

SCHOOL PLANT MANAGEMENT AND MARKETABILITY OF PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AKWA IBOM STATE

Vincent, Etienne Albert (PhD)
Educational Management and Planning
vincentetiene5@gmail.com
+2348032623178

Abstract

The study examined the extent to which School Plant Management predicted Marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State. Correlational research design was used for the study. The population of this study consisted of all the 499 Principals spread across all the 499 Private Secondary Schools in the thirty-one Local Government Areas in Akwa Ibom State. 222 respondents were drawn from the population to participate in the study using multi stage sampling technique. Two instruments, entitled “School Plant Management Questionnaire (SPMQ) and Secondary School Marketability Questionnaire (SSMQ)” were used to gather data for the study. The instruments were validated by three experts. The reliability of the instruments was determined using Cronbach Alpha Analysis with reliability coefficients of .875 for SPMQ and .855 for SSMQ. Simple Regression Analysis statistics was used to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the findings showed that, library management and classroom management are significant predictors of Marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State. Based on the findings, it was concluded that School Plant Management can predict Marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State. It was recommended, amongst others, that Ministry of Education should monitor the state of facilities in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State and withdraw Authority To Operate (ATO) form schools with poor facilities.

Keywords: School plant management, Educational facilities, Marketability, Private Secondary Schools, Akwa Ibom State

Introduction

School is a complex social organization essentially characterized by formal structures and fabric of roles occupied by people. It is not only a place where learners go to be educated but also a secondary agent of socialization. Structurally, secondary education was and is still at the second level of the Nigerian education system (FRN, 2013). Secondary schools train and educate learners between the ages of 11 and 18+ and can be private or public. Private schools are classified as independent schools or non-state schools. They are not administered by Local, State or Federal Governments. Private schools are funded in whole or in part by charging tuition fees, rather than relying on mandatory taxation through public (government) funding. Private secondary schools are managed by the principal. The principal is saddled with the responsibilities of maintaining school facilities and establishing good teaching and learning conditions in school for the purpose of getting the learners well educated and bringing about the interaction of human and material resources. In a private secondary school organization, there are facilities and organizational structure which help the school to function as an institution of learning. These facilities are collectively known as school plants.

School plant is the fundamental infrastructure required for running of schools. It is the totality of what makes up a school system. Onyemauche, (2021) defined school plant as the entire scope of infrastructural facilities provided in the school for the purpose of educating the learners. For Ibrahim, (2018), school plant includes school building, grounds, equipment, lawns, paths, furniture, fields, laboratory libraries, machines and chalk board. For a clearer understanding, the term 'school plant' means the school building, all materials, furniture, equipment attached and unattached to the building, all structures and features on the school site such as paths, roads, parking lots, playgrounds, open grounds, trees and flowers. These facilities are used for implementing or supporting the implementation of an educational programme. The term as used here, shares the same meaning as what some authors like Oyewole, (2022) and Nwosu, (2022) refer to as school facilities. Where these facilities are not available in their right form, quantity and quality, the school may suffer high student turnover rate and low retention of student.

Management according to Nwune *et al.* (2016) is the arrangement of available human and material resources for the achievement of desired goals and objectives. Management is explained as a seven administrative bodies abbreviated as POSDCRB. That is: planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting. The specific goal of management is to work for the welfare of man. The person saddled with the responsibility of management is regarded as a manager; who makes effort to achieve the common goals of an organization by directing human activities through the use of other available resources. In the context of this study, management is the organization and utilization of human and material resources by the principal in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State, for the achievement of goals and objectives of secondary education. Therefore, the efficient and effective management of any school facilities lies in the abilities of the principal to put in place measures that would oversee the physical infrastructure a school. This is referred to as school plant management.

School plant management, therefore, implies making and carrying out series of decisions by individuals and groups in building school plant according to need, operating and using it effectively and efficiently. It also implies ensuring that it is in a functional state as the educational programme is being implemented. Mark and Ajayi, (2017) defined school plant management as the process of selecting school sites, acquiring and designing buildings and facilities which would satisfy the educational needs of the students. The school plant management influences not only the kind of programmes that would be possible but also the

diversity of each programme and the entire school enrollment. Asiabaka (2018) observed that facilities management is the most overlooked aspect of school management. Some of these facilities as noted by Etuk, (2017) are architecturally obsolete and therefore cannot contribute to functional education. In this study, two variables of school plant management are considered, namely: library management and classroom management.

