning process is unconducive for both teachers and the pupils. Oyediji (2013) noted that the total number of school plants and education facilities provided in the school is one of the potent indicator for measuring the quality and standard of education given in a particular school. Poor and inadequate school plants and educational facilities affect the students' academic performance. Unfacilitating school environment; have negative effects on the attainment of educational objectives. School plants are vital in the educational system and are crucial for students' academic performance and for the teacher effectiveness. School plant can be defined as the structure both permanent, non-permanent or semi-permanent, that are used for the students programmes in the school. The school plants are categorized into Building like Classrooms, offices, workshops, hostels, libraries and laboratories. The transit involved the cars, bicycles, buses, the library are the books, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), facilities are instructional aids, recreation, games and sport. While those

unstructured ones are lawns, landscaping, fence and other environmental conditions that makes the schools environment to be attractive for effective teaching and learning processes. This paper therefore discusses in detail the concept and needs for school plants reasons for school plant maintenance and systematic approaches that the educational administrators can adopt in order to enhance effective school plants maintenance in Nigeria Schools. Recommendation and conclusion were made.

The following school plant and facilities are necessary in the school setting. Buildings like classrooms, library complex, hostels, administration offices, recreation centers, dining hall, assembly hall, stores and facilities, bulletin board, instructional materials, furniture, science equipment. Semi-Structures like sport field, and teaching learning facilities like instructional materials, science equipment computer machine, agricultural equipment, library materials. These facilities are very important for effective teaching – learning processes and no teachers; job performance and satisfaction. (Usman 2016)

The Federal Government of Nigeria also recognized the importance of school plant and educational facilities to the teaching – learning process and as such billions of naira were disbursed into capital expenditure during her yearly budgetary allocation and through Educational \trust \funds many buildings have been constructed in all the educational levels in Nigeria. Yet, the school plants is grossly inadequate for the student use. Despite high commitment of the Federal Government to develop school plant, still, to the dismay of educational planners in Nigeria most of the buildings and structures in the various schools are those ones constructed right from the inception of each school and no proper attention is paid to the reconstruction or proper maintenance of those buildings.

These buildings are now surrounded by thick bush with big trees which make them to dysfunctional use and some had been destroyed by burning fire. Most of the school buildings in both the primary and secondary schools are varying level of dilapidation and destruction

many exist without roof and there are inadequate spaces in each of the classroom to accommodate the students’ population Most of the school facilities had been stolen, destructed and vandalized by the students and many windows exist without louver blades etc.

Among the questions that' bothers the mind of current educational planners over the years is what approach can both the schools, parents and the students apply towards effective school plant maintenance and management in Nigeria schools, so as to complete Federal Government efforts.

It should be noted that despite the Federal Government efforts and commitment to improve the quality and standard of Nigerian education, the issue of school plant management is yet to be attended to. Nigerian school plants were not properly managed nor maintained. School managers therefore, need Jo be adopt appropriate strategies in order to enhance effective maintenance culture and proper management of the few available school plants and facilities in interest of Nigerian educational system. Ogundele & Ezeh (2008)

2. Reason for School Plant Maintenance

The school plant can be maintained though the following cultures:

The issue of maintenance culture depends on the situations and the available funds in the school system. However the proper management and maintenance of the school plants is the responsibilities of every member of the society like parent, teachers, students, artisans, philanthropist associations, government and all the members that have a good will to help in the development of educational system.

Effective management and maintenance is very necessary in order to keep or restore every facility - part of the site buildings and contents to an acceptable standard.

Maintenance-is also necessary in order to retain their value, and original status and to keep them in good condition for use and to prevent wastage of those facilities. The maintenance of facilities

are necessary for corrective, preventive and preservative purposes.

The issues of school plant maintenance aid the expansion of educational programme and to accommodate more students in the school system. Also, school plant maintenance aid and effective conducive environment for effective teaching learning process.

Finally school plant maintenance is essential for promoting the integrity of the schools at global level.

