

Influence of School Environment on Senior Secondary School History Students' Academic Performance in Jos South Lga of Plateau State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study investigated influence of school environment on senior secondary school history students' academic performance in in Jos south LGA of Plateau State, Nigeria. The study formulated one aim and four specific objectives. In line with these objectives the study raised and answered four corresponding research questions. Two null hypotheses were also tested at 0.05 level of significance. Extensive literature was reviewed concerning the variables and issues in the study. Empirical studies were also reviewed and gaps in literature were identified. The study adopted a survey research design specifically cross-sectional survey research design. The study population consisted of 521 SS II history students across the 20 public schools in Jos South LGA for 2025 academic year. From the population a sample of 100 students were selected from 10 schools using simple random sampling technique. To generate data for the study the researcher used a structured questionnaire also referred to as close ended questionnaire. The questionnaire was titled *Influence of school environment on academic performance of SS II History students in in Jos South*" (ISEAPSH). Content validity was established by experts and reliability was determine at 0.71 using Cronbach Alpha method for internal consistency. Direct method of data collection was established and data collected was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings revealed among other things that, types of Learning Environments Available: The study identified that students have access to varying forms of learning environments, which include physical infrastructure, classroom size, access to educational resources like libraries and ICT tools, and teacher-student interactions among others. The study concluded that school environment has significant influence on academic performance of History students in Jos South LGA. The study recommended among other things that, government and school proprietors should invest in classroom infrastructure, ensuring adequate space, proper seating, ventilation, and lighting.

Keywords: School Environment; Senior Secondary; School History; Academic Performance

I. Introduction

Education is universally acknowledged as a vital driver of sustainable development, and in Nigeria, it remains indispensable for individual and national growth. Beyond teacher competence, the effectiveness of education is strongly shaped by the school environment and its management. Education transmits national values, knowledge, and skills necessary for societal advancement, with history playing a particularly critical role in shaping citizenship and national identity. The saying that "*a country unaware of its past may be blind to its future*" illustrates the importance of history in helping students understand the past, contextualize the present, and prepare for the future. In Nigeria, history has been positioned as a key subject within the arts curriculum of senior secondary schools, often taught alongside government and related humanities.

Despite its relevance, history education faces serious challenges in Nigeria, particularly in Jos South. Students' interest has gradually declined, partly because history is optional in many

schools and because of the shortage of qualified teachers. The absence of professionals hinders effective content delivery, resulting in poor academic outcomes. Data from the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and National Examinations Council (NECO) between 2019 and 2023 reflect stagnation: 47% credit-level performance in 2019, 48% in 2020, followed by declines to 46% in 2021 and 45% in 2022, before returning to 47% in 2023.

These statistics reveal an unstable performance trend, underscoring a crisis in students' achievement in history.

Several factors contribute to this problem, ranging from curriculum implementation, lack of qualified teachers, and outdated teaching methods, to inadequate instructional materials, poor student attitudes, and weak school environments. Although teacher competence and pedagogy have received much scholarly attention, the school environment as a determinant of academic performance has not been sufficiently explored. Yet, recent studies show that conducive school environments are critical to effective teaching and learning. Udoh and Ogbuagu (2021) emphasize that adequate facilities, professional teachers, and safe atmospheres significantly improve learning outcomes. The school environment includes material resources like libraries, classrooms, and laboratories, as well as non-material aspects such as teacher-student relations, peer influence, and school culture.

Environmental factors like class size, location, and safety strongly influence outcomes. Adebayo and Olanrewaju (2020) observe that overcrowded classrooms limit teacher attention and hinder student engagement, while smaller classes promote closer interaction and personalized learning. Similarly, Onyinyechi (2019) highlights disparities between urban and rural schools, with urban institutions generally enjoying better infrastructure and access to resources. Safety is equally crucial, as Okafor et al. (2022) stress that insecurity in schools generates fear and anxiety that negatively impact learning. The abduction of the Chibok girls in 2014 remains a painful reminder of how insecurity undermines education in Nigeria. Secure environments—with fencing, controlled entry points, and security personnel are therefore essential for effective learning.