The school library can be seen as a room or building in a school where books, magazines, journals, periodical, cassettes, films, filmstrips and projectors are stored for students' use. It is a central space in the school where books in all subject areas, including non-book materials are preserved. Nwosu, (2022) observed that the school library is an inexhaustible store house of unrestricted information resources in diverse formats systematically organized for users. The administration and organization of a library is referred to as library management. This includes cataloging and classification of library materials, circulation of materials, reference services and collection development. Library management also includes tasks such as managing budgets, supervising staff, and maintaining library facilities. The library plays a major role in the enhancement of learning and teaching activities which takes place in the classroom. Students can utilize library resources to conduct research, gather information and deepen their understanding of topics taught in the classroom.

A classroom is a space provided in a school where students gather and the teacher meets them for teaching and learning. It is a room set aside, specifically designed and furnished for the purpose of teaching and learning. For the classroom to be useful for teaching and learning, it has to be organized and maintained. This brings about the concept of classroom management which refers to the sum total of plan of actions taken by the teacher in the classroom to bring about a conducive environment that supports effective teaching and learning (Saifi *et al.* 2018). Classroom management should of necessity involve the structure of the classroom and should allow teachers ample opportunities to know their students' interests and abilities. A good classroom management can influence perceptions, attract students and contribute to the overall reputation of school. Thus, the relationship between school plant management and marketability of schools seems to be related, as the condition and quality of the school environment can influence perceptions, attract students, and contribute to the overall reputation of the school. It can be suggested that when principals of secondary school manage physical infrastructure in the school, marketability of secondary school may improve.

Marketing in general term is seen as human activity orientated in the direction of satisfying the needs and wishes through exchange processes (Uchendu *et al.* 2015). Marketing can mean a combination of methods, techniques and tools which analyze the market and explores the market's factors in order to adapt supply and represents a new idea regarding the reality of life (Kennedy, 2014). Marketability is a measure of whether a product will appeal the buyers and sell at a certain price range to generate a profit. Marketability of private secondary school is therefore seen as the likelihood of being able to sell, market or advertise products and services of private secondary schools at a certain time, price and under certain conditions. It is also related to school advertisement, school growth and school attractiveness. Uchendu *et al.* (2015) defined marketability of a school as the ability of the school to attract students and families. In other words, it is how well the school can convince people to choose a particular school over other educational options. There are several factors that can contribute to school marketability. These include academic reputation, school programs, quality of staff, facilities, available resources, school culture, environment and cost or financial aid. Inversely, poor marketing of schools could relate to turnover, attrition,

burnout, stress, absenteeism, low level of morale and counterproductive behaviour which is believed to be caused by poor management of school plants and facilities.

It is believed that school plant management can have a significant impact on marketability of private secondary schools. Principals may likely have improvement in school enrolment if they ensure regular cleaning of school facilities, conduct routine inspection, develop preventive maintenance schedule, manage inventory and supplies of school equipment, implement emergency response plan, manage essential services, maintain of school ground, manage waste properly, make financial decisions related to school plant management and provide regular update on the state of school facilities. This suggests that, marketability of private secondary schools could hinge on the ability of school principal to manage school facilities effectively. It is against this backdrop that the study aims at establishing the extent of relationship between school plant management and marketability of private secondary schools.

Statement of the Problem

School marketability is crucial for the success and sustainability of educational institutions. Effective school marketing helps to increase enrolment, create brand awareness, improve community engagement, improve student retention, recruitment top talent and ensure long term sustainability of the school. By prioritizing marketing, private secondary schools can achieve several benefits which can enhance their reputation. But the reverse might be the case where the researcher observed that private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State face challenges of maintaining school enrolment which is crucial for maximizing profits and increasing earning potential. The primary cause of the decline in the number of enrolment in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State could be attributed to inadequate school facilities, poor school facilities and poor school plant management practices.

Effective school plant management is considered essential for creating a conducive learning environment, attracting students and ensuring secondary school sustainability. The argument for the use of library management and classrooms management appear to be strong and laudable. Considering the importance of school plant management in school marketability, many private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State still struggle with inadequate school facilities, deteriorating infrastructure, inefficient resource allocation, lack of strategic planning and limited attention to aesthetics and environmental considerations. This inefficiency in the management of school plants could consequently lead to reduced enrollment and revenue, decreased competitiveness in the education market, negative impact on student academic performance, difficulty attracting and retaining qualified teachers and above all damage to the school's reputation and brand.

