ACADEMIC DIMENSION OF CLASSROOM LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND STUDENTS' NURSES ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOLING

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research was to investigate the academic dimension of classroom learning environment and students' nurses' attitude toward schooling. To achieve this objective, the following hypothesis was postulated, there was no significant relationship between students' perception of their classroom academic environment and their attitude toward schooling. To test this hypothesis two instrument were employed for this study. One was 25 – item classroom learning environment questionnaire. The second questionnaire was a 20-item attitudinal questionnaire which sought to get information on students' attitude toward attendance at school, altogether giving a total of 45-item questionnaire. This was used to collect data from two hundred and forty (240) students, randomly sampled from the twelve schools selected for the study. Twenty (20) students were selected from each schools of southern senatorial district. In Cross River State these responses obtained from the instrument were analyzed using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. The result showed that there is a significant relationship between students' perception of their classroom academic environment and attitude toward schooling. Based on this finding, it was recommended that the teacher should create and maintain social learning environment, relationship with peers, inculcate tone of disciplinary measures and finally, healthy academic learning environment such that will help the students develop the right attitude toward schooling. All the resource persons involved in the training of the teachers should equip them with the necessary knowledge that will enable them to effectively manipulate the principles of human relation. These will aid in the development of a healthy learning environment

KEYWORDS: Academic Dimension, classroom learning environment, students' nurses and attitude.

INTRODUCTION

In all societies and the world over, academic is used as a vehicle for the transformation of the individuals. Schools are established by the society to ensure that people progress from nothing to something in an organized and purposeful manner. And in school, the students are prepared to make education a priority. If they do, making the time to learn will be less of an effort and will become an opportunity to expand life's possibilities. Learning should be exhilarating, not a chore. Everyone goes to school to develop appropriate attitude and behavior for meaningful living in the society. Besides, through schooling, individuals develop marketable skills such as study habits, time management, taking notes, effective reading, critical thinking, and test taking. Though that is the case, it is noticed that in most schools in Cross River state individuals do not have positive attitude towards schooling especially nursing students in cross river states. Most students complain of science subject being too hard to understand and a lot are not interested to do the science courses but just for the sake of their parents they are force to do the course at the end the failure rate becomes so high in nursing and midwifery council of Nigeria. The teachers on the other hand do not have time to create good interpersonal relationship with the students for fear of not been accused of taking prep from students.

Attitude is defined by Ukpong (2000) as a mental and neural state of readiness organized through experience exerting a direct or dynamic influence upon the individuals' response to objects and situations with which he is related. To Mukherdee (1978) the term attitude refers to one's feeling, thoughts and predisposition to behave in some particular manner towards some aspects of his/her environment. Eze (1978) defines attitude as ones mental predisposition which determines the next line of response to the stimulus to which the attitude is directed. Attitude is therefore a feeling of liking or disliking, a positive or negative notion about objects or situations. It refers to response tendencies. It is also defined as the degree of commitment to statements describing choices of personal disposition towards objects, persons, activities or events.

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Observation have shown that many students who leave home for school are distracted by the school environment stop half-way, play around with their mates and return home when they find others returning from school. In such a situation, their parents at home believe that they were at school. Meanwhile, some will decide to loiter around the market places prizing one thing from one place to another. All these show poor attitude towards schooling.

The depth and the extent of the problem show that, students do not know the importance of education and as such cannot transform the society into a dependable one. Most parents have criticized the schools and teachers for lack of control of pupils and the resultant effect is in-discipline which affects learning and school achievement.

Most students are not interested in their school work. They prefer going about with their peers at the end, the result is poor performance. This usually affects their orientation and personal guidelines as well as leading them to conflict in learning.

Effort at the implementation of the order is circumvented by students, who now choose to hide in their friends hostels in order to avoid class room activities. In spite of these steps, one still observes that most students in the school system still manifest poor attitude toward schooling. This study is therefore being carried out as an effort to help the school system solve the problem of students' poor attitude towards education. The study is directed at determining the relationship between classroom learning environment and students nurse attitude toward schooling.