The availability and maintenance of facilities such as libraries, laboratories, and sanitation further shape student experiences. Ahmed and Abdullahi (2023) note that access to gender-sensitive facilities, especially toilets, is vital for female students' participation. Without them, absenteeism increases, weakening performance. Additionally, teaching strategies play a significant role. For history in particular, interactive approaches like debates, storytelling, and multimedia enhance student engagement and understanding. Unfortunately, history is often taught with limited instructional materials, reducing lessons to rote memorization and further discouraging interest.

A well-organized and attractive school environment fosters pride and motivation in students, reinforcing their interest in school. Proper lighting, ventilation, desks, and teaching aids create a psychological advantage for learning. Swaminathan and Venkatesh (2019) argue that education is also shaped by the broader community, underscoring the role of social attitudes in motivating learners. Similarly, Lawal and Akinpelu (2020) affirm that conducive environments support cognitive development and intellectual engagement. Facilities such as functional libraries, ICT centers, and science laboratories provide opportunities for critical thinking and problem-solving, complementing classroom learning. Beyond physical infrastructure, school climate including perceptions of safety, belonging, and well-being has a major impact on student performance. Barth (2019) explains that schools must be hospitable to learning, emphasizing the reduction of stress and anxiety. Bullying, harassment, and social insecurity diminish students' focus, while supportive environments enhance concentration and performance. The case of insecurity in parts of Nigeria illustrates how unsafe environments discourage attendance, particularly among girls, and reduce teacher willingness to serve in vulnerable areas.

Class size remains another persistent challenge. Smaller classes encourage differentiated instruction and closer monitoring, while overcrowding common in Nigerian public schools reduces instructional quality and discipline. Umaru and Haruna (2021) note that overcrowded classrooms exacerbate inequities, as weaker students receive less support, while competition for scarce resources undermines overall performance. Furthermore, basic facilities such as clean and adequate toilets remain critical to student welfare and attendance, especially for female students during menstruation.

In light of these challenges, it becomes evident that the school environment has profound implications for history education in Jos South. While several studies have explored students' academic performance, limited attention has been given to how the school environment specifically affects achievement in history. This gap provides the justification for the present study, which seeks to examine how environmental factors ranging from infrastructure, class size, safety, and facilities, to teacher-student interactions influence students' performance in history.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The academic performance of students in History is expected to be encouraging, given the subject's vital role in exposing learners to historical facts, the secrets of civilization, and the development of generations. History, as a discipline, has the potential to foster critical thinking, promote cultural awareness, and instill a strong sense of identity and patriotism among students. However, in reality, students' academic performance in History has been far from satisfactory.

Efforts by the government and other stakeholders to address this issue, such as improving manpower, enhancing teachers' welfare, implementing training and retraining programs for teachers, and sensitizing students on the importance of studying History, are commendable. Nevertheless, these efforts have yet to yield significant improvements in students' academic outcomes. This persistent underperformance points to deeper underlying factors that may hinder effective learning, one of which is the condition of the school environment.

Conversely, a poor school environment characterized by dilapidated infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, insufficient instructional materials, lack of recreational facilities, and unqualified or poorly motivated teachers creates an atmosphere that discourages learning and reduces academic performance. In the context of History, where the subject demands critical reflection, interactive teaching methods, and access to learning aids such as historical maps, multimedia tools, and reference materials, the absence of these essentials can lead to disinterest, disengagement, and under-academic performance. For instance, if classrooms are poorly ventilated, overcrowded, or lacking visual aids, students' ability to focus, comprehend, and retain historical content is significantly compromised. Furthermore, inadequate school environments may contribute to absenteeism and a lack of enthusiasm, further exacerbating the decline in academic performance.

