

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AS CORRELATES OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG INTERNALLY DISPLACED PUPILS IN NORTH CENTRAL, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of environmental factors on the academic performance of primary school pupils in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps in North Central Nigeria. Utilizing a descriptive correlational survey design, the study involved 3,608 pupils from IDP camps across Abuja, Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, and Plateau states, with a sample size of 719 determined using Research Advisor (2006). Multistage, stratified, and simple random sampling techniques were employed to select the camps, schools, and pupils. Data were collected using the Environmental Factor Checklist (EFC) and the Pupils Performance Test (PPT), both validated with reliability indices of 0.71 and 0.72, respectively. Analysis using percentages and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) revealed that inadequate infrastructure, poor water supply, insufficient sanitation, and substandard classroom facilities negatively affected academic performance. The study recommends that local voluntary organizations and government agencies collaborate to address these challenges by improving access to clean water, upgrading sanitation facilities, and ensuring safe and well-equipped learning environments to enhance the overall well-being and academic performance of pupils in IDP camps.

Keywords: Environmental Factors, Academic Performance, Primary School Pupils, Internally Displaced Persons (IDP), North Central, Nigeria.

DOI: <https://doie.org/10.0913/SER.2024583538>

Introduction

In recent decades, Nigeria has confronted severe security challenges, including terrorism, the farmers-herders crisis, banditry, and various forms of violence, many rooted in religious conflicts. These issues have led to the displacement of thousands in North-Central Nigeria, resulting in significant loss of life and extensive property damage valued in millions of naira. Consequently, many survivors seek refuge in Internally Displaced Persons Camps (IDPCs), where they may remain for extended periods due to ongoing fears of further attacks and the persistence of the crisis.

Addressing the challenges faced by internally displaced persons in North-Central Nigeria, a significant number of primary school pupils exposed to insurgency show psychological reactions and suffer from post-traumatic stress. Unfortunately, many of these children remain undiagnosed and untreated for their psychological distress (Alozieuwa & Oyedele, 2017).

The escalation of insurgency in Nigeria has severely impacted the well-being of Nigerian pupils. The effects on education are extensive, including the loss of human resources and physical infrastructure, strain on already burdened educational facilities in host communities, inadequate environmental amenities, and lack of resources for school fees and materials. Increased poverty levels force some internally displaced

persons to forego education and seek work to support their families. Many IDP environments are unfamiliar, inhospitable, and unhealthy, which negatively affects the cognitive and emotional development as well as the academic performance of pupils (UNESCO, 2020). A conducive and threat-free environment is essential for effective teaching and learning. Environmental factors significantly influence learning outcomes, yet their impact on academic performance is often underestimated.

In this study, environmental factors are described as the physical facilities provided by school management to enhance the teaching and learning process. These factors encompass classrooms, buildings, playground facilities, laboratories, laboratory equipment, school furniture, blackboards/whiteboards, tools and machines, as well as audio and audiovisual aids (Ndu, Ocho and Okeke, 2017).

According to Ndu, Ocho, and Okeke (2017), environmental factors are defined as the physical facilities provided by school management to enhance the teaching and learning process. These include classrooms, buildings, playgrounds, laboratories, laboratory equipment, school furniture, blackboards/whiteboards, tools, machines, and audio-visual aids. Such facilities are crucial for improving the teaching and learning experiences of pupils in IDP camps. An ideal environment should feature playgrounds, modern gadgets, computer laboratories, library resources, and well-equipped classrooms and workshops. Well-structured and child-friendly school environments, especially in IDP primary schools, are essential for positively influencing children's learning processes (UNHCR, 2014).

Environmental factors significantly influence the teaching and learning process. The learning environment, encompassing physical, social, and psychological aspects, is crucial in educational planning. It includes both material resources, such as facilities and equipment, and non-material resources, such as teachers, peers, and teaching methods. A healthy and attractive school environment fosters conducive learning, instills pride in students, and encourages their continued interest in school (Mgbodile, 2014). In well-structured, child-friendly environments, particularly in IDP primary schools, the learning processes of children can be positively impacted. Schools, as vital social and educational institutions, provide a supportive environment for formal education and the achievement of educational goals (Umoh, 2016).