1.2   Statement of the problem

Initially, going to school for most children is a pleasant adventure but observation over the years shows that a good number of them don't like school, don't like teachers. Many students who leave home for school stop half-way, play around with their mates and return home when they find others returning. In such a situation, their parents at home believe that they were at school especially in the university environment. Meanwhile, some will decide to loiter around the market places prizing one thing from one place to another. All these show poor attitude towards schooling. The extent of this problem shows that students do not know the importance of school as such most of them are not interested in their school work, and at the end fail to do well in their examinations.

Furthermore, Most students complain of science subject being too hard to understand and a lot are not interested to do the science courses but just for the sake of their parents they are force to do the courses at the end the failure rate becomes so high in nursing and midwifery council of Nigeria. The teachers on the other hand do not have time to create good interpersonal relationship with the students for fear of not been accused of taking prep from students.

Most parents are very worried about the situation. Many principals, lecturers and teachers are equally worried and have taken different steps to crab the practice by taking extra lessons with the students yet, the problem still persists. Government on his part directed that, any students caught outside the school premises should be arrested and detained. To avoid being arrested, some students now hide in their friends places during school hours to avoid classroom activities.

This study was therefore conducted to find out the relationship between academic dimension of their classroom learning environment and students' nurse attitude towards schooling.

Key environmental variables isolated for study include:
i)   Academic dimension

While attitude toward schooling included attitude toward:
i)   Learning task e.g. carrying out assignments, reading, doing exams, test etc

1.3   Purpose of study

The purpose of the study was to determine whether nursing students' perception of their classroom learning environment has any relationship with their attitude toward schooling.

Specifically, the study was aimed at determining:
1)   Students nurse perception of the academic dimension of their classroom learning environment and their attitude toward schooling.

1.4   Research questions

The study was guided by the following research question.
1)   Does there exist any relationship between students nurse perception of the academic dimension of their classroom learning environment and their attitude toward schooling?

1.5   Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was tested in the study.
1)   There was no significant relationship between students' perception of their academic dimension of their classroom learning environment and their attitude toward schooling.

1.6   Significance of the study

The study might be of tremendous benefit to students' nurses, teachers, parents, guidance, counselors, school administrators, education policy makers and researchers

To teachers, the study might enable them to be aware of the classroom life and how it influence students attitude towards schooling.

To parents, the study would encourage them to always encourage their children to desist from bad company as this will lead to negative attitude toward schooling.

To guidance counselors, it may help to develop the interests of educators in the affective areas of school because the cognitive and affective domain goes hand in hand.

To school administrators, it may help provide the administrators the idea that attitude towards school is highly dependent on the human relations that exist in the classroom.

To education policy makers, it might help develop learners capacity so that, their formal education

would result in the production of new product for the good of the Nigerian society.

To researchers, it might serve as a guideline, knowing that poor attitude to schooling could be as a result of so many factors.

Finally, the renovation and rehabilitation of school buildings, the provision of desks, equipped laboratories in school and other useful advisory tools will go a long way to solve the problem of classroom learning environment and poor students' nurse attitude toward schooling.

1.7   Scope of the study

This study is limited to schools of nursing in southern senatorial district of Cross River State; therefore any generalization of the results should be done in the context of the area or other areas having similar characteristics.

The investigation is also concerned with the psychological environment and its effects on the cognitive ability of the students nurse in the classroom. Thus, the researchers seeks to find out the influences of interpersonal relationship between academic environment and students' attitude towards schooling.

2.0   LITERATURE REVIEW

The nursing school classroom has a power influence in the shaping of student's both cognitively and socially thus the purpose of this study is to investigate the students perception of their classroom learning environment and to see how it affects their attitude towards schooling. It is imperative that an extensive perusal of relevant literature on this area of study be made following these stipulated sequences.

i)   Academic dimension and students nurse attitude towards schooling.