Parents, academic community and the entire society have decried the negative effects of this problem. This has raised the concern of scholars to attempt finding solutions to these problems through studies conducted at different places and time. It was observed from the reviewed studies that none was done specifically on school plant management and marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. Also in previous studies reviewed, some of the variables used in the present study were not considered. This has therefore created a gap in knowledge and information and has raised the concern of the present study to establish the extent of relationship between school plant management and marketability of private secondary schools. The question therefore is, to what extent does school plant management predicts marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which:

1. school library management predicts marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State
2. classroom management predicts marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does library management predict marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State?
2. To what extent does classroom management predict marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State?

Research Hypotheses

1. Library management is not a significant predictor of marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.
2. Classroom management is not a significant predictor of marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Method

The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of this study consisted of all the 499 principals in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. Cluster sampling technique was used to cluster the population into 3 senatorial districts. Hat and draw method was used in selection 44.5% of private secondary schools in each senatorial district. This gave a total of 222 principals in 222 selected private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. The decision to use 222 principals was in line with Yamane (1973) formula for sample size determination. Convenience sampling technique was used in selecting 3 parents (raters) to rate each principal's school marketability strategy.

Two researcher developed instruments titled "School Plant Management Questionnaire (SPMQ) and Secondary School Marketability Questionnaire (SSMQ)" were used to obtain information from respondents. Both instruments were constructed on a declarative statement of four-point rating scale as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 , Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The respondents were assured of confidentiality and were expected to indicate by ticking the extent to which the items applied to them. Using Cronbach Alpha Reliability Method, a reliability coefficient of .875 was obtained for SPMQ and .855 for SSMQ. The instruments: SPMQ and SSMQ were administered to the respondents in their various schools by the researcher with the help of 4 research assistants. 216 copies of the instruments were returned out of 222 instruments sent out. This represents 97.3% return. Out of 216 instruments returned, 3 copies of the instruments were wrongly filled and were not useful for the analysis. This gives 4.1% attrition rate. All completed and returned copies of the instruments were subjected to statistical analysis.

Simple Linear Regression Statistics was used for data analyses. The R value of the Simple Linear Regression Statistics was used in answering the research questions while the F-value was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule by Schober *et al*, (2018) was applied while answering the research questions to show the

strength and direction of prediction between school plant management and marketability of private secondary schools.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does library management predict marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 1 Simple Linear Regression Analysis for the extent to which Library Management predict Marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State

Variable	R	R ²	Extent of Prediction	Std. Error of Estimate	Remark
Library Management					
Marketability of Secondary School	.445	.198	19.8%	6.35735	Moderate Extent

The output in Table 1 shows the strength of relationship R and the determination of the extent to which library management predicts marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. The R value of .445 indicates a moderate extent of relationship between the two variables. The calculated R² of .198 which is the coefficient of determination indicates that only 19.8% of marketability of private secondary schools is predicted by library management. This implies that library management, to a moderate extent, predicts marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Question 2: To what extent does classroom management predict marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 2 Simple Linear Regression Analysis for the extent to which Classroom Management predict Marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State

Variable	R	R ²	Extent of Prediction	Std. Error of Estimate	Remark
Classroom Management					
Marketability of Secondary School	.207	.043	4.3%	6.94629	Low Extent

The output in Table 2 shows the strength of relationship R and the determination of the extent to which classroom management predicts marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. The R value of .207 indicates a low extent of relationship between the two variables. The calculated R² of .043 which is the coefficient of determination indicates that only 4.3% of marketability of private secondary schools is determined by classroom management. This implies that classroom management to a low extent predicts marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Library management is not a significant predictor marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State

Table 3 Simple Linear Regression Analysis for the extent to which Library Management predict Marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Cal	F-Crit	Decision @ P < .05
Regression	2118.273	1	2118.273	52.412	3.89	*
Residual	8568.175	212	40.416			
Total	10686.449	213				

The entries in Table 3 reveals the calculated F-value of 52.412 is greater than the critical F-value of 3.86 0.05 level significant with 1 and 212 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which claims that library management is not a significant predictor of marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State is rejected. The result shows that library management significantly predicts marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Hypothesis 2: Classroom management is not a significant predictor marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State