While the teacher's performance is important, the coordination and effectiveness of the overall learning environment also contribute to the quality of education. Academic achievement or failure could be perceived by pupils in the form of feelings of success or failure, based on how their performance aligns with their individual expectations (Kufre, 2019). In the context of IDP camps, pupil's academic achievement or failure is determined by the standards and norms of education. Academic success can be seen as a reflection of the alignment between the abilities and interests of children in IDP camps and the demands placed on them through various educational methods. On the other hand, academic failure, or difficulties in learning, indicates a mismatch between the capabilities of children in IDP camps and the expectations imposed by a particular educational approach (UNHCR, 2014).

The availability of adequate teaching and learning resources is essential for promoting active participation and engagement among pupils (Nsa, Apan, and William, 2012). Schools function as unique social spaces where children's education, training, and

personality development occur, relying on effective training methods, appropriate physical spaces, and supportive psychological environments. A healthy environment and positive role models contribute significantly to academic performance. The physical aspects of the school environment, such as walls, grounds, lighting, and mechanical systems, play an active role in the learning process (Keep, 2012). Integrating learning opportunities into the school's design and structure transforms the environment into an active space that supports educational objectives. Thus, environmental factors—including physical facilities, classrooms, libraries, technical workshops, laboratories, teacher quality, school management, teaching methods, and peers—are crucial variables influencing students' academic performance (IDMC, 2020).

Environmental factors such as buildings, classrooms, furniture, equipment, instructional materials, laboratories, libraries, play areas, and audio-visual equipment are crucial for creating a conducive learning environment for pupils (Egim, 2013). In Nigerian schools, however, these factors are often neglected, leading to poorly maintained facilities, such as leaking roofs and broken doors, especially in IDP camps. This neglect can negatively impact the academic performance of pupils in these camps (UNHCR, 2014).

School furniture is a critical component of educational resources. The relationship between comfortable school furniture and enhanced learning is highlighted by Schroder (2017), who emphasizes that high-quality, child-friendly furniture is essential for children's ability to learn effectively. Play is also vital for children's physical, mental, intellectual, and social well-being. According to Alward and Van (2013), play significantly impacts nearly every developmental aspect of children's lives. Olgan and Kahriman-Ozturk (2011) view play as a means through which children learn about their surroundings, develop communication skills, and gain self-awareness.

Instructional materials, such as books, audio-visual aids, and writing materials, are essential for facilitating the teaching and learning process. These materials, which can be human or non-human, support and enhance the acquisition and evaluation of knowledge, skills, attitudes, morals, and values. Eya (2014) and Udachukwu (2014) highlight the importance of instructional materials, which are necessary for effectively delivering lessons and enriching the overall learning experience.

School environmental factors, including school quality and facilities, play a crucial role in fostering pupils' readiness to engage in their learning journey. These factors contribute to creating an environment that encourages pupils to work diligently toward their academic pursuits. In the education system of any nation, environmental factors significantly impact the academic performance of primary school pupils in Internally Displaced Persons' (IDP) camps. Schools serve as important social and educational institutions that provide a child-friendly environment for formal training and the achievement of educational goals. The unlimited learning capacity of humankind can be influenced by behavioral patterns and the facilities available in their immediate environment (Umoh and Etuk, 2013).

However, in IDP camps and primary school settings, administrators and instructors often fail to provide proper education for pupils due to conflicts or environmental

hazards. This deprivation of education not only infringes upon the children's right to education but also hinders efforts to achieve the Education for All (EFA) Goals, subsequently affecting their academic performance in primary school. Therefore, it is imperative to establish an educational system that ensures IDP camp primary school pupils have access to education at every stage of displacement.

Security in the school plays a crucial role in shaping a child's attitude toward schooling. It is essential for such environments to be equipped with appropriate security for the safety of the pupils in the camp; an insecure environment could negatively impact a child's attitude toward schooling, as the current state of the environment may determine success or failure in life.