This problem is particularly evident in secondary schools in Jos South LGA, where trends from external examinations between 2019 and 2023 demonstrate a consistent decline in students' academic performance in History. The implications of this persistent underperformance extend beyond the classroom, posing a broader societal challenge. A decline in students' interest and performance in History risks eroding the country's historical values, weakening cultural identity, and fostering a citizenry with a limited understanding of the nation's past. If such a situation persists it will undermine patriotism, which is essential for national integration, unity, and development. It is within this context that this study seeks to examine the impact of the school environment on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in History in Jos South LGA.

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the study

1. What is the influence of the school environment on students' academic performance in History?
2. What is the impact of class size on students' academic performance in History?
3. What is the influence of school infrastructure on students' academic performance in History?
4. What is the impact of instructional materials on students' academic performance in History?

1.3 Hypotheses

The below hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. The use of instructional materials does not significantly impact on students academic performance

School environment does not significantly impact students academic performance in history

II. Review of Literatures

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theory underpinning the study is School Climate Theory developed by Gregory, Cornell, and Fan (2011) emphasizes that students' academic performance is strongly shaped by the overall environment of the school. This environment, known as school climate, is influenced by factors such as the quality of academic activities, the safety of the learning space, the extent of community and institutional support, and the broader school culture. The theory suggests that effective teaching, availability of instructional resources, and positive classroom interactions enhance intellectual engagement, while physical and emotional safety create an atmosphere of trust that supports learning. Similarly, a supportive social environment fostered by teachers, peers, and administrators motivates students and strengthens their engagement. Together, these interrelated elements shape students' cognitive, behavioral, and psychological development, all of which contribute to academic achievement.

In the context of this study, the School Climate Theory is particularly relevant in exploring how aspects such as infrastructure, safety, class size, and instructional materials affect students' performance in History in Jos South LGA. The theory underscores the importance of a holistic school environment, arguing that positive conditions adequate facilities, teacher support, and a culture of safety enhance students' motivation and outcomes. Conversely, a negative or inadequate climate may hinder learning and lead to poor performance. By applying this theoretical framework, the study is able to link the quality of the school environment to students' academic success, highlighting that History, as a subject requiring concentration and intellectual engagement, thrives in a supportive and enabling school climate.

2.2 Literature Review

History, as a discipline, is the systematic study of past events, people, and societies aimed at understanding human experiences and their impact on the present and future. Etymologically derived from the Greek word *historia*, meaning inquiry or investigation, history functions both as a narrative and analytical field that reconstructs and interprets evidence to create coherent accounts of the past. In Nigeria, history is particularly significant due to the country's diverse cultural heritage, pre-colonial civilizations, colonial experiences, and post-independence transformations. Studying history helps Nigerians appreciate their identity and the collective experiences that unite them as a nation. It not only preserves cultural memory but also offers lessons that inform social, political, and economic progress.

Within Nigerian schools, history has played an important role in fostering national identity, patriotism, and intellectual development. Initially a core subject at all educational levels, history later suffered neglect due to curriculum changes and the perception that it had limited economic relevance compared to science and technology (Alabi, 2020). Nevertheless, history remains central in exposing students to both global and local perspectives, ranging from the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism to the achievements of pre-colonial societies such as the Benin Empire and the Sokoto Caliphate. The teaching of history builds analytical and critical thinking skills, develops pride in cultural heritage, and promotes unity in a country of over 250 ethnic groups. Through history, students not only learn about their past but also cultivate empathy, respect for diversity, and civic responsibility (Adebanjo & Alabi, 2020). Despite its importance, history education in Nigeria has faced major challenges, including marginalisation in the curriculum, lack of teaching resources, and inadequate government support. The decline worsened after Social Studies replaced history in the Junior Secondary School curriculum in 1982, leading to dwindling student interest (Ojiogwu, 2009). However, advocacy by scholars, professional associations, and public figures such as Wole Soyinka eventually pressured the government to act. In 2016, Minister of Education Adamu Adamu announced the reintroduction of history into the curriculum, which took effect in 2017 (Micheal, 2020). This reintroduction reflects recognition of history's enduring role in preserving cultural heritage, fostering national unity, and equipping young learners with the analytical skills and moral lessons necessary for nation-building and personal development.

