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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION AND METHODS OF TEACHING ARABIC LANGUAGE AND ISLAMIC STUDIES IN DIFFERENT STAGES	Dalhatu Muazu Saidu & Ahmad Muhammad Inuwa	1-6
ARABIC EDUCATION IN NIGERIA AND ARABIC LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS ACROSS EDUCATIONAL LEVELS	Dr. Abubakar A. A. Zage-Zage	7-9
SOCIAL MEDIA: THE POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES IN EDUCATION	Shereefdeen Ayo; Abubakar & Dr. Saeed Yunus	10-13
PARENTS' SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS OF GOVERNMENT DAY JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL GASHAKA, YOBE STATE, NIGERIA	Salisu Mohammed Ali; Saleh Musa; Yusuf Zakar & Nasiru Bello	14-19
STATUS OF SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ILORIN SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KWARA STATE, NIGERIA	Ologele, Ibrahim (PhD); Omikunle, Lateef Adisa; Ibrahim, Jimoh & Abdulqadir, Oyebisi Folaranmi	20-25
PRINCIPALS' HIGHER ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION: A TOOL FOR IMPROVING STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BAUCHI STATE	Dr. Barakatu Abdullahi	26-31
TEACHERS VARIABLES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ECONOMICS IN SHONGOM LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF GOMBE STATE	Dr. Samuel Alfayo Boh	32-40
PRE – PRIMARY EDUCATION AND PUPILS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN ILORIN WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KWARA STATE	Ayinde, Yusuf Adisa	41-46
A SURVEY OF THE AVAILABILITY AND ADEQUACY OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE TEACHING FACILITIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA	Usman, Abdullahi; Jamaji Samuel Dogo & Laraba, Ibrahim	47-52
ATTENTION SKILL AND THE ROLE OF GUIDED OUTDOOR PLAY IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS' COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT	Janet Motunrayo Eseyin	53-60
TEACHERS' MOTIVATION AS DETERMINANT OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL HISTORY STUDENTS IN ILORIN, KWARA STATE	Alabi, Jimoh Adeniyi, Iliasu, Samuel Femi & Abdulkadir, Bolakale Abdulkadir	61-65
SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN ACADEMIC LIBRARY: IMPLICATION FOR SERVICE DELIVERY BY LIBRARIANS IN KADUNA STATE UNIVERSITY, KADUNA	Dr. Sahabi, Muhammad Kabir & Ogunbote, Kehinde Olubunmi	66-76
CORROSIVE EFFECT OF POVERTY ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KOGI STATE	Omuya Ohunene Florence (Ph.D); Haliru Abubakar & Ukwumaka Kate Ojomah	77-82
ITEM RESPONSE THEORY ESTIMATION OF A SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL CERTIFICATE PHYSICS PRACTICAL EXAMINATION	Oluseyi Peter Adeoye & Alaba Adeyemi Adediwura	83-90