Abraham Maslow's theory suggests that individuals have a hierarchy of needs that must be fulfilled in a specific order. The hierarchy includes five levels: physiological needs (such as food, water, and shelter), safety needs (security, stability), love and belonging needs (social relationships, acceptance), esteem needs (recognition, self-worth), and self-actualization needs (personal growth, fulfilling one's potential). According to Maslow, individuals must have their basic needs met before they can progress to higher-level needs. In the context of education for IDPs, this theory helps understand the importance of addressing the basic needs of displaced pupils, such as providing them with food, shelter, a school playground, light, school furniture, a school building, water supply, and a safe environment with a secured fence and regular exits, before focusing on their educational needs.

To address the influence of environmental factors faced by primary school pupils who have been exposed to insurgency and subsequently displaced in IDP camps, it is crucial to conduct thorough investigations to gain a better understanding of the experiences of Nigerian primary school pupils affected by terrorism. As a result, IDP camps have been established in several states in North Central Nigeria to accommodate those affected by the conflicts. Despite the attention given by the Federal government, NGOs, and international donors, the conditions in these camps remain deplorable.

Mwaba (2016) explored the relationship between environmental factors and academic performance of lower primary school pupils in the rural Zambezi district of Zambia. Using a quantitative cross-sectional design, the study employed various statistical tests, including the Chi-square test of independence, Phi and Cramer's V test, independent sample t-test, and Pearson correlation coefficient. Results revealed a relationship between environmental factors and academic performance in literacy and numeracy among lower primary school pupils. Recommendations emphasized government action in mobilizing resources to serve children, acknowledging that serving the child equates to serving the nation.

Similarly, Nbanefor (2018) conducted a study on the security challenges and their impacts on the academic performance of primary school pupils in Abia State, Nigeria. The study included 600 primary school pupils, evenly distributed between male and female respondents. The researcher formulated two research questions and hypotheses, using means, standard deviations, and independent samples t-tests for data analysis. The major findings of the study revealed that insecurity significantly affected the academic performance of primary school pupils. Factors such as

insurgency, kidnapping, noisy school environments, violence, and unsafe school environments contributed to poor academic performance. This led boys to leave school for trading while causing girls to drop out and settle for early marriages. Based on these findings, the study recommended that school owners and stakeholders in education should take steps to fence and protect school environments from intruders to ensure the safety of students.

Therefore, it is on this premise that this study examines environmental factors as correlates of academic performance for pupils in IDP camps in North Central Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In response to security challenges in Nigeria, including insurgency, banditry, farmers/herder conflicts, and natural disasters, both the Federal and State governments have established Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps in the North Central zone of the country, including states such as Benue, Kwara, Nasarawa, Kogi, Niger, Plateau, and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). These camps aim to provide temporary shelter and safety for displaced individuals until they can return to their homes. However, the living conditions in these camps are deplorable, with overcrowding, poor health conditions, inadequate nutrition, limited space for children to play, and a pervasive atmosphere of insecurity. Urgent attention is needed to improve the living conditions of the residents and provide effective support to the displaced population, particularly the children.

These environmental factors in the IDP camps can impact the overall development of pupils. The importance of factors such as school furniture, playground equipment, school buildings, lighting, classroom infrastructure, and school security prompted the researcher to investigate their influence within IDP camps in North Central Nigeria. The goal is to determine how these environmental factors affect the learning of pupils, either by obstructing or encouraging their academic performance in primary schools located within the IDP camps. By incorporating various environmental factors in the schools, pupils can better assimilate the curriculum and achieve educational objectives in the IDP context. This prompted the researcher to carry out an in-depth study to examine the influence of environmental factors as correlates of academic performance for pupils in IDP camps in North Central Nigeria.