The concept of the physical learning environment encompasses all the tangible elements within a school setting that support teaching and learning. These include classrooms, libraries, laboratories, playgrounds, furniture, instructional materials, lighting, ventilation, and overall school infrastructure. A well-structured physical environment not only enhances students' educational experiences but also fosters intellectual engagement, emotional stability, and a sense of belonging (Asiyai, 2020). The arrangement of furniture, classroom acoustics, safety, and aesthetics all shape the extent to which students feel motivated and able to participate actively in academic activities. When classrooms are poorly designed or overcrowded, they often hinder concentration, communication, and collaboration, thereby limiting academic performance.

Research has shown that the architecture of the classroom significantly influences students' learning outcomes. Variables such as noise, temperature, seating arrangements, colour, and lighting directly impact attention span, communication, and cognitive ability. For example, Chiang and Lai (2008) observed that excessive classroom noise disrupts language comprehension, reading, and writing skills. Conversely, adequate lighting and colour schemes such as blues and greens create calm atmospheres that improve student focus. Seating arrangements also determine levels of engagement; students in circular or cluster arrangements are often more participatory compared to those in rigid rows. These studies demonstrate that subtle physical features of classrooms can either enhance or undermine student learning.

School facilities, broadly defined, refer to the buildings, playgrounds, libraries, workshops, laboratories, and other instructional resources that provide the framework for education. These facilities serve as the backbone of the learning process and create opportunities for both academic and extracurricular development (Adegbile & Olanrewaju, 2020; Abraham & Johnson, 2021). Beyond providing space, facilities such as laboratories, sports grounds, and multimedia classrooms enhance practical learning experiences. For instance, science laboratories equipped with microscopes and test tubes allow for hands-on learning, while playgrounds and sports equipment foster physical and social development. Thus, schools that invest in modern and well-maintained facilities create environments that promote holistic growth in students.

The availability and quality of school facilities directly influence the quality of education delivered. Well-maintained facilities ensure safety, comfort, and productivity, while inadequate or dilapidated resources reduce academic performance and limit engagement. Oyedepo and Adeyemi (2019) showed that schools with well-equipped classrooms and infrastructure produced better student outcomes than those with poorly managed facilities. Similarly, Olanrewaju and Akinlolu (2022) observed that modern tools such as computers and multimedia projectors enhanced student engagement and improved learning outcomes. This underscores the need for consistent investment in the development and maintenance of school infrastructure. Effective management of school facilities ensures not only better academic outcomes but also the overall well-being of learners and educators, thereby sustaining educational quality and preparing students for contemporary societal demands.

Academic performance is a multidimensional construct that reflects not only students' ability to recall knowledge but also their engagement, motivation, and capacity to apply learning meaningfully. Traditionally, it was measured through tests and grades, but contemporary perspectives emphasize critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving as integral aspects of achievement (Alabi, 2020). Performance is shaped by both internal factors such as motivation and emotional well-being, and external ones such as socio-economic background, school resources, and teacher quality (Barth, 2019). In subjects like History, academic performance further involves students' capacity for analysis, interpretation, and reflection on historical events, which demands more than rote memorization. However, many students struggle with History due to limited resources, poor teaching methods, and perceptions of the subject as abstract or irrelevant (Alabi, 2020).