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PARENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD IN JOS NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF PLATEAU STATE	Agnes, S. Ojile (Ph.D.)	91-96
IMPACT OF MATHEMATICS TEST ANXIETY ON STUDENTS' MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT IN JOS NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF PLATEAU STATE	James Sambo Wujat & Agnes, S. Ojile (Ph.D.)	97-102
QUALITY OF WORK-LIFE AND EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE IN FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC, BIDA, NIGER STATE	Adekanmbi, Christiana Oluwamuyiwa; Dr. Ahmed Yahaya Abdulhameed & Dr. Nurudeen Ahmed Bello	103-109
PERSPECTIVE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PHYSICS TEACHERS ON THE USE INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING PHYSICS IN ILORIN	Abdulwaheed, Opeyemi Ibrahim PhD & Dr. Akogun, Nasiru Abdulkadri	110-113
BOKO HARAM'S PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATION AND JIHAD: ASSESSMENT OF ISLAMIC STUDIES TEACHERS IN NORTH-EASTERN NIGERIA	Issa Muhammad-Jamiu (Ph. D.)	114-121
SINGLE PARENTS' PSYCHO-SOCIAL CHALLENGES AND COUNSELLING NEEDS IN MINNA MUNICIPAL OF NIGER STATE, NIGERIA.....	Ibrahim, Nuhu Saidu, Abdullahi, Usman & Abdullahi, Abdulkadir Yabagi	123-129
EFFECTS OF EXTENSIVE READING ON SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT AND CONCORD IN TORO LGA, BAUCHI STATE, NIGERIA	Usman Ya'u, Isyaku Mohammed & Isah Abdulkarim Tilde	130-135
STUDENTS' ACCESS AND READINESS TO THE USE OF E-LEARNING FACILITIES IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN ILORIN, NIGERIA	Dr. Adegbeye, Surajudeen Olayiwola & Dr. Abdulazeez, Isiaka	136-141
EFFECT OF FLIPPED CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY IN TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, ZARIA-NIGERIA	Hajara Abubakar Dangaji	142-145
ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' INDISCIPLINE PRACTICES INFLUENCING ENGLISH LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KWARA STATE	Yusuf Muraina (Ph.D.)	146-154

STATUS OF SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ILORIN SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine the status of secondary schools health services in the study area based on; pre-entry medical examination, emergency care services, monitoring communicable diseases and control programme in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State are available or not. Descriptive research of the cross-sectionally type was used for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select all the twenty-two (22) secondary schools in the study area. A researcher-developed observational checklist validated by three experts from the Department of Health Promotion and Environmental Health Education, University of Ilorin was used for data collection by the researchers. Frequency counts and percentages were used to analyse the result of the data collected. The findings of the study revealed that pre-entry medical examination, monitoring communicable diseases and control programme and emergency care services were high and implemented for secondary school students in the study area. The researchers recommend among others that the State Ministry of Education should formulate a law which will make it compulsory for all school principals to include pre-entry medical examination as part of the requirement for admitting students into the secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State.

Keywords: Assessment, Status, Health, Services and Secondary-school

Introduction

School health programme contributes significantly to the health of the school children to enable them to maintain optimum health which helps them benefit from learning activities in the school. School can hardly achieve the fundamental goal of education if learners and staff are not in good health and are not physically, mentally and socially fit for the academic programme. Nwimo (2014) explained that school is an institution designed for the teaching of students under the direction of teachers. School provides a learning experience, services and environment which favourably influence those knowledge, practices and attitudes which promote individual, family and community health. Okafor (2015) stated that there is no social agent or formerly organized group other than the school that has the privileges and resources to interact with practically every citizen to modify their ways of life.

The school community is made up of students, teaching and non-teaching personnel. National school health policy (2006) defined school community to mean "all the people living/ working within the school premises including students, the teaching and non-teaching staff as well as members of their families". Udoh, Fawole, Ajala, Okafor and Nwana (2005) stated that the cardinal objective of school health service as a component of school health programme is to promote and maintain the health of the school children and the school personnel. The World Health Organisation (2015) emphasized the role schools play in the health and educational wellbeing of students. The school must strive to improve the health of school personnel, families and community members as well as students and work with community leaders to help them understand how the community contributes to or undermines health

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and education. Several studies have reported the positive association between effective school health services and academic performance of students globally.

Moronkola (2017) opined that the school provides an easy avenue for communicable diseases to spread quickly. Early diagnosis is important in containing disease transmission. In the school, the social contact route can be blocked by isolating the student. Airborne infections can be controlled by providing proper ventilation in the classrooms and ensuring that each child can cover his cough or sneeze, for the control of water route, sources of water available in the school must be clean and pure. Efforts must be made to create awareness in the community on water-borne diseases and securing resources for obtaining adequate portable water. There should also be provided for emergency services.