Objectives

- i. To examine if there is relationship between Environmental factors status and primary school pupils' academic performance in IDPs camp in North central of Nigeria.
- ii. To find out if there is relationship between school security and pupil's academic performance in IDPs camp in North central of Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study addressed the following research questions:

- i. What are the relationship between Environmental factors status and primary school pupils' academic performance in IDPs camp in North central zone of Nigeria?
- ii. To find out if there is relationship between school security and pupil's academic performance in IDPs camp in North central zone of Nigeria.

Hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between environmental factors status and the academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps in the North Central of Nigeria

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between school security and the academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps in the North Central of Nigeria.

Method

The design adopted for this study is a correlational research design. This design was chosen because it investigates the relationship between environmental factors and the academic performance of pupils in IDP camps. The study's population comprised 3,608 primary school pupils from IDP camps in Abuja, Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, and Plateau states, with a gender distribution of 1,878 males and 1,730 females.

The sample population included pupils in public primary schools located within IDP camps in the North Central zone of Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 719 participants from four states: Benue, Niger, Plateau, and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, following the guidelines of Research Advisor (2006). The instruments used for data collection were the Environmental Factor Checklist (EFC) and the Pupils Performance Test (PPT).

The instruments were validated, and reliability indices of 0.71 for the EFC and 0.72 for the PPT were obtained, respectively. To collect data on the checklist items, a modified Likert four-point rating scale was used. The rating scale consisted of the following response options: Highly Adequate (HA) - 4 points; Adequate (A) - 3 points; Moderately Adequate (MA) - 2 points; and Inadequate (IA) - 1 point. The instruments were administered and collected from the respondents with the assistance of two research assistants. Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. To test the null hypotheses formulated in the study, the researcher employed the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistic, which measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between variables. This analysis aimed to provide insights into the research questions and draw meaningful conclusions based on the data obtained.

Results

Research Question one: what are the Environmental factors affecting primary school pupils' academic performance in IDPs camp in North Central of Nigeria?

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Analysis of the Environmental factors of Primary School Pupils in IDP Camps.

S/n	Environmental factors of Primary School Pupils in IDP Camps.	HA	A	MA	IA
1	School building	3(0.415)	109(15.1%)	310(43.1%)	297(41.3%)
2	School furniture	-(0)	110(15.2%)	308(42.8%)	301(41.8%)
3	School play ground	10(1.39%)	160(22.2%)	302(42.0%)	267(36.7%)
4	Water supply	-(0)	50(6.95%)	372(51.7%)	297(41.3%)
5	light	-(0)	9(1.25%)	367(51.0%)	343(47.7%)

Note these acronyms: Highly Adequate (HA)-4 Points: Adequate (A) -3points: Moderate Adequate (MA) -2: points and Inadequate (IA) -1point.

Table 1 presents the results obtained to assess the environmental factors and academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps. Item 1 shows that 0.415% of the participants considered school buildings as highly adequate, 15.1% deemed them adequate, 43.1% viewed them as moderately adequate, while 41.3% considered them inadequate. Item 2 indicates that 0% of the participants viewed school furniture as highly adequate, 15.2% considered it adequate, 42.8% found it moderately adequate, and 41.8% deemed it inadequate. Item 3 reveals that 1.39% of the participants rated school playgrounds as highly adequate, 22.2% considered them adequate, 42.0% found them moderately adequate, and 36.7% remained neutral. Item 4 shows that 0% of the participants considered water supply facilities as highly adequate, 6.95% rated them adequate, 51.7% found them moderately adequate, and 41.3% viewed them as inadequate. Item 5 reveals that 0% of the participants rated lighting as highly adequate, 1.25% considered it adequate, 51.0% found it moderately adequate, and 47.7% deemed it inadequate.

The data above indicates that significant improvements are needed in the provision of environmental factors, as these factors have a positive influence on the academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps within the North Central Zone of Nigeria. Ensuring the availability of these environmental factors is crucial for creating a conducive learning environment and supporting pupils' academic success in IDP camps.

Research Question two

What are the school security issues and pupils' academic performance in IDPs camp in North Central of Nigeria?

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Analysis of the School Security of Primary School Pupils in IDP Camps.