Table 4 Simple Linear Regression Analysis for the extent to which Classroom Management predict Marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Cal	F-Crit	Decision @ P < .05
Regression	457.253	1	457.253	9.477	3.89	*
Residual	10229.196	212	48.251			
Total	10686.449	213				

The entries in Table 4 reveals the calculated F-value of 9.477 is greater than the critical F-value of 3.86 0.05 level significant with 1 and 212 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which claims that classroom management is not a significant predictor of marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State is rejected. The result shows that classroom management significantly predicts marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Findings of the Study

1. Library Management to a moderate extent predicts Marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State.
2. Classroom Management to a low extent predicts Marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State
3. Library Management is a significant predictor of Marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State
4. Classroom Management is a significant predictor of Marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State

Discussion of the Findings

Library Management and Marketability of Private Secondary Schools

The result of the analysis reveals a moderate positive relationship between library management and marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State. The corresponding hypothesis reveals a significant extent of prediction between library management and marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State is. This result must have come out this way for reasons that a well-managed library creates a warm and inviting atmosphere that welcomes students, parents and other visitors to the school. This helps to create a positive impression of the school and its commitment to learning and education. The result could also be attributed to the fact that a well-managed library ensures that students and staff have access to a wide range of high-quality resources which help to demonstrate the school's commitment in providing its students with the best possible education.

This result is supported by Zheng *et al.* (2024) who agreed that library that is well-managed is a vital aspect of a school and it plays a significant role in promoting the school to potential students, parents and other stakeholders. The library serves as the cornerstone of learning, providing students and staff with a wealth of knowledge and resources to support their academic and personal growth. Similarly, Supriadi *et al.* (2021) agreed that, a well-managed library serves as a key factor in attracting new students and enhancing the school's reputation. All these results align because all the studies discovered that library management significantly predicts school attractiveness. By ensuring that the library is well-organized, well-stocked and easily accessible, the school can highlight its commitment to education and learning. A well-managed library can be a showcase for the school, demonstrating the school's commitment to learning and knowledge. This can be an effective form of advertisement, as prospective students and parents may be attracted to schools with strong libraries. Also, a well-managed library can provide a variety of resources for marketing and advertising purposes, such as photographs, information about the school's history and programs, brochures and other promotional materials. It is therefore necessary to emphasize that necessary proactive measures should be taken to improve physical conditions of school library so as to increase school enrolment in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Classroom Management and Marketability of Private Secondary Schools

The result of the analysis reveals a low positive relationship between classroom management and marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State. The corresponding hypothesis reveals a significant extent of prediction between classroom management and marketability of Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State. This result seems to have come out this way probably because parents want to enroll their children in schools that prioritize student success and academic achievement. When prospective parents, students and families visit a school, they often observe classrooms to get a sense of the learning environment and to assess the quality of the teaching. A well-managed classroom can showcase the school's dedication to providing a top-notch educational experience, which can be a significant factor in attracting new students. Also, a classroom that is well-organized, well-run and engaging creates a positive and welcoming environment that inspires students to learn and grow. Similarly, a well-managed classroom demonstrates schools' commitment to student safety and welfare, which is a critical concern for parents when choosing a school.

This finding of this study is in line with the findings of Yi and Chen, (2014) who agreed that a well-managed classroom can be a significant draw for parents who want their

children to have an enriching educational experience. This implies that a well-managed classroom is an essential component of a high-quality education and can play a significant role in attracting students and their families to a school. Classroom management can increase school enrollment by creating a positive learning environment that students enjoy and want to be a part of. The finding of this study is also supported by Cheng and Yu-chi, (2018) who found that a well-managed classroom fosters a positive and engaging learning environment, which can appeal to parents who want their children to enjoy school and develop love for learning. When classroom is managed properly, it shows that the school has established clear expectations and routines that support student learning and growth. A school with well-managed classrooms therefore conveys a positive image of professionalism, organization and a commitment to excellence in education. This can significantly enhance a school's marketability and appeal to prospective students and their families.

