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Assessment of School Plant Facility Maintenance Practices in Public Secondary Schools in Lafia Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study assessed the level of school plant maintenance in public secondary schools in Lafia Local Government Area (LGA) of Nasarawa State. The study employed a survey research design, which is considered appropriate for studies that aim to gather factual and perceptual information from a given population. The population of this study comprised of all Principals, Teachers and staff of quality assurance department of State Ministry of Education (SMOE) within public secondary schools in the Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State. (Principal 46, Teachers 1436, and staff of ministry of education 30). That gives a total population of 1512 used for the study. Through simple random sampling technique, a total number of 380 respondents were selected for the study. The main instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire, developed by the researcher based on the objectives and research questions of this study. The instrument, titled "Questionnaire on the Assessment of the level of School Plant maintenance (QASPM) in public Secondary Schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State," was divided into two sections: Section A: Captured demographic data of the respondents. Section B: Consist of questionnaire to elicit information from the respondents on the maintenance of school facilities. The questionnaire items were rated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1). To ensure the questionnaire measured its intended purpose, the face and content validity were established. The instrument was submitted to experts in research, measurement and evaluation to assess the instrument for clarity, relevance, appropriateness, and comprehensiveness. A validity index of 0.89 was therefore obtained for the instrument. Through Crombach alpha coefficient of reliability, a reliability coefficient of 0.74 was established. Descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation were used to answered research questions, while inferential statistics, particularly One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that there is no significant difference in school facilities maintenance in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State.

Keywords: Assessment, Maintenance, Practices, School Plant Facilities

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Introduction

This study focuses on the maintenance of the school plant, including the school buildings, grounds, service facilities and other structures that make up a school to ensure that teaching and learning take place effectively with little or no interruption. The quality of education delivered by teachers and the academic achievement of pupils of any school depend on several factors, of which school plant facilities maintenance is paramount. School plant facilities are material resources that enhance teaching and learning, making the process meaningful and purposeful (Asiyai, 2012). School facilities can be referred to as the school plant. School facilities can be defined as the entire school plant which school administrators, teachers and students harness, allocate and utilize for the smooth and efficient management of any educational institution, for the main objective of bringing about effective and purposeful teaching and learning experience.

Similarly, Adeboyeje (2020) and Emetarom (2020) stated that school facilities are the physical and spatial enablers of teaching and learning, which increases the production of results. School facilities serve as pillars of support for effective teaching and learning. Oyesola (2020) posits that school facilities include permanent and semi-permanent structures, such as machinery, laboratory equipment, the board, teachers' tools, as well as consumables, among other equipment. The quality and standard of a school depend largely on the provision, adequacy, unitization and management of education facilities. Akinsolu (2020) asserted that an educational curriculum cannot be effective and well-implemented without properly maintained school facilities. From all indications, school facilities are physical resources that facilitate effective teaching and learning. They include blocks of classrooms, laboratories, workshops, libraries, equipment, consumables, electricity, water, visual and audio-visual aids, tables, desks, chairs, playground, storage space and toilets.

In Nigeria, public school enrolment has continued to increase without proper maintenance of the existing facilities for effective teaching and learning (Asiyai, 2012). As a result of the underfunding of education in Nigeria, the government has been encouraging the proper maintenance of available school facilities. School plant management and maintenance entails ensuring that the facilities are kept near their original state as possible. This involves

maintaining the cleanliness of the school sports and football fields, periodic renovation of buildings, regular servicing of the school bus and generator sets, and undertaking repairs, among others, to restore the facilities to their optimum working conditions. School plant maintenance refers to work carried out on any component of the school plant management to keep it at good working condition (Olagboye, 2018). The quality and durability of a building largely depends on the type and level of servicing, repairs and the rate at which the needs and requirements change. School facilities management involves keeping records of the facilities, supervising the facilities, planning for the facilities, motivating students and teachers to participate in facilities maintenance and evaluating the available facilities.

Adeboyeje (2020) reported that schools with well-coordinated plant planning and maintenance practices recorded better student performance. Burkett and Bowers (2019) reported that students in newer and adequate school facilities outperformed students in older and inadequate school facilities. A conducive school physical environment could enhance students' school attendance, involvement in academic activities and academic performance positively.