The challenges affecting History performance are compounded by inadequate school facilities, insufficient instructional materials, and unqualified teachers, which hinder effective teaching and learning. Students from low socio-economic backgrounds face additional barriers, including poor access to learning resources and unsupportive study environments (Ibrahim, 2021). These factors contribute to disengagement and poor outcomes in History, a subject that ideally should foster critical and reflective thinking. Moreover, rigid curricula and traditional assessment methods that emphasize memorization rather than analytical skills further restrict students' ability to perform well (Chidozie & Ilesanmi, 2021). Addressing these challenges requires curriculum reforms, provision of adequate resources, and teacher training in modern pedagogical strategies that make History more engaging and relevant.

The school environment itself plays a vital role in shaping students' academic performance across subjects. Physical infrastructure, safety, and availability of facilities like libraries and laboratories create conditions for effective learning, while supportive teacher-student and peer relationships enhance motivation and engagement (Eze & Ogbu, 2020; Johnson & Omotoso, 2022). Schools with positive social climates and adequate resources encourage students to thrive academically, whereas poor facilities, overcrowding, and lack of safety reduce concentration and achievement (Ali, 2021). In the context of History education in Jos North LGA, improving school environments through better facilities, smaller class sizes, adequate teaching materials, and safe, inclusive spaces will be essential for enhancing students' learning experiences and academic performance. Thus, the review establishes that academic performance in History is shaped by a complex interaction of student motivation, teaching quality, resources, and the overall school climate, all of which must be addressed to foster better outcomes.

III. Research Methods

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design which enabled the collection of data from a representative sample of the population at a single point in time, making it suitable for examining the influence of the school environment on the academic performance of SS II History students in Jos South LGA. The population comprised 521 students across 20 public secondary schools, from which a sample of 100 students was drawn using simple random sampling through the lottery method to ensure equal representation. Data were collected with a structured, close-ended questionnaire titled “Influence of School Environment on Academic Performance of SS II History Students in Jos South” (ISEAPSH), developed by the researcher based on study objectives, literature review, and expert consultation. The questionnaire contained two sections: demographic data and 20 analytical items rated on a 4-point Likert scale. Validity was established through expert review for face and content accuracy, while reliability was tested using the split-half method and Pearson Product Moment Correlation, yielding a coefficient of 0.71. Data collection was conducted on-site using a face-to-face method to ensure clarity and high response rates, and analysis was carried out with SPSS version 24.0, employing descriptive statistics (percentages and means) for research questions and inferential statistics (t-test) for hypothesis testing.

IV. Result and Discussion

4.1 Answering of Research Questions

a. Research question one

What are the types of learning environment available to students of social studies in Jos North LGA?

Table 1. Mean Scores of School Environment and Students’ Academic Performance

S/N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	Good infrastructure, such as well-equipped classrooms and libraries, helps students learn better.	100	3.01	0.11	Accept
2	Proper lighting, ventilation, and seating make studying more comfortable and effective.	100	2.62	0.09	Accept
3	Positive relationships with teachers and classmates increase motivation and engagement.	100	2.64	0.10	Accept
4	Extracurricular activities improve cognitive skills and overall academic performance.	100	2.76	0.10	Accept
5	Good infrastructure can improve students academic performance	100	2.83	0.09	Accept

The table 1 presents the responses of 100 participants regarding factors influencing pupils’ academic performance, with all items receiving mean scores above the neutral threshold, indicating general agreement. The highest mean score of 3.01 suggests strong affirmation that good infrastructure such as well-equipped classrooms and libraries significantly supports learning outcomes. Similarly, aspects like adequate lighting, ventilation, seating, and extracurricular activities were also acknowledged as contributing positively, though with slightly lower mean scores ranging from 2.62 to 2.83. The standard deviations for

all items are low (ranging between 0.09 and 0.11), indicating a high level of agreement and consistency in participants' responses. Collectively, the results reflect a shared perception that both physical infrastructure and psychosocial environments play critical roles in shaping academic achievement among pupils.

b. Research question two

What is the impact of class size on students' academic performance in History?