Conclusion

This study was able to make various discoveries and observations about the extent to which school plant management predicted marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. If marketability of private secondary schools is to be enhanced, management of school facilities should be improved upon. It is through conducting regular inspections of school facilities, managing the procurement and installation of new equipment and technology and ensuring compliance with health and safety regulations that will attract and make parents enroll their wards in private secondary schools. The findings of the study revealed that, library management and classroom management significantly predicted marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. It was concluded based on the result that management of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State should adopt various management strategies and develop a master plan for school facilities, including the allocation of space, the design of new buildings and the upgrade of existing facilities since school plant management to a great extent significantly predicted marketability of private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Recommendations

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

1. Ministry of Education should monitor the state of facilities in private secondary schools and withdraw Authority To Operate (ATO) form schools with poor facilities.
2. Government should organize in-service-training for principals in order to improve their management skills. The training perhaps should focus on school plant management in order to create a healthy and attractive school environment and attract more enrolments.
3. Principals should ensure regular staff meetings and constant supervision of staff in their various duties posts as this will help to monitor their level of compliance with school plant management policy.
4. Teachers should embark on further studies that will help them acquire knowledge considered essential in management and utilization of school resources and make school conducive for teaching and learning. This will help in advertising the school

REFERENCES

- Asiabaka, S. (2018) School location and teachers' job satisfaction *Journal of Education review*, 5(2):45-67.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1989). Ecological System Theory. *Annals of child Development*. (6): 187-249
- Cheng, Y. and Yu-chi, C. (2018). Enhancing classroom management through parental involvement by using social networking apps. *South African Journal of Education*. 38:1-14 <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v38ns2a1427>
- Etuk, R. (2017). *Environmental impact on student learning*. Unpublished NCE Project, College of Education, Afahasit, Akwa Ibom State.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2013). *National Policy on Education* (4th ed.). Lagos. NERDC Press.
- Halpin, A. W. and Croft, D. B. (1963). *The Organizational Climate of Schools*. Chicago, IL: Midwest Administration Center of the University of Chicago.
- Ibrahim, F. (2018). Effect of School plan and entrepreneurial school development. *Journal of Education* 7(2):35 – 45.
- Kennedy, F. (2014). *Making social media work for your school*. London: University Press.
- Mark, S. and Ajayi, T. (2017). *School Building and Students Academic Learning Outcomes* New York: Strong Brook.
- Nwune, E. N., Nwogbo, V. N. and Okonkwo, C. C. (2016). Competencies Improvement needs of Head Teachers of Primary Schools in Supervision of Instruction in Anambra State. *UNIZIK Journal of Educational Management and Policy*, 1(1):59-66.
- Nwosu, C. C. A. (2022). School plant management for effective students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation*. 3(5):574-582
- Onyemauche, N. S. (2021). Influence of Management of School Plant and Success of Entrepreneurial Subjects in Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Education Zone in Rivers State. *Sapientia Foundation Journal of Education, Sciences and Gender Studies (SFJESGS)*. 3(3): 253 – 260
- Oyewole, S. O. (2022). School Plant Planning and Management Efforts Required for Business Education Students' Skills Acquisition in Colleges of Education. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education (NIGJBED)*. 9(3):106-116
- Purkey, W. W. (1984). *Inviting School Success: A Self-concept Approach to Teaching, Learning and Democratic Practice*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Saifi, I. L., Hussain, M., Salamat, L. and Bakht, M. I. (2018). Impact of classroom management on students' performance at university level. *Asian Innovative Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2(2):13-27.

- Schober, P., Boer, C. and Schwarte, L. A. (2018). Correlation Coefficients: Appropriate Use and Interpretation. *Anesthesia & Analgesiamay*. 126(5):1763-1768
- Supriadi, T., Nurahyani, M. and Eddy, S. (2021). The Role of Library Managers in Improving Students' Reading Interest'. Proceedings of the International Conference on Education Universitas PGRI Palembang (INCoEPP 2021). *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*. 8(565):630-634
- Yamane, T. (1973). "Statistics: An Introductory Analysis." New York: Harper and Row.
- Uchendu, C. C., Nwafor, I. A. and Nwaneri, M. G. (2015). Marketing Strategies and Students' Enrolment in Private Secondary Schools in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and Practice*, 3(5): 212-223. DOI: 10.18488/journal.61/2015.3.5./61.5.212.223
- Yi, H. and Chen, Y. (2014). An Analysis of Factors Affecting Parents' Choice of a Junior High School. *International Journal of Business, Humanities and Technology* 3(2): 39-49
- Zheng, Z., Zeng, M., Huang, W. and Sun, N. (2024). The influence of University Library Environment on Student Interactions and College Students' Learning Engagement. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 11(385):1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-02892-y>