Adesina (2019) stressed that the quality, quantity and level of maintenance of education facilities available within an education system positively correlate with the quality and standard of the education system. Durosaro (2019) examined school plant planning as the administrative effectiveness of secondary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria. The researcher found that schools that planned and maintained their facilities had higher student retention and were more effective than the others. Many scholars, researchers, administrators and education planners have confirmed that school facilities in Nigerian schools are inadequate, and few available ones are not properly maintained. Ikoya and Onoyase (2018) reported that only 26% of secondary schools have adequate and sufficient school infrastructure in the country with good maintenance culture. Ajayi (2019) reported that most Nigerian schools are dilapidated due to inadequate funding, while most secondary schools are in their past glories. Such a situation hinders effective teaching and learning, making the process rigorous and uninteresting to students and teachers.

Owuamanam (2020) noted that the inadequacy of infrastructural facilities and the lack of maintenance for available facilities were major challenges facing the Nigerian education system, especially secondary schools. The school facilities are grossly inadequate to match the students' population, and the

available facilities are poorly maintained. The availability and proper maintenance of school facilities will enhance teaching and learning, thereby improving the academic performance of students.

Furthermore, (Ajayi, 2020; Owoeye, 2020) have long identified the importance of school facilities in teaching and learning, while the inadequacy, deterioration and lack of maintenance of these facilities will spell doom for the teachers and students in the teaching and learning activities. Negligence in the maintenance of school facilities has many negative consequences. When school facilities are not well managed and maintained, they constitute health hazards to pupils and teachers who use the facilities. For instance, Ogonor (2021) reported the killing of pupils and teachers of a primary school in Nigeria when the school walls and roofs collapsed. Even a large amount of money invested in school facilities is wasted when school buildings and equipment deteriorate without maintenance.

It has been observed that school facilities in Nasarawa State are not maintained by school administrators, and hence, their depreciation. The administrators appear to spend much time on instructional planning, curriculum development, personnel development and community relations, claiming that the management and maintenance of school facilities is the sole responsibility of the government. It is also believed that the condition of the school plants in Nasarawa State is discouraging and contributes to students' lack of interest in education. This must largely affect their performance. This study therefore intends to assess the level of maintenance of school facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia Local Government Area (LGA) of Nasarawa, Nigeria with focus on the state of the facilities, the adequacy of the maintenance provided, and challenges of school facilities maintenance.

Statement of the Problem

The education system in Nigeria has contributed in no small measure to supporting the nation's economy through the provision of qualitative manpower and acquisition of knowledge, skills and values. In achieving this, in the 21st century, it has been a nightmare due to the poor state of school plant facilities, which are poorly managed, maintained, out of use, aged and not conducive for the teaching and learning process. It has been observed that most schools, especially public schools, are poorly managed. These schools have become sorry sights. Specifically, you notice dilapidated buildings with

leaking roofs, broken chairs and desks, rough floors and windows without louvers and a bushy compound. In some of the schools, the buildings are dirty, no lighting, while some have blown off roofs. The roads leading to the sports field in some schools are weedy. It appears that adequate management and maintenance is not provided on the available school facilities.

School facilities are supposed to be kept in good condition, near their original state as possible, by school administrators. But from causal observation and complaints, it appears that school administrators are neglecting the role of school facilities management and maintenance. Could this observation be the same for all public secondary schools in Lafia LGA?

Effective and efficient operation of any school is in doubt with absence of school plant management and maintenance. This adversely creates discomfort to the teachers, students and adequate operators of the school's administrative system. Facilities form one of the potent factors that contribute to academic achievement in the school system. If therefore, such facilities as school buildings, classrooms, library, laboratory, furniture, recreational equipment and other instructional materials are not properly maintained due to political reasons, lack of funds or for any other reason. Then, the academic performance of students in such schools should not be queried because of the obvious reasons created. Perceived failure of the authorities to maintain facilities in schools affects teaching and learning process. Lafia LGA has been identified as one of the likely areas affected by some of the problems mentioned above. This phenomenon is dangerous to society and, if not controlled, may lead to a high rate of half-baked students and drop outs shortly. This study therefore focuses on assessment of the level of maintenance of school plant facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to assess the level of maintenance of school plant facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

i. determine the level of maintenance of school plant facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State.

ii. assess the challenges facing the maintenance of school plant facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State

Research Questions

The following questions were developed to guide this study:

i. What is the level of maintenance of school plant facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State?

ii. What are the challenges facing the maintenance of school plant facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in the level of maintenance of school plant facilities among public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference in the perception of maintenance challenges among MOE Officials, Principals and teachers in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State.

