

School Facilities and Enrolment as Diagnostic Indicators of Access to Basic Education in Akko Local Government Area, Gombe State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated School Facilities and Enrolment as Diagnostic Indicators of Access to Basic Education in Akko Local Government Area, Gombe State, Nigeria, with emphasis on the availability of school facilities and enrolment rates in basic education schools. A survey research design was adopted to generate empirical evidence of the prevailing conditions influencing access to basic education. The population comprised 1,984 teachers drawn from public primary and junior secondary schools in Akko LGA, from which a sample of 322 respondents was selected using proportionate stratified sampling. Data were collected through structured questionnaires, facility checklists, administrative maps and a handheld Global Positioning System (GPS) device for school location capture. Descriptive statistics, including percentages, means and standard deviations, were used to answer the research questions, and chi-square statistics were applied to test the stated hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that the availability and functionality of essential school facilities were generally inadequate across most basic education schools. Only a small proportion of schools had functional libraries, clinics, digital resource rooms, sanitation facilities, laboratories, counselling units, and safety equipment. The overall facility availability was found to be substantially low, and the hypothesis confirmed that there was no significant availability of school facilities in basic education schools in Akko LGA. Conversely, the study established that enrolment rates in basic education schools were relatively high, indicating that a large proportion of school-age children were enrolled and that access to participation appeared encouraging. The study concludes that, while enrolment in basic education in Akko LGA is improving, the

shortage of functional learning facilities poses a serious threat to quality, retention, and effective teaching and learning. Therefore, it recommends increased government investment in educational infrastructure and learning resources to sustain enrolment gains and enhance equitable access to quality basic education.

Keywords: Access to basic education; diagnostic parameters; school facilities; enrolment rate; basic schools; Akko Local Government Area; Gombe State; Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Access to education has been a significant problem, particularly in the northern regions of Nigeria. The country has the world's highest rate of out-of-school children. UNICEF (2018) observed that the northern part of Nigeria constitutes 69% of children without access to basic education. Lending a voice to this, Menkiti (2021) also noted that most of these school-age children without basic education in Nigeria are mostly found on the streets of the Northeast States, of which Gombe State is among. Furthermore, Akko, being the largest Local Government Area in Gombe State, has the largest number of these school-age children who either have never enrolled or did not complete basic education. The provision of educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the basic level of education is one of the cardinal objectives of the National Policy on Education. Also, the philosophy of the National Policy on Education is in consonance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which asserts that everyone has a right to education (Child Right Act, 2003). Ene (2007) posited that access to education involved removing all forms of obstacles to educational opportunities which are not due to natural capacities and social arrangements but are the products of social factors. Thus, access to basic education provides a guarantee for everyone to receive education. This implies making education available to every citizen of a nation. Diagnostic parameters are tools that are of use or help to track enrolment of pupils and students, facilities, learners, and needs at the basic level of education. Also, they check or monitor dropout rates, assess literacy rates and educational resources especially their availability, analyse educational expenditures and track educational outcomes. Thus, when the parameters are examined, it brings out areas of strength and weakness in accessing education at the basic level, helping to identify opportunities for improvement and resource allocation.

The observable effects of school-age children not having access to basic education in the Akko Local Government Area of Gombe State, if left unchecked, will have devastating effects on the goals of education, which include but are not limited to providing individuals with the skills, knowledge and attitude that enable each learner to find his or her own way through life with dignity, productivity and satisfaction. The Gombe State Government has made efforts to stem the tide of non-enrolment, provision of learners' needs and inability to complete basic education through education committees at the community level, sensitisation programmes, community-based economic empowerment programmes, award of scholarships and establishment of more basic schools (primary and junior secondary schools) but these seem not to have yielded the desired results aimed at improving access to basic education in Akko LGA of Gombe State. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to assess the diagnostic parameters for access to basic education in Akko Local Government Area, Gombe State, to bridge literature gaps, validate similar research outcomes done in the state and