School health services deal with health appraisals, control of communicable diseases, record keeping and supervision of the health of school children and personnel. It is the aspect that concerns itself with evaluating the health of an individual objectively. Health appraisals allow the school authorities to detect signs and symptoms of common diseases as well as signs of emotional disturbances that could impede the learning activities of children (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, 2007). School health services are both preventive and curative services and it helps in providing information to parents and school personnel on the health status of school children. It also provides advisory and counselling services for the school community and parents. It includes pre-entry medical screening, routine health screening/examination, school health records, sick-bay and first aid and referral services. Other services rendered include health observation (which involves the physical inspection of the physiology and behaviours of children), health examinations (screening tests and medical diagnosis) and health records (keeping of records of the health histories of children) (Federal Ministry of Education, 2006).

Moronkola (2012) explained that school health services are curative and preventive health services provided for the promotion of positive health status of pupils and staff in a school. Health services are an important integral part of the school health programme. The schools setting that have good health services will help learners to achieve maximum health possible for them to achieve excellent performance in school work. School children need to have good health to be able to learn effectively. "Good health supports successful learning and successful learning supports good health". Children at school are exposed to a variety of hazards – physical injury, infections and emotional problems. The school through the school health service provides treatment through first aid and emergency services as well as counselling. The school health services are preventive and curative services provided for the learners and staff within the school setting. The purpose of the school health services is to promote optimal health among learners and staff and to keep school children in the best possible health condition that will enable them to maximize educational benefit. Personnel responsible for providing school health services include physicians, dentists, school health nurses, teachers and other appropriate personnel to appraise, protect and promote the health of members of the school community (FME, 2006).

Moronkola (2012) explained that learners and staff need to undergo medical health examination periodically especially upon school entry to detect areas needing treatment, referral, education or counselling. Medical health examination may reflect the need for correction of vision or hearing defects. The school may not be bothered itself for medical health examination but ask parents for learners health reports as provided by a medical officer employed by the State. By this, parents will see the need to be involved in the maintenance and promotion of their children health while in school. Medical health examination of existing staff can be an avenue for staff to detect areas of their health status that need correction with the aimed of making the staff more productive.

Moronkola (2012) argued that many schools do not have functioning health centres or learners may go out of the school for an excursion or interscholastic competitions, some school staff and students must be trained as first aiders. A first aider must be able to provide necessary essential care to prevent an injured or sick person condition becoming worse until a qualified person arrives. In all, the injured or the sick must be helped to continue to breathe and he or she is not choked. The first aid must ensure stoppage of loss of blood, reduce the effect of shock and avoid making an unconscious person be lying on his or back and should send for help immediately. Each school must have at least a well-stocked properly marked first aid box with iodine, crepe bandage, paracetamol, blade, scissors, cotton wool, plaster and gauze.

The overall goal of the provision of School Health Services is to strengthen and facilitate the educational process by improving and protecting the health status of children and staff. Parents/guardians, child care workers, and educational professional know that the health and intellectual development of children are related and for this

reason, the need for nursing services in schools has been recognized since the early twentieth century. Government of most countries in the developed world has accordingly required services to prevent the spread of infection diseases, to detect developmental problems, and to assist students who become ill or injured (American School Health Services, 2005).

Kayode (2004), observed that the prevalence of diseases in most of the school environment are a major global threat to the health, prosperity, social stability and security of an individual which could account for millions of death if adequate care is not taken against such diseases. School students are faced with a lot of emotional problems such as stress and lack of concentration which can arise as a result of poor school climate and which eventually affect their learning processes. Stainmann (2008) observed that an emotionally unstable student will have difficulty in learning.

Research Questions

The following questions were answered

1. What is the status of pre-entry medical examination in secondary schools in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State?
2. What is the status of monitoring communicable diseases and control programme in secondary schools in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State?
3. What is the status of emergency care services in secondary schools in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State?