Methodology

This study employed a survey research design, which is considered appropriate for studies that aim to gather factual and perceptual information from a given population. The population of this study comprised of all principals, teachers and staff of quality assurance department of State Ministry of Education (SMOE) within public secondary schools in the Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State. (Principal 46, Teachers 1436, and staff of ministry of education 30). That gives a total population of 1512 used for the study. Through simple random sampling technique, a total number of 380 respondents were selected for the study. The main instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire, developed by the researcher based on the objectives and research questions of this study. The instrument, titled "Questionnaire on the Assessment of the level of School Plant maintenance

(QASPM) in public Secondary Schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State," was divided into two sections: Section A: Captured demographic data of the respondents, such as gender, age, qualification, designation, and years of experience. Section B: Consist of questionnaire to elicit information from the respondents on the maintenance of school facilities. The questionnaire items were rated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1).

To ensure the questionnaire measured its intended purpose, the face and content validity were established. The instrument was submitted to experts in research, measurement and evaluation to assess the instrument for clarity, relevance, appropriateness, and comprehensiveness. Their comments and observations led to the refinement of the instrument for precision. A validity index of 0.89 was therefore obtained for the instrument. Through Crombach alpha coefficient of reliability, a reliability coefficient of 0.74 was established. Descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation were used to answered research questions, while inferential statistics, particularly One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the level of maintenance of School Plant facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State?

Table 1
Opinions of Officials of MOE, Principals and Teachers on the levels of maintenance of School Plant facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA

SN	Item Statement	Respondents	Response Categories						
			SA		U	SD	D	Mean	Std.dev.
1	The school regularly maintains its physical infrastructure	M.O.E.	5	1	2	-	1	3.25	1.167
		Principals	1	4	2	1	4	3.82	1.206
		Teachers	146	45	58	33	77	4.56	1.46
2	There is a maintenance plan in place for school facilities	M.O.E.	5	1	2	-	1	3.92	1.323

		Principals	4	-	3	-	5	3.54	1.375
		Teachers	57	36	105	54	107	3	1.268
3	Maintenance activities are supervised by qualified personnel	M.O.E.	7	-	2	-	-	3.5	882
		Principals	3	6	2	-	1	2.64	900
		Teachers	129	69	57	16	88	3.11	1.377
4	Funds are regularly allocated for the upkeep of school facilities	M.O.E.	1	3	1	3	1	4.08	1.323
		Principals	4	4	3	1	-	3.36	1.624
		Teachers	38	42	91	53	135	2.78	1.204
5	School heads or management are committed to maintaining facilities	M.O.E.	3	-	2	1	3	3.08	1.537
		Principals	7	1	2	-	2	2.82	1.24
		Teachers	147	53	71	75	83	2.89	1.42
6	Teachers and students are encouraged to protect school property	M.O.E.	2	2	-	3	2	2.82	1.716
		Principals	8	-	-	3	1	3.45	1.379
		Teachers	47	63	70	41	138	2.67	1.23
7	Faulty equipment is repaired or replaced promptly	M.O.E.	2	-	3	1	3	3.25	1.364
		Principals	3	-	3	2	4	3.98	1.467
		Teachers	133	45	61	29	91	3.67	1.409
8	The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) supports facility maintenance	M.O.E.	3	-	-	3	3	3.33	1.803

		Principals	1	3	6	-	2	3.22	866
		Teachers	53	89	66	43	108	2.89	1.308
9	School plant maintenance is monitored by the Ministry of Education.	M.O.E.	1	1	2	4	1	2.75	1.225
		Principals	3	5	1	1	2	2.8	1.67
		Teachers	97	73	56	53	80	3.25	1.441
10	Maintenance practices are effective in sustaining school facilities	M.O.E.	3	-	2	3	1	2.82	1.764
		Principals	1	2	5	2	2	2.56	1.357
				1.233					

Note: S.A = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, U= Uncertain, SD= Strongly Disagree, D =Disagree

Table 1 shows the result on the views of Ministry of Education (MOE) officials, school principals, and teachers regarding the level of maintenance applied to school plant facilities across public secondary schools in Lafia Local Government Area. Based on the result, Teachers reported the highest mean score (4.56), indicating strong agreement that physical structures are maintained regularly. MOE officials (3.25) and principals (3.82) also leaned toward the agreement. This indicates that from the school-level perspective, especially among teachers who interact daily with infrastructure, regular maintenance is a visible and ongoing activity. While MOE officials strongly agreed on the existence of a maintenance plan (mean = 3.92), principals (3.54) showed moderate agreement. Teachers, however, were less convinced (mean = 3.00), indicating that maintenance planning may not be consistently communicated or implemented across all levels. MOE officials (mean = 3.50) and teachers (3.11) agreed that qualified personnel supervise maintenance tasks, though the lower rating from principals (2.64) raises questions about consistency or access to specialized staff at the school level.