2.1   Academic dimensions and students' nurse attitude towards schooling.

There is a continuous interaction between the organism (learner in this case) and the environment. The individual effects changes in the environment to a great extent influence the learners' behavior. In fact a favorable environment is key to favorable heritability and mental development. If two children (twins) with identical and equal potential are-reared in two different environment one stimulating and another unstimulating, their constitutional capacities or intellectual endowment will differ sharply because of the environmental difference (Oyira,2012).

The word environment means an aspect of the "field" in which an individual functions. The home, the school, the peer group, the classroom tone, the totality of a child's upbringing including the provision of his tissue needs, spiritual needs psychological needs as well as social needs which constitutes the environment goes a long way to influence the child. Environmental effect on a child begins as soon as the child is conceived. The mother's health, diet, emotional state and age constitute the environment or academic dimensions for unborn babies Denga (1988).

Eze (1978) also ascertain that as soon as a child is born, he is exposed to the environment that is in turn influenced by the parents' social class, ability to provide the basic wants, the quality of home, the

psychological stability of the family, the stimulation for intellectual growth and so on. If children born of low socio-economic parents and feebleminded mothers are reared in a favorable and stimulating environment, the intellectual ability of the children will definitely be improved: a point must be made that at birth a child moves from a stable, beneficent but dull environment of the womb to an unstable, potentially hostile but stimulating environment outside the womb. In some societies, the culture moves determines how the biological needs can be met. Thus right from the cradle, the child behaviour, his physical and emotional aspects are simultaneously affected by the biological and environmental factors, with environmental factors dictating the tune in most cases of academic dimension.

According to Oyira (2016) hereditary and environment operate simultaneously and cooperatively on the individual. It hereditary factors provide the potential for the organism, a dynamic and stimulating environment acts actualized or optimized. Heredity and environment can never be sharply differentiated; the two interact, an intelligent child reared in a non-stimulating environment will be an under achiever while a dull child reared in a stimulating environment can only improve slightly.

Researchers have shown that a child is not born a genius but only with the potential for becoming one for example when the home or school environment of the child is very rich in books and instructional resources, the child will be able to perform very well. Changes are that many children of inadequate environmental stimulations are affected. Similarly a child not born criminal or lazy, it is the environment that makes him so. Certain environmental conditions help the development of positive or negative attitudes and the achievement of potentiality levels. If a father is a thief he cannot necessarily produce child who is a thief. A child owing to peer group influence may turn out to be a thief when the father is not (Emeh, UmohInyang, & Oden, 2000).

Omirin,(2012) also identifies in their studies on academic performances of secondary school students reported that, boarding students performed better than their day counterparts. Whereas, the findings of this study, contradicted the work of Eden (2000) who found no significant difference in the performance of boarding and day students.

The cultural factor goes a long way in influencing the intellectual development of the child. This is seen in the exposure of the child to different cultures as he changes his school and goes with the father from one different culture to another as the father is being transferred from one different culture to another affect the academic atmosphere of a child (Oyira, Okon, Nsemo,& Antigha 2012).

Experiments have shown that well-feed women are healthier and so are their children whereas the malnourished women had babies who are sickly with very low resistance who may grow up with a number of psychological problems which may have retarding consequences on their intellectual development. Indiscriminate use of drugs and self-medication by pregnant women have cause a numbers of deformation in babies, some also have suffered permanent brain damage. The excessive use x-ray by pregnant women can also have damaging affect on the foetus. Pregnant

women who smoke heavily deprived foetus of oxygen in the right quantity which may result in malformation of the foetus with a considerable damage done to the brain and may be mentally sub-normal (Uche,& Kalu1999). Therefore academic dimensions' and students' nurse attitude towards schooling if there is none existing in school brings about negative attitude to school.

3.0   Research methods

The main purpose of this study was to determine whether nursing school students' perception of their classroom learning environment has any relationship with their attitude towards schooling. To attempt solutions to the problem under investigation, the design of the study was carried out under the following sub heading.