Methodology

Descriptive research of the cross-sectional type was used for the study. The population of the study comprised of all public secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State. Purposive sampling technique was used to select all the twenty-two (22) secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State. A researcher-developed observational checklist validated by three experts from the Department of Health Promotion and Environmental Health Education, Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin was used for data collection by the researchers. Both content, face and construct validity were assessed by the experts validated the instrument used for the study. The instrument used for the study contained 16 items and the instrument was pilot tested on Government Secondary School Odokun and Ilorin Grammar School both in Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State which had similar characteristics with the secondary schools selected for the study. The result of the two tests compared using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC), a correlation coefficient of 0.83 was obtained. The researchers administered the instrument with the help of three trained research assistants. The completed observational checklist was collected, sorted, coded and analysed using frequency counts and percentages.

Results

Research Question One: What is the status of pre-entry medical examination in secondary schools in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State?

Table 1: Status of Pre-entry Medical Examination of Secondary Schools in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State

S/N	Items	Yes	No
1.	Is there a vision examination before admission	16 (72.7%)	6 (27.3%)
2.	Is there a hearing examination before admission	15 (68.2%)	7 (31.8%)
3.	Is there a postural screening before admission	7 (31.8%)	15 (68.2%)
4.	Is there a body mass index (BMI) test before admission	5 (22.7%)	17 (77.3%)
5.	Is there a weight and height check before admission	10 (45.5%)	12 (54.5%)
Average		(54.55%)	(45.45%)

Table 1 shows the answer to the research question one and it revealed that 16 (72.7%) schools said there are vision examination carried out before admission and 6 (27.3%) said no. On whether they carry out hearing examination before admission, 15 (68.2%) schools said yes while 7 (31.8%) schools said no. also, on whether they do postural screening before admission, 7 (31.8%) schools responded positively while 15 (68.2%) schools responded negatively. 5 (22.7%) schools said there is body mass index (BMI) test before admission while 17 (77.3%) schools said that BMI is not done before admission in their schools and on whether weight and height check is done before

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admission, 16 (72.7%) schools said yes while 6 (27.3%) schools said no. Therefore, secondary schools in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State do carry out a pre-entry medical examination, and this shows that the status is high.

Research Question Two: What is the status of monitoring communicable disease and control programme in secondary schools in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State?

Table 2: Status of Monitoring Communicable Disease and Control Programme of Secondary Schools in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State

S/N	Items		Yes	No
6.	Is there a provision for screening and intervention for Identified student with health concerns	14	6 (63.6%)	6 (36.4%)
7.	Is there a regular immunization programme by the health Service centre of the school	16	6 (72.7%)	6 (27.3%)
8.	Is there a programme to assess student health risk behaviours and protective factors	12	10 (54.5%)	10 (45.5%)
9.	Is there an education about infectious and nuisance disease	16	6 (72.7%)	6 (27.3%)
10.	Is there a home visit programme	13	9 (59.1%)	9 (40.9%)
	Average		(63.64%)	(36.36%)

Table 2 above shows the answer to the research question two, it revealed that 14 (63.6%) school claimed that there is provision for screening and intervention for identified student with health concerns while 8 (36.4%) said no, as to whether there is regular immunization programme by the health service centre of the school, 16 (72.7%) school said yes while 6 (27.3%) said no, on whether there is a programme to assess student health risk behaviours and protective factors 12(54.5%) responded positively while 10(45.5%) responded negatively, 16(72.7%) claimed that there is an education about infectious and nuisance diseases in their schools but 6(27.3%) said no, and 13(59.1%) schools said that there is home visit programme while 9(40.9%) said no. Therefore, secondary schools in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State do engage in monitoring communicable diseases and control programme and this shows that the status is high.

Research Question Three: What is the status of emergency care services in secondary schools in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State?