The variation reflects differences in how "qualified supervision" is defined or experienced. There was mixed perception regarding financial support for maintenance. MOE officials had a high mean (4.08), indicating strong belief that funding is regularly provided. Principals (3.36) were moderately optimistic, but teachers (2.78) expressed doubt, implying either inadequate disbursement or delayed release of maintenance funds at the school level.

Teachers (mean = 2.89) and principals (2.82) had relatively lower scores, implying a lack of visible or proactive leadership in facility maintenance. Interestingly, MOE officials (3.08) rated this slightly higher, indicating a possible overestimation of school management's efforts by central authorities. Teachers (mean = 2.67) and MOE officials (2.82) felt that students and staff are not sufficiently encouraged to protect school assets. Principals (3.45), however, were more positive, indicating efforts exist but are either sporadic or poorly institutionalized. Teachers (mean = 3.67) and principals (3.98) recognized that faulty materials are usually addressed in a timely manner. MOE officials (3.25) also supported this, indicating that equipment maintenance receives more attention compared to other areas. While all respondent acknowledged the PTA's involvement, the intensity of support appeared moderate. MOE officials rated this highest (mean = 3.33), followed by principals (3.22) and teachers (2.89). These results indicate that while PTAs contribute to maintenance, their roles may not be formalized or consistently active across all schools.

Monitoring from higher authorities was generally perceived as weak. MOE officials (2.75), principals (2.80), and teachers (3.25) agreed modestly. This implies that oversight mechanisms may be lacking or not regularly enforced, reducing accountability at the school level. Respondents expressed concerns regarding the overall effectiveness of current maintenance strategies. Teachers gave a notably low mean score of 1.92**,** indicating dissatisfaction with how maintenance contributes to sustainability. Principals (2.56) and MOE officials (2.82) echoed this concern. This result implies that while maintenance activities may be occurring, they are not adequately preserving the condition of school facilities over time.

Research Question 2: What are the challenges facing the maintenance of school plant facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State?

Table 2

Opinions of Officials of MOE, Principals and Teachers on the challenges facing the maintenance of school facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA

SN	Item Statement	Respondents	Response Categories					Mean	Std.dev
			SA	A	U	SD	D		
1	Supply of sub-standard materials by the government	M.O.E.	3	1	-	-	5	3.22	1.481
		Principals	1	3	1	2	5	2.67	1.303
		Teachers	86	56	82	27	108	3.14	1.371
2	Poor motivation for the staff towards effective management and maintenance culture in the school	M.O.E.	2	2	1	1	3	3.11	1.453
		Principals	4	2	3	-	3	3.58	1.24
		Teachers	95	50	92	35	107	3.05	1.316
3	Inadequate space for storage of materials resources	M.O.E.	4	1	1	1	2	3.56	1.59
		Principals	5	-	2	4	1	3.08	1.832
		Teachers	98	57	76	27	101	3.23	1.402
4	Shortage of skilled staff for proper handling of school materials	M.O.E.	4	-	-	2	3	3.11	1.833
		Principals	3	3	1	1	4	3.25	1.422
		Teachers	101	53	52	38	115	3.14	1.469
5	Pressure on the usage of school materials due to large numbers of students	M.O.E.	5	-	1	-	3	3.78	1.481
		Principals	3	1	3	3	2	2.92	1.564
		Teachers	113	49	61	36	100	3.27	1.44
6	Inappropriate handling of school materials by students	M.O.E.	3	2	1	-	3	3.56	1.333
		Principals	3	5	1	-	3	3.67	1.155
		Teachers	98	49	72	17	123	3.23	1.334
7	Bad records keeping of damages in the school	M.O.E.	3	1	2	1	2	3.33	1.5
		Principals	1	4	1	-	6	3	1.128