Approaches to School Plant Maintenance

The basic strategies that the school managers can adopt in order to enhance effective school plant maintenance in Nigerian schools are:

- Educational planners in the country need introduce school plant maintenance into the school curriculum as a way of making the students at all educational levels in order to embrace good maintenance culture.
- Adequate attention should also be given by educational/planners and officials of the inspectorate divisions of Federal/and State Ministries, teachers, non-teaching staffs and students to be involved in school plant maintenance. Kudos to the Federal Republic of Nigeria for spending billions of naira on the rehabilitation of various classrooms across the state. Within the school setting therefore, the following systematic approach should be adopted by the school managers so as to bring about effective school plant management. (Oparingde (2013). This includes situational approach, committeeship approach, community participation approach, damage preventive approach and utilization of internally generated funds for school plants maintenance approach. Situational Approach can be adopted by the school managers whenever the school or society wants to make use of any of the school buildings or facilities the school can call on such user to repair

or to pay certain reparatory fees for such structure as such immediately after being used the funds paid can be made use of rehabilitate some part of the school building. In this way, such facilities used can be properly maintained for effective teaching learning process without raising any alarm on anybody to come and give aid towards school plant maintenance in Nigerian school. Adeyanju (2004)

Committee System Approach can also be used systematically within and outside the school system works, committee can be constituted. The committee should be charged with the responsibility of funds-raising that can be used for school plant maintenance and rehabilitation. All complaint relating to the damaged infrastructure will be directed to the committee for immediate action. The committee will be responsible for organizing direct labour for the type of the infrastructure that needs to be repaired. The school managers will be responsible for evaluation and collation of the damaged structure and send to the appropriate committee for immediate action this will reduce the rate at which most of the educational infrastructures are put at dysfunctional use. Sanusi (2015).

Another systematic approach that can be used for effective school plant maintenance and management is Community Participatory Approach- those members of the society that are among the parent Teachers Association (P.T.A.) and have professional skill such as carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers, electricians can be co-opted into school plant maintenance committee and the will give professional advice and to assist in keeping the facilities in good order. The school managers can still employ the casual labourers to help in the general cleaning of the school compound so as to, reduce the existence of jungles that is very common in the present day system. Durosaro (2002)

Damaged Preventive Systematic Approach can be adopted fey, the school heads. This is the method of inculcating the spirit to use and handle with the care the schools infrastructural

facilities. The teachers, the students and non-teaching staffs should have respect for the school property and the school head should make provision for dustbin, trash-trays, illumination building, and incinerators. If this approach is adopted, it will be very difficult for the people to steal and vandalize those properties in the school system and since prevention is better than cure and sting in time saves nine. The spirit of preventing damages to the school plants should be inculcated in the mind of the teachers, students and every members of the school community. Ayoku(2005)

Finally, Utilization of the Internally Generated Funds for the School Plant Maintenance Approach can be adopted since school plant needs to be improved both in quantity and quality in order to raise the standard of the schools in Nigeria. Government capital expenditure is not enough for school plant maintenance therefore; the school manager should make use of the internally generated funds to embark on the school plant maintenance. Certain percentage of funds should be made use to embark on the school plant maintenance. The school managers should always raise funds through various sources, the funds raised should be diverted to school plant maintenance in the interest of Nigerian educational system. Suleiman (2002).

3. Suggestions

- There should be appropriate culture of Adhoc, preventive corrective and regular maintenance culture in the school system.
- The school should always clear the jungles and bushes that surround the school environment
- Enough funds should be provided for school facilities maintenance, so as to retain its original status
- There should be community-school relationships who will always be called upon whenever the needs arise in the areas of school plant maintenance and provision.
- There should be training, retiring for the school managers on the areas of school

plant planning management and utilization.

- The students' admission should be based on the available school plant facilities so as not to over-stress the available ones.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, if all educational processes and policies are to go on smoothly, it is very important for every member of Nigerian society to take part in the management and maintenance of school plant. Since educational development in Nigeria is a joint responsibility of all citizens, since educational can never be free at all levels. it is therefore advisable for the school managers to make use of appropriate systematic approach towards effective maintenance of Nigerian school plants and other educational facilities so that there will be adequacy and effectiveness in the use of available school plants.

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