Table 3: Status of Emergency Care Services of Secondary Schools in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State

S/N	Items		Yes	No
11.	Are there first aid treatment drugs such as pain relievers, methylated spirit among others	20	2 (90.9%)	2 (9.1%)
12.	Is treatment given recorded	15	7 (68.2%)	7 (31.8%)
13.	Is there transportation provided for students to nearest health post	7	9 (59.1%)	9 (40.9%)
14.	Is there a provision for immediate notification of parents and/or guardians	17	5 (77.3%)	5 (22.7%)
15.	Is there a design response plans to assist all students with special needs in emergencies	13	9 (59.1%)	9 (40.9%)
16.	Is there a school clinic, food handler, school field in the school	16	6 (72.7%)	6 (27.3%)
	Average		(86.36%)	(13.63%)

Table 3 above shows the answer to the research question three, it revealed that in 20(90.9%) schools there are first aid treatment drugs such as pain relievers, methylated spirit but there is none in 2(9.1%). It also shows that treatment given is recorded in 15(68.2%) schools while 7(31.8%) do not, as for the transportation provided for students to nearest health post 13(59.1%) schools responded positively while 9(40.9%) responded negatively, as to whether there is provision for immediate notification of parents and/or guardians, 17(77.3%) schools said yes while 5(22.7%)

said no, as for whether there is design response plans to assist all students with special needs in emergencies, 13(59.1%) said yes while 9(40.9%) said no, 16(72.7%) schools said that there is school clinic, food handler, school field in their school but 6(27.3%) said no therefore, secondary schools in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State do carry out emergency care service and this shows that the status is high.

Discussion of Findings

Research question one concluded that many secondary schools used pre-entry medical examination for students is higher (54.55%) than those which do not (45.45%). The result of the finding agreed with the submission of Bamidele, Abodunrin, Olajide and Oke (2010) who pointed out that screening for students at entrance and while in school has significant importance in the identification of refractive errors, eyes infections, hearing impairment, identify abnormality on urine examination and nutritional status. The screening also helps to identify genetic and physical disability not only affect their well-being but also has the potential of affecting their learning. Also, the result of the finding agreed with the view of Federal Ministry of Education (2006) which argued that there should be pre-entry medical examination which will assist in the evaluation of the health status of a student before entering school and also on staff before employed. A medical test should also conduct on school food vendors before allowed to operate in the school. Pre-entry medical screening should be conducted by trained health personnel.

Research question two indicated that status of monitoring communicable diseases and control programme of secondary school in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State is satisfactory because (63.64%) of the school carried out communicable diseases monitoring activity than (36.36%) which do not properly practice communicable diseases monitoring activity. The result of the finding similar to the finding of Adeniran and Ezeiru (2016) who pointed out that majority of the school (72.2%) of the secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria promoted immunization and educate students on measures to control infectious diseases in their schools.

Research question three found that status of emergency care services of secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State is satisfactory because (86.36%) of secondary schools in the study area used first aid care for students and staff that sustain an injury or develop a sudden illness while (27.3%) of the school do not. The result of the finding oppose by the view of Moronkola (2012) who argued that many schools do not have functioning health centres and learners may go out of the school for an excursion or interscholastic competitions, some school staff and students must be trained as first aiders. A first aider must be able to provide necessary essential care to prevent an injured or sick person condition becoming worse until a qualified person arrives. In all, the injured or the sick must be helped to continue to breathe and he or she is not choked. The first aid must ensure stoppage of loss of blood, reduce the effect of shock and avoid making an unconscious person be lying on his or back and should send for help immediately. Each school must have at least a well-stocked properly marked first aid box with iodine, crepe bandage, paracetamol, blade, scissors, cotton wool, plaster and gauze.

Conclusions

Status of pre-entry medical examination in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State was satisfactory, status of monitoring communicable diseases and control programme as well as status of emergency care services of secondary schools in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State were commendable.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. State Ministry of Education should formulate a law which will make it compulsory for all school principals to include pre-entry medical examination as part of the requirement for admitting students into the secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State.
2. The school management should ensure there is a continuous activity for monitoring of communicable diseases and control programme among secondary school students and staff in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State.
3. The State Ministry of Education should make it mandatory for all secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government to have functional school clinic where students and staff can visit when experience illness or sustain an injury while in school.

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