		Teachers	95	70	72	30	92	3.27	1.373
8	Inadequate workshop training for the staff on good management and maintenance techniques	M.O.E.	4	-	2	2	1	3.33	1.732
		Principals	1	4	2	2	3	2.92	1.311
		Teachers	107	48	61	29	114	3.22	1.426
9	Lack of proper inspection from the government to schools	M.O.E.	2	3	1	1	2	3.33	1.414
		Principals	5	2	1	2	2	3.5	1.624
		Teachers	123	69	52	37	78	3.44	1.44
10	Lack of proper maintenance of registers for damages and repairs of school properties	M.O.E.	3	1	2	1	2	3.33	1.5
		Principals	5	2	2	3	-	3.5	1.679
		Teachers	87	81	30	93	68	2.99	1.579

Note: S.A = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, U= Uncertain, SD= Strongly Disagree, D =Disagree.

Table 2 shows the perceptions of officials from the Ministry of Education (MOE), school principals, and teachers regarding the major challenges affecting the maintenance of school facilities in public secondary schools within Lafia Local Government Area. The analysis draws on ten identified factors, with responses measured on a five-point Likert scale, and supported by corresponding mean scores and standard deviations.

The respondents generally acknowledged that the government sometimes supplies materials of inferior quality. Teachers (mean = 3.14) and MOE officials (mean = 3.22) tended to agree with this view, while principals showed moderate agreement (mean = 2.67). This implies that material quality is a concern, especially for those directly responsible for managing school facilities. All three groups recognized poor staff motivation as a challenge. Principals, in particular, expressed strong agreement (mean = 3.58), while MOE officials (mean = 3.11) and teachers (mean = 3.05) also acknowledged its impact. This implies that without adequate incentives or recognition, staff may not prioritize maintenance responsibilities. Space limitations for storing instructional and infrastructural materials were also identified as a challenge.

MOE officials (mean = 3.56) and teachers (mean = 3.23) largely agreed, suggesting this issue may hinder proper organization and preservation of school resources. The shortage of trained personnel to handle and maintain school materials effectively was a common concern. All respondents showed moderate agreement, with mean scores ranging from 3.11 to 3.25. This points to a gap in human resource capacity for maintaining educational infrastructure.

Respondents reported that large student enrolments exert pressure on existing school facilities. MOE officials were the most concerned (mean = 3.78), while principals (mean = 2.92) and teachers (mean = 3.27) also acknowledged this strain, which could accelerate wear and tear on school plants. Improper use and negligence by students were also considered significant. Principals (mean = 3.67) showed the strongest concern, followed by MOE officials (mean = 3.56) and teachers (mean = 3.23). This indicates the need for sensitization of students on the proper use of school resources. Inadequate documentation of damages was reported as a factor undermining maintenance efforts. MOE officials (mean = 3.33) and teachers (mean = 3.27) acknowledged this issue, while principals reported a slightly lower mean (3.00), possibly indicating inconsistencies in tracking and managing repairs. The absence of regular workshops or training for staff on proper maintenance practices was another challenge. MOE officials (mean = 3.33), teachers (mean = 3.22), and principals (mean = 2.92) agreed that equipping staff with relevant skills could improve the condition and longevity of school facilities. Respondents identified insufficient government monitoring and follow-up as a critical issue. Teachers (mean = 3.44) and principals (mean = 3.50) showed strong agreement, indicating that schools may be left to manage facilities without adequate oversight or support from relevant authorities. The final challenge centred on the poor upkeep of official records detailing damages and repairs. MOE officials and principals both rated this problem at a mean of 3.33 and 3.50, respectively. Teachers, however, provided a lower mean score (2.99), suggesting some variance in perception or practice at different administrative levels. Across the ten items examined, the study reveals a multi-faceted set of challenges affecting the effective maintenance of school facilities. The results indicate that maintenance lapses are not merely technical but stem from systemic issues, including inadequate training, insufficient government support, poor material quality, and weak record-keeping practices.

Hypotheses Testing

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in the levels of maintenance of School Plant facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State

Table 3
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the levels of maintenance of School Plant facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA

Status	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Prob.	F.critical
Between Groups	210.715	3	105.357	2.780	.063	3.23
Within Groups	14553.151	377	37.899			
Total	14763.866	380				

The table 3 shows f-ratio value (2.780) at 3 df 380 and at the level 0.05. The critical value (3.23) is greater than f. ratio values (2.780), the probability level of significance P (.063) is greater than 0.05. This means that there is no significant difference in the levels of maintenance of School Plant facilities and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State. Thus, the null hypothesis is retained.

