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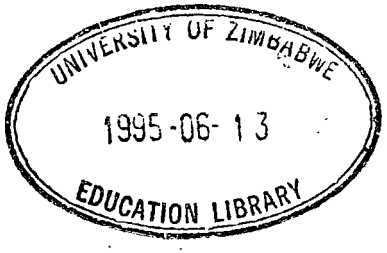

PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND THEIR IMPACT ON STAFFING AND DROP-OUT RATES

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INTRODUCTION

Much research has been directed towards discovering factors which cause or are related to school effectiveness.

According to Brophy (1986) in the Handbook of Research on Teaching (Third Edition), following the publication of the well-known Coleman et al report in 1986, many researchers attempted to relate school inputs to school outputs. School inputs should be in the form of funds, physical facilities, human resources etc. However, extensive reviews of the input - out literature by Averch, Carroll, Donaldson, Kiesling, and Pincus (1974) suggest that these studies fail to provide any consistent evidence for a relationship between general school resources and student outcomes such as achievement. There has been little research done to relate the provision of facilities such as classrooms, teachers accommodation, and furniture etc, to the drop-out rate and the turnover rate of teachers in general and the retaining of trained teachers in particular.

THE PROBLEM

In Zimbabwe where the number of primary schools has increased from less than 2 500 at independence in 1980 to 4500 in 1990 (Chikombah, Mupawaenda and Mlambo, 1990), the availability of physical facilities such as teachers houses, classrooms, classroom furniture, is very important particularly in the rural schools.

The majority of rural primary schools in Zimbabwe experience inadequacy of teachers houses, inadequacy of classrooms and classroom furniture (desks, chairs, benches). These facilities are provided by the local communities. Some communities have not been able to provide these facilities adequately. As a result, some non-governmental organisations such as EEC, SIDA etc have given money to some schools to provide these facilities. This study was directed at finding out if the presence or absence of these facilities affected teacher turnover, drop-out rate, and level of trained teachers in a school. The study focused on two specific problems:

- What impact does the provision of teaching space, teachers houses, classroom furniture etc have on the drop-out rate, teacher turnover and level of trained teachers in rural primary school?

- Is there difference in impact between rural primary schools which were given money (funded) for the purpose of providing physical facilities and those rural primary schools which were not given money (unfunded) for the same purpose?

The following specific questions were asked using the LIKERT SCALE in order to get answers to the above two problems:

(a) How do you describe the buildings (classrooms, teachers houses, toilets, etc) in your school?

(b) How do you describe the furniture (desks, chairs, benches, tables) in your school?

(c) How would you describe teachers accommodation in your school?

(d) What is the drop-out rate at your school?

(e) What are the reasons for dropping out?

(f) What is the teacher turnover rate in your school?

(g) What are the reasons for the turnover?

(h) How many trained teachers are at your school?

(i) What are the reasons for trained teachers choosing your school?

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study was conducted in all regions in the rural Zimbabwe. Questionnaires were mailed to headmasters of 177 funded schools and 154 unfunded schools which were randomly selected, The response was 106 (60%) funded and 116 (75%) unfunded. The details of the funded schools were obtained from the EEC offices in Harare who made funds available to schools for upgrading physical facilities. The list of the unfunded schools was obtained from the Ministry of Education and Culture. The X^2 test with correction for continuity was employed to determine the statistical nature of the responses from the funded and unfunded rural primary schools.

Table 1 presents data from funded and unfunded rural primary schools on the conditions of buildings in the responding schools. The responses indicate that the conditions of buildings in the funded schools was better than in the unfunded schools.

The results of the X^2 test were significant ($X^2 = 8.34$, df = 4, $p < .1$) indicating that the condition of the buildings in the funded schools was better than the conditions of buildings in the unfunded schools. The majority of buildings in the funded schools were either in good or usable condition.

RESULTS

TABLE 1: CONDITIONS OF BUILDINGS

Conditions of buildings	Type of School	
	Funded	Unfunded
Good	64	47
Usable	11	21
Broken	12	17
Other	15	27
No response	4	4
N	106	116

$X^2 = 8.34$, df = 4, $p < .1$

TABLE 2: CONDITION OF FURNITURE

Condition of furniture	Type of School	
	Funded	Unfunded
Good	38	31
Usable	40	38
Broken	12	25
Other	14	21
No response	2	1
N	106	116

$X^2 = 5.99$, df = 4, $p < .25$

On the condition of furniture in both types of schools the results of X^2 test were significant ($X^2 = 5.99$, df = 4, $p < .25$) indicating that the condition of furniture in funded rural primary schools was better than in the unfunded rural primary schools (see table 2).

TABLE 3: ADEQUACY OF TEACHERS ACCOMMODATION

Adequacy Of Accommodation	Type of School	
	Funded	Unfunded
Very adequate	7	3
Adequate	6	9
Amost adequate	24	10
Inadequate	41	56
Very Inadequate	25	36
No Response	3	2
N	106	116

$X^2 = 9.46$, df = 5, $p < .25$

The results of the X^2 test on the adequacy of teachers accommodation as shown in table 3, were significant ($X^2 = 9.46$, df = 5, $p < .25$) indicating that teachers' accommodation was more adequate in funded rural primary schools than in unfunded rural primary schools.