S/N	School Security of Primary School Pupils in IDP Camps.	HA	A	MA	IA
1	Secure perimeter/Fence.	-	132(18.3%)	312(43.3%)	275(38.2%)
2	Regulation of entrances/exits.	-	125(17.3%)	304(42.2%)	290(40.3%)
3	Professional security personnel.	-	118(16.4%)	318(44.2%)	283(39.3%)
4	Leverage technology to screen visitors.	-	44(6.11%)	384(53.4%)	291(40.4%)
5	Constant monitoring of school's environment for invaders.	-	94(13.0%)	339(47.1%)	286(39.7%)

Note these acronyms: Highly Adequate (HA)-4 Points: Adequate (A) -3 points: Moderate Adequate (MA) -2: points and Inadequate (IA) -1point

Table 2 highlights issues related to school security for primary school pupils in IDP camps. Item 1 shows that 0% of respondents considered the secure perimeter/fence as highly adequate, 18.3% deemed it adequate, 43.3% viewed it as moderately adequate, and 38.2% considered it inadequate. Item 2 indicates that 0% of participants rated the regulation of entrance/exit as highly adequate, 17.3% considered it adequate, 42.2% found it moderately adequate, and 40.3% deemed it inadequate. Item 3 shows that 0% of participants considered professional security personnel as highly adequate, 16.4% deemed it adequate, 44.2% found it moderately adequate, and 39.3% considered it inadequate. Item 4 indicates that 0% of participants rated leveraging technology to screen visitors as highly adequate, 6.11% considered it adequate, 55.4% found it moderately adequate, and 40.4% deemed it inadequate. Item 5 shows that 0% of participants rated constant monitoring of the school's environment for invaders as highly adequate, 13.0% considered it adequate, 47.1% found it moderately adequate, and 39.7% deemed it inadequate.

The findings suggest that providing adequate school security measures positively influences the academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps within North Central Nigeria. It is crucial to prioritize the safety and security of pupils to create a conducive learning environment and enhance their academic success in IDP camps.

H₀₁: Hypothesis 1. There is no significant relationship between environmental factors status and the academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps in the North Central of Nigeria

Table 3: Relationship between Environmental Factors (EF) and academic performance (AP)

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r-Cal	P-value	Decision
WSS	357	14.32	4.58	.235	.000	Ho ₁
AP	362	62.45	8.43			

Environmental Factors (EF), Academic Performance (AP),

From the findings presented in Table 3, a significant positive relationship was observed between the environmental factors and the academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps in the North Central Zone of Nigeria ($r\text{-Cal} = .235$, $p = .000$). The p -value of $.000$, which is less than the chosen alpha level of significance, indicates a significant relationship. Thus, the null hypothesis stating no significant relationship between environmental factors and academic performance was rejected. These results suggest that the provision of water supply facilities, school building, light and playground contributes positively to the academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps in the North Central of Nigeria.

H_{02} : Moving on to Hypothesis 2, which explores the relationship between school security status and the academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps in the North Central of Nigeria, further analysis is needed to draw conclusions.

Table 4: Relationship between school security (SS) and academic performance (AP)

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r-Cal	P-value	Decision
SSS	357	14.37	4.59	.245	.000	H_{03}
AP	362	62.45	8.43			

School Security (SS), Academic Performance (AP)

Based on the findings presented in Table 4, there is a significant positive relationship between school security and the academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps in the North Central Zone of Nigeria ($r\text{-Cal} = .245$, $p = .000$). The p -value of $.000$, which is less than the chosen alpha level of significance, indicates a significant relationship. Consequently, the null hypothesis, which suggested no significant relationship between school security and academic performance, was rejected. These findings suggest that providing adequate school security positively contributes to the academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps in the North Central Zone of Nigeria.

Discussion Findings

Research Question One, detailed in Table 1, explores the relationship between environmental factors and academic performance in IDP camps. The overall ratings for the items were "Moderate Adequate," with statistical values of 43.1%, 42.8%, 42.0%, 51.7%, and 51.0%. The study suggests that the provision of environmental factors positively influences the academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps within the North Central Zone of Nigeria.