3.1   Research design

The design adopted for this study was the ex-post design. This design is a system empirical inquiry in which the researcher does not have direct control of independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulate able. The nature of the problem suggest that the independent variables were phenomenal which had already occurred, as such, no attempt was to be made to manipulate or control them. The dependent variable (students nurse attitude towards schooling) was measured against the possible effect of the independent variable (academic dimension of classroom learning environment).

3.2   Research area

The study was carried out in Cross River State, one of the thirty six states in Nigeria. Geographically, Cross River State is bounded in the North by Benue State, East by the Republic of Cameroon and in the South by the Atlantic Ocean. The state is divided into three senatorial districts, the Northern Cross River, the Central Cross River and the Southern Cross River Senatorial Districts. The Southern Cross River Senatorial District was the area for the study. The district is made up of seven local government areas (Biase, Akamkpa, Odukpani, Calabar Municipality, Calabar South, Akpabuyo and Bakkasi). The people of the district are basically peasant farmers with a few of them in the civil service. There are about 45 public secondary schools, 2 universities and a school of health technology and nursing in the area.

3.3   Population of the study

The population of this study included all the nursing students in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State. These students numbered about seventeen thousand on the 2014/2015 school year. The nursing students were used for this study because they have spent a reasonable number of years in nursing school and it is possible that, the students may have interacted reasonably with the environment of the school at that stage. And they should have developed an attitude towards schooling.

3.4   Sampling procedure

The main sampling procedure used in this study was stratified random sampling, with the various classes or arms of the different streams (year1, year2, year3) and the geographical location (urban/rural) of the school being the basis of the stratification. Two schools were selected from each local government area that has schools of nursing using the simple random sampling method. To select the subjects for the study, the students in each school and in each class were separated into boys and girls and on equal number of boys and girls selected accordingly by random method.

3.5   The sample

The sample was made up of two hundred and forty (240) students nurses randomly selected from the two schools selected for the study. One hundred and Twenty (120) students' nurses were selected from each school. 120 boys and 120 girls were selected out of these numbers, 60 from each gender came from rural schools of nursing and the other 60 each came from the urban schools.

3.6   Instrumentation

Two instruments were employed for this study. One was a 25 items classroom learning environment questionnaire which was designed to seek information on the various kinds of learning environments in the classroom. The areas of classroom learning environment covered in this questionnaire included academic environment. The second questionnaire was a 20 item attitude questionnaire which sought to get information on students' nurse attitude toward learning tasks e.g. tests assignments exams etc.

3.7   Instrument construction

One question or items were sent for each of the above listed subtitles of the independent and dependent variables.

Questionnaire of section A and B consist of statement questions on a 5 likert type scale ranging from Very Strongly Agree to Very Strongly Disagree. Some items of the questionnaires were adopted from earlier related studies while others were framed by the researchers. The entire questionnaire was however duly scrutinized by my friends and close colleagues.

The six point likert scale adopted for the questionnaire items options were:

Very Strongly Agree (VSA)
Strongly Agree (SA)
Agree (A)
Strongly Disagree (SD)
Very Strongly Disagree (VSD)

3.8   Validation of the instrument

Before the study instruments were administered, the items were presented to experts in measurement for validation. To ensure that variables were listed out and enough items constructed to measure each aspect of attitude towards schooling and classroom learning environment. After this the items were scrutinized by experts who recommended the 25 and 20 items used for the environment and attitudinal questionnaires respectively.

After all the necessary corrections were made, the questionnaire was finally pilot tested in one of the schools in the study area. The result of the pilot test also helped the researchers to reframe and reorganize some

of the items before the final copies for the study proper were produced.

3.9   Reliability of the instrument

Reliability of an instrument is defined as the accuracy or precision with which the instrument measures whatever it is measuring.

To ensure reliability each of the variables for the study was pilot tested using the split half reliability method. The two instruments were administered to 50 students in the pilot school. An item by person matrix was then obtained from the results and used to do the reliability estimates for the nine (9) variables of the study. This was presented in table 1.