Table 2. Mean Scores of Responses on Types of Learning Environments Available for Students

S/ N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	Smaller class sizes allow teachers to give more individual attention to students.	100	3.12	0.09	Accept
2	Large class sizes can lead to overcrowding, reducing student concentration.	100	2.95	0.10	Accept
3	Smaller classes improve teacher-student interaction and participation in history discussions.	100	3.07	0.09	Accept
4	Larger classes may hinder effective classroom management and discipline.	100	2.88	0.11	Accept
5	Students in smaller classes often perform better due to personalized feedback.	100	3.10	0.09	Accept

The data in table 2 reveal that respondents overwhelmingly acknowledge the influence of class size and classroom environment on students' learning outcomes. Specifically, the relatively high mean values across all items (ranging from 2.88 to 3.12) indicate strong agreement that smaller class sizes enhance individual attention, improve student participation, and facilitate better feedback. Conversely, larger class sizes are viewed as contributing to overcrowding and weakening classroom management. Overall, the responses support the notion that well-structured learning environments, particularly those featuring smaller class sizes, positively affect students' academic performance.

c. Research question three

What is the influence of school infrastructure on students' academic performance in History?

Table 3. Mean Scores of Infrastructures and Students Academic Achievement

S/N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	Well-equipped libraries help students access historical books and materials.	100	3.23	0.78	Accept
2	Properly furnished classrooms make learning more comfortable and effective.	100	2.87	0.84	Accept
3	Functional laboratories aid in practical learning and understanding historical artifacts.	100	3.17	0.73	Accept
4	Good lighting and ventilation improve students' focus during history lessons.	100	2.93	0.81	Accept
5	Access to technology, like projectors and computers, makes history lessons more engaging.	100	3.21	0.75	Accept

Table 3 reveals that students generally agree that infrastructural facilities such as well-equipped libraries, functional laboratories, proper classroom environments, adequate lighting and ventilation, and access to educational technology significantly enhance the teaching and learning of history. The mean scores, all above the midpoint of the scale, suggest a positive perception of these facilities' roles in supporting academic engagement and comprehension.

The relatively low standard deviation values indicate consistency in students' responses, reflecting a shared understanding of the importance of a conducive learning environment.

Overall, the findings highlight the critical need for investment in both physical and technological infrastructure to improve the quality and effectiveness of history education.

d. Research question four

What is the impact of instructional materials on students' academic performance in History?

Table 4. Mean Scores of Instructional Materials and Students Academic Achievement

S/N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	Instructional materials make history lessons more engaging and easier to understand.	100	3.35	0.72	Accept
2	Visual aids, like maps and charts, help students grasp historical concepts better.	100	3.28	0.75	Accept
3	Textbooks provide structured content for effective learning in history.	100	3.11	0.80	Accept
4	Multimedia tools, such as videos, bring historical events to life for students.	100	3.24	0.76	Accept
5	Lack of instructional materials can reduce interest and performance in history.	100	3.30	0.79	Accept

The results in table 4 indicate that students strongly perceive instructional materials as crucial to effective history education. The consistently high mean scores across all items ranging from 3.11 to 3.35 suggest a general consensus that the use of tools such as visual aids, textbooks, and multimedia significantly enhances understanding and engagement in history lessons. Moreover, the acknowledgment of negative consequences from the absence of these materials further underscores their importance. Standard deviation values between 0.72 and 0.80 reflect a relatively low spread in responses, pointing to a shared view among students. Collectively, these findings emphasize the need for schools to provide diverse and adequate instructional resources to improve student learning outcomes and sustain interest in the subject.

4.2 Testing of hypotheses

Hypothesis one: The use of instructional materials does not significantly impact students' academic performance in History.

Table 5. Chi-square Hypothesis Test on Use of Instructional Materials and Students Academic Performance

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Level of Significance (α)	df	Chi-square Calculated	Chi-square Critical	P-value	Decision
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Instructional materials	100	25.0	3.54						
				0.05	1	5.212	3.841	0.023	Reject Ho
Academic performance	100	24.0	3.75						

The calculated chi-square value in table 7 is 5.212, which is greater than the critical value of 3.841. The associated p-value of 0.023 is less than the 0.05 significance level.

Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0). This implies that the use of instructional materials has a statistically significant positive impact on students' academic performance in History. The data supports the position that instructional materials contribute meaningfully to improving learning outcomes.

Hypothesis two: School environment does not significantly impact students' academic performance in History

Table 6. Chi-square Hypothesis Test on School Environment and Students Academic Performance

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Level of Significance (α)	df	Chi-square Calculated	Chi-square Critical	P-value	Decision
School Environment	100	26.5	3.89						
				0.05	1	6.728	3.841	0.009	Reject Ho
Academic performance	100	24.0	3.75						

The Chi-square calculated value in table 8 is 6.728, which is greater than the critical value of 3.841 at 1 degree of freedom and a significance level (α) of 0.05. The p-value is 0.009, which is below 0.05. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0). This indicates that the school environment significantly impacts students' academic performance in History. In other words, improvements in the school environment such as better classroom infrastructure, ventilation, seating, and safety are associated with higher student achievement in History.

4.3 Discussion

The findings of the study showed that both instructional materials and the quality of the school environment significantly influenced students' academic performance in History in Jos North LGA. Statistical results confirmed that resources such as textbooks, multimedia, and visual aids enhanced comprehension and engagement, consistent with Musa and Dauda (2020) and Olufemi and Aladejana (2020). Similarly, conducive learning environments, including adequate infrastructure, smaller class sizes, and supportive teacher-student relationships, were found to foster better academic outcomes, aligning with Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2019) and Nwachukwu and Ogbonna (2021). The Chi-square test further validated these associations, while the low standard deviations across responses indicated strong consensus among participants. The study emphasized that learning is shaped by both instructional aids and environmental conditions, echoing Udo and Bassey's (2022) view of a synergistic effect between resources and school design. Overall, the results highlight the strategic importance of providing quality instructional materials and conducive school environments as critical determinants of students' achievement in History education.

4.4 Summary of findings

The major findings are summarized as follows:

1. Types of Learning Environments Available: The study identified that students have access to varying forms of learning environments, which include physical infrastructure, classroom size, access to educational resources like libraries and ICT tools, and teacher-student interactions.
2. Impact of School Environment on Academic Performance: The Chi-square hypothesis testing showed a statistically significant relationship between school environment and student performance ($\chi^2 = 6.728$, $p = 0.009$), confirming that a conducive school environment enhances student engagement, concentration, and academic success. This supports the views of Udo and Bassey (2022), who emphasized that school learning conditions significantly shape students' academic outcomes.

Impact of Instructional Materials on Academic Performance: Another major finding was the significant role of instructional materials such as maps, textbooks, multimedia tools, and charts in improving understanding and performance in Social Studies.

V. Conclusion

The study concludes that the school environment, encompassing both physical infrastructure and psychosocial factors, plays a critical role in the academic development of JSS students in Social Studies. Adequate facilities such as lighting, ventilation, manageable class sizes, and access to learning materials all contribute to a more effective and engaging learning experience. Similarly, the availability and use of instructional materials are shown to significantly enhance teaching and comprehension in Social Studies. These outcomes indicate that academic underperformance among students can be substantially mitigated through improvements in the school learning environment and instructional delivery.

Recommendations

1. Government and school proprietors should invest in classroom infrastructure, ensuring adequate space, proper seating, ventilation, and lighting.
2. Efforts should be made to reduce classroom overcrowding by constructing more classrooms and maintaining a student-teacher ratio that allows for personalized attention.
3. Existing physical structures should be renovated and maintained regularly to provide a safe and comfortable learning atmosphere.
4. Schools should be equipped with modern instructional materials, including maps, textbooks, visual aids, and multimedia tools, to improve student engagement and comprehension in Social Studies.

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