TABLE 4: DROP-OUT RATE

Drop-out Rate	Type of School	
	Funded	Unfunded
5	61	73
10	14	22
20	3	3
30	2	15
Other	21	1
No Response	5	2
N	106	116

$X^2 = 25.92$. df = 5, $p < .001$

Examining the responses on drop-out rate between the funded and unfunded rural primary schools as table 4 shows and testing for the difference, the results of the X^2 test were significant ($X^2 = 25.92$, df = 5, $p < .001$) indicating that the drop-out rate in funded rural primary schools was very significantly lower than in unfunded rural primary schools.

Table 5 presents the responses to the question on the reasons for the drop-out in funded and unfunded rural primary schools. The results of the X^2 test were significant ($X^2 = 49.84$, df = 4, $p < .005$) indicating that more pupils in unfunded rural primary schools drop-out on account of building fund (money paid by parents for building purposes) than in funded rural primary schools.

TABLE 5: REASONS FOR DROP-OUTS

Reasons For Drop-outs	Type of School	
	Funded	Unfunded
School Fees	6	15
Building Fund	39	54
Distance from school	4	5
Other	50	31
No response	6	11
N	106	116

$X^2 = 49.84$, df = 4, $p < .005$

Table 6 shows responses from both funded and unfunded rural primary schools to the question on the teacher turnover rate. The results of the X^2 test were significant ($X^2 = 8.37$, df = 6, $p < .25$) indicating that the teacher turnover rate is higher in unfunded rural primary school than in funded rural primary schools.

Table 7 presents data from both funded and unfunded rural primary schools on the turnover reasons. The results of the X^2 test were significant ($X^2 = 4.92$, df = 5, $p < .5$) indicating that inadequate and poor teachers accommodation in unfunded rural primary schools cause a higher turnover rate than in funded rural primary schools.

TABLE 6: TEACHER TURNOVER RATE

Teacher Turnover Rate	Type of School	
	Funded	Unfunded
%		
5	39	44
10	2	12
15	9	12
20	9	12
25	15	18
Other	16	13
No Responses	16	15
N	106	116

$X^2 = 8.37$, df = 6, $p < .25$

TABLE 7: TURNOVER REASONS

	Type of School	
	Funded	Unfunded
Pooraccommodation	35	52
Poor Furniture	1	5
Very Bad PTA	2	3
Other	46	37
No response	21	19
N	106	116

$X^2 = 4.92$, df = 4, $p < .5$

TABLE 8: TRAINED TEACHERS

Trained Teachers	Type of School Funded	Unfunded
One To Four Trained Teachers	45	32
Five Trained Teachers	18	5
Ten Trained Teachers	3	1
No Trained Teachers	14	7
No Response	26	71
N	106	116

$X^2 = 28.56$, df = 4, $p < .001$

The results of the X^2 test were significant ($X^2 = 28.56$, df = 4, $p < .001$) indicating that there were more trained teachers in the funded rural primary schools than in the unfunded rural primary schools.

TABLE 9: REASONS FOR TRA INED TEACHERS IN SOME SCHOOLS

Reasons For Trained Teachers	Type of School Funded	Unfunded
TeachersAccommodation	25	14
Teaching Spac	16	6
Teacher - PTA Relationship	5	6
Other	22	14
No Response	38	76
N	106	116

$X^2 = 17.90$, df = 4, $p < .0025$

The results of the X^2 test as shown in Table 9, were significant ($X^2 = 17.90$, df = 4, $p < .0025$) indicating that trained teachers favour more of those schools with good and adequate physical facilities than those with poor and inadequate facilities, particularly teachers accommodation.

DISCUSSION

The major purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the provision of physical facilities in schools on drop-out rate, teachers turnover rate, and the level of trained teachers in rural primary schools. The results showed that provision of good and adequate physical facilities such as teachers houses and classrooms has impact on teacher turnover rate, drop-out rate and the level of trained teachers in rural primary schools. The major cause of drop-outs in these schools is building fund. The pupils whose parents fail to pay building funds (money for building purposes) are excluded from attending classes. The major reason for teacher turnover and trained teacher level in these schools is teachers accommodation. More teachers transfer from schools with poor and inadequate accommodation. The results also indicate that there are more trained teachers in schools with good and adequate teachers accommodation than in schools where these facilities are poor and inadequate.

The second purpose of this study was to determine the difference in level between the funded and unfunded rural primary schools on drop-out rate, teacher turnover rate and the level of trained teachers. The results showed that the difference was very significant in many cases. In the 9 aspects tested the results were positively significant. The drop-out rate and the teacher turnover rate in funded rural primary schools were lower than in unfunded rural primary schools while the level of trained teachers was higher in funded rural primary schools than in unfunded rural primary schools.

This study, however, did not determine the impact of the drop-out rate, the teacher turnover rate and the level of trained teachers on pupil achievement. This seems to bc the logical step to take in the study of quality education.

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