Table 1: Split-half reliability estimates for variable in the study

Variable	Half	N	Rxy	rxx
Academic environment	1st	12	0.72	0.84
	2nd	12	0.68	0.81

3.10   Data collection procedure

The two sections of the questionnaire A and B were administered by the researchers on the same day. The break periods of the individual schools were used for the exercise. Before the exercise commenced in each school, the students selected for it were all moved to one classroom and arranged according to the serial numbers allotted to them. After distributing the questionnaire the instructions were read out allowed to the students, followed by an explanation of the likert-type responses needed from them. During the session, the researchers and the school teacher assisting moved from one point to the other offering explanations where it was necessary and ensuring that students responded independently to the items on the questionnaire. In each school, students were able to complete the questionnaire within the time limit stipulated and the questionnaire were retrieved immediately.

3.11   Data analysis procedure

The following procedure were adopted to test the hypothesis guided the research.

There is no significant relationship between students' perception of their classroom academic environment and their attitude toward schooling.

Variable – independent – Students' nurse perception of their classroom academic environment.

Dependent – students' attitude toward schooling

Test statistic used: Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient

4.0   RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section is basically concerned with the analysis of data, interpretation and presentation of results and discussion of the findings. For clarity or purpose and orderly presentation of material, the section has been reported under the following subheadings.

4.1   General description of data

The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient test statistic was used in testing the hypothesis formulated for this study. The independent variable was   academic dimension.

Five items from a 25 item section of the questionnaire were used to obtained data that were used to quantify the variable, five item used for the variable.

The dependent variable was students' attitude towards schooling. This variable was sub-divided for purpose of the questionnaire into a group.

ii)   Attitude towards learning task

In collecting data for analysis, items of the questionnaire on this variable were scored separately. That is a respondent scored a total mark on the attitudinal scale and 4 different marks on the sub-heads of the attitudinal attributes. The general means and standard deviations of all the variable used for the test of significance are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Mean and standard deviations of all variables of the study

Variables	N	X	SD
Academic dimension	240	13.513	4.067
Attitude toward schooling	240	14.576	8.703

4.2   Hypothesis by hypothesis analysis of data and interpretation of results

Hypothesis one

There is no significant relationship between students' perception of their classroom academic environment and their attitude toward schooling. The independent variable was students' perception of their classroom academic environment while the dependent variable was students' attitude toward schooling. The

results did not however show any signal in terms of sub dependent variables and tone of disciplinary measures. To test this hypothesis student's response to section (1) of the questionnaire which particularly sought information on students' classroom academic environment were scored. The scores were then correlated against schooling using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient test statistic. The results were presented in table 3.

Table 3: Pearson product moment correlation coefficient of the relationship between students' classroom academic environment and attitude toward schooling.

Variable	$\sum X$	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	r
Academic learning environment	3243	-	47775	-	-	-
Attitude towards attendance at school	-	1994	-	17970	27943	0.424*
Attitude towards learning task	-	1700	-	13436	24604	0.695*
Attitude towards extra-curricular activities	-	1304	-	8256	18356	0.342*
Attitude toward teacher/students	-	115	-	7100	16241	0.243*
Total (attitude toward schooling)	-	5898	-	163044	83387	0.436*

*p<.05; df=238; critical r=0.196

The result as presented in table 3 revealed that the calculated r value for all the attitudinal levels were greater than the critical r value (.196) at .05 level of significance with 238 degrees of freedom. This result shows that there was a significant relationship between student 'nurse perception of their classroom academic environment and their attitude towards schooling. The null hypothesis was therefore however rejected.

5.0   DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Academic environment and attitude to schooling

To the hypothesis of their relationship between students' nurse perception of their classroom academic environment and their attitude toward schooling, it showed that there is a significant relationship between students' nurse perception of their classroom academic environment and their attitude toward schooling. Ground (2007) investigation revealed that, many students showed that they love school and few also say they hate it. A significant number of others said that they liked the school primarily because of the contact the students identifies. (for the purpose of this research is the teacher-student contact and student-student relationship). Also, other researchers viewed student attitude toward school as being dependent on the student relationship with each other (Oyira, 2009).