Results from hypothesis testing (H_{01}), as presented in Table 1, indicate a statistically significant positive relationship between environmental factors and academic performance. This aligns with the study by Mwaba (2016), which explored the relationship between environmental factors and academic performance of lower primary school pupils in the rural Zambezi district of Zambia. Using a quantitative cross-sectional design, the study employed various statistical tests, including the Chi-square test of independence, Phi and Cramer's V test, independent sample t-test, and Pearson correlation coefficient. Results revealed a relationship between

environmental factors and academic performance in literacy and numeracy among lower primary school pupils. Recommendations emphasized government action in mobilizing resources to support children, noting that improving conditions for children equates to serving the nation. Prioritizing funding to make public schools more conducive to teaching and learning is essential for improving academic standards.

Pupils in IDP camps face issues related to environmental factors such as school buildings, school furniture, playgrounds, water supply, and lighting. The significant positive relationship between these environmental factors and academic performance suggests that improving these aspects can enhance the academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps in the North Central Zone of Nigeria. Consequently, the null hypothesis stating no significant relationship between environmental factors and academic performance was rejected.

The findings from Research Question 2, as presented in Table 4, examined the relationship between school security and academic performance in IDP camps. The overall items were rated as "Moderate Adequate," with statistical values of 43.3%, 42.2%, 44.2%, 53.4%, and 47.1%. The study shows that providing adequate school security measures positively influences the academic performance of primary school pupils in IDP camps within the North Central Zone of Nigeria. Hypothesis testing (H_02) results presented in Table 4 indicate a statistically significant positive relationship between school security status and academic performance.

These findings are consistent with the study by Nbanefor (2018), which revealed that security challenges impact the academic performance of primary school pupils in Abia State, Nigeria. The study found that insecurity significantly affected academic performance, with factors such as insurgency, kidnapping, noisy environments, violence, and unsafe conditions contributing to poor performance. This led to boys leaving school for trading and girls dropping out for early marriages. The study recommended that school owners and stakeholders take measures to secure school environments to ensure student safety.

Pupils in IDP camps have issues of school security such as secured perimeter/Fence. Regulation of entrances/exits. Professional security personnel. Leverage technology to screen visitors. Constant monitoring of school's environment for invaders. The null hypothesis, which suggests no significant relationship between school security status and academic performance, was rejected. Therefore, there is a significant Positive relationship between the academic performances of primary school pupils in IDP camps within the North Central of Nigeria.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that primary schools in IDP camps in the North Central Zone of Nigeria are significantly affected by environmental factors, which subsequently hinder the educational and academic performance of children. The study revealed that environmental factors in the IDP camps—including school buildings, school furniture, playgrounds, water supply, instructional materials, and school security—have a substantial impact on the teaching and learning process. However, the current environmental conditions in the camps are

inadequate to meet the needs of the pupils. Notably, water supply, instructional materials, and school security were identified as the most pressing challenges faced by children in IDP primary schools in the North Central Zone and globally. Therefore, addressing these critical environmental factors in IDP primary schools in the North Central Zone will greatly enhance their academic performance.

Recommendations

1. The government should allocate additional resources to improve school buildings, school furniture, playgrounds, water supply, instructional materials, and security in IDP camps.
2. Government agencies such as the Federal Ministry of Education (FME), Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), and State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEB) should ensure that schools are equipped with sufficient instructional materials by taking responsibility for procurement, thereby facilitating effective teaching and learning in IDP primary schools and improving performance.
3. The community, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and society at large should be encouraged to support the development of IDP primary schools in the North Central Zone, particularly in improving environmental facilities such as school security, water supply, and school buildings to enhance academic performance.

Contributions to Knowledge

1. The researcher has developed tools that other researchers can adopt or adapt for their studies.
2. This study provides practical recommendations that, if applied, will address existing issues related to children in IDP camps.

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