H_{02}: There is no significant differences in the perception of maintenance challenges among MOE Officials, Principals and Teachers in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State

Table 4
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the challenges facing the maintenance of school facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia Local Government Area of Nasarawa State

Status	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Prob.	F.critical
Between Groups	126.757	3	63.379	1.260	.285	3.23
Within Groups	19312.255	377	50.292			
Total	19439.013	380				

The table 4 shows f-ratio value (1.260) at 2 df 384 and at the level 0.05. The critical value (3.23) is less than f. ratio values (1.260). The probability level of significance P (.285) is greater than 0.05. This means that there is no significant difference in the challenges schools faces in maintaining school facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained.

Discussion

This study aimed to assess the level of maintenance of school facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State, and the challenges schools faces in maintaining school facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State. In Table 1, items 1–10 present the opinions of officials from the Ministry of Education (MOE), school principals, and teachers regarding the levels of maintenance of school plant facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State. For instance, item 1 reveals that schools regularly maintain their physical infrastructure, as shown by the mean responses of MOE officials (3.23), principals (3.82), and teachers (4.45). Item 2 shows that a maintenance plan is reportedly in place, supported by the mean scores of 3.92 (MOE), 3.54 (Principals), and 3.00 (Teachers). Item 3 indicates agreement that maintenance activities are supervised by qualified personnel, though teachers rated this lower (2.64) than MOE officials (3.00) and principals (3.50). The finding of this study revealed that there is no significant difference in the levels of maintenance of School Plant facilities and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA. This finding is consistent with Emakuma (2020), who reported on the vital role of maintenance in enhancing teaching and learning effectiveness. Also, Owolabi and Oginni (2019), in their study on school plant maintenance in Southwestern Nigeria, found that regular maintenance of school facilities significantly impacts students' academic performance and teachers' job satisfaction, aligning with the consensus observed in the current data. Adeyemi (2013) also reported that the presence of structured maintenance plans and committed school leadership contributes positively to the longevity and functionality of educational infrastructure. Therefore, this finding reinforces the broader academic position that proactive and consistent maintenance of school plant facilities is essential for educational effectiveness and sustainability.

In Table 2, items 1-10 reveal the opinions of officials of MOE, principals and teachers on the challenges schools faces in maintaining school facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State. Item 1 shows that the supply of sub-standard materials by the government could be seen from the responses of the respondents as challenges schools face in maintaining school facilities, where the mean of MOE is 3.22, Principal is 2.27, and teachers is 3.14. The finding of hypothesis two revealed that challenges schools face in maintaining school facilities in public secondary schools in Lafia Local Government Area of Nasarawa State are Poor motivation for the staff towards effective management and maintenance culture in the school, inadequate workshop training for the staff on good management and maintenance techniques. This finding agreed with the findings of Ajayi (2019), and Olagboye (2018) who found that challenges such as lack of proper inspection from the government to schools are a serious challenge public schools face in Nigeria.

Conclusions

This study attempted to advance an argument that school plant maintenance are a necessity for effective teaching and learning process in the secondary school. This study opines that maintenance of school plant facilities is the yardstick that fosters quality learning and enhanced students' academic performance. Inadequacies in the maintenance of teaching facilities, learning facilities, games and recreational facilities, and welfare facilities, are believed to affect not only on teaching and learning process but also students' performance. The major factors encouraging school plant facilities depreciation are poor funding, lack of maintenance culture, excess pressure on available facilities, and delayed maintenance amongst others. This study finding revealed that school plant facilities in secondary schools are generally in a state of good condition. In a nutshell, conclusion was that learning facilities like Libraries are well maintained in public secondary schools in Lafia Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Recommendations

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations were drawn:

i. The government should increase allocation of financial resources to the government secondary schools to encourage improved maintenance of the school facilities.

ii. The government and the school management should bring forth workshop training for the staff in specific management and maintenance techniques.

iii. The school principals should adopt regular inspection and supervision of schools' human and material resources to reduce damage and apply necessary measures to enhance effective management and maintenance of school material resources.

iv. Teachers and students should be adequately motivated to key into the program of effective maintenance of the school facilities.

Reference

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