Other researchers Anderson (2000) carried out empirical studies of classroom climate and individual learning. They identified the classroom climate variables as "Affective Climate Predictors" which can be grouped into "Syntality" and "Synergism" measures syntality or emotional identification with the group course i.e. measures group status.

According to Isangedighi (1996) parents who are interested in preparing their off spring in readiness for learning should in addition provide food, medication and educational toys, or in-door games that will enhance children who suffer deprivation in care, love and peer interaction.

Omirin, (2012) also identifies in their studies on academic performances of secondary school students reported that, boarding students performed better than their day counterparts. Whereas, the findings of this study, contradicted the work of Eden (2000) who found no significant difference in the performance of boarding and day students.

5.1   SUMMARY

The summary of this research was to investigate the academic dimension of classroom learning environment and students' nurses' attitude toward schooling. To achieve this objective, the following hypothesis was postulated, there was no significant relationship between students' perception of their classroom academic environment and their attitude toward schooling. To test this hypothesis two instrument were employed for this study. One was 25 – item classroom learning environment questionnaire. The second questionnaire was a 20-item attitudinal questionnaire which sought to get information on students' attitude toward attendance at school, altogether giving a total of 45-item questionnaire. This was used to collect data from two hundred and forty (240) students, randomly sampled from the twelve schools selected for the study. Twenty (20) students were selected from each schools of southern senatorial district. In Cross River State these responses obtained from the instrument were analyzed using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. The result showed that there is a significant relationship between students' perception of their classroom academic environment and attitude toward schooling. Based on this finding, it was recommended that the teacher should create and maintain social learning environment, relationship with peers, inculcate tone of disciplinary measures and finally, healthy academic learning environment such that will help the students develop the right attitude toward schooling. All the resource persons involved in the training of the teachers should equip them with the necessary knowledge that will enable them to effectively manipulate the principles of human relation. These will aid in the development of a healthy learning environment.

5.2   CONCLUSION

The finding of this study has a basis for the following conclusions.

The students nurse attitude towards school is determined by the types of teacher-student relationship that exist in the classroom. The children like school primarily because of the social contact it provided. Therefore, it is the place of the teachers to encourage a healthy interrelationship amongst the students through team work so as to create a suitable learning environment that will augur the student to develop a positive attitude toward schooling.

In a nutshell, it has been shown that some of the variables that measure the classroom learning environment as perceived by the students actually predict their attitude towards school while others do not. Therefore, it is highly mandatory to the Nigerian school of nursing Teachers to create a well-balanced classroom learning environment, such that will foster the

achievement of the five main goals of Nigeria school as endorsed in the National Policy on Education (2004.p7).

5.3   RECOMMENDATION

Academic dimension as they reflect the impact of the classroom learning environment on students' attitude towards schooling. The human aspect of the classroom climate for learning is almost equally important as the teaching procedures adopted and the curriculum itself. Therefore, these recommendations are directed to the classroom teacher closest to the students in the school system, to the state, school management board and the faculty of education in the Universities as they are responsible for the training of students.

To the teacher, the classroom interpersonal relationship is of a vital significant especially, the teacher – students, and students – student relationship. It is therefore incumbent on the teacher to harness this social aspect of the classroom and use it for encouraging positive attitude towards schooling. To do this, the teacher must know, and be able to manipulate the working of the group dynamics, its qualities and how to improve it. They should also realize that by bringing the students' to work together, they learn to exchange approvals, share each other feelings, tolerate each other and above all, learn how to control their aggressive feelings and complement with each other, on a healthy basis.

Finally, all the resource persons involved in the training of teachers should equip them with necessary knowledge that will enable them to create and maintain a healthy psycho-social environment suitable for the development of a "total child". By doing this, it will help to devoid our social milieu of deviants, truants, and drop-outs who could be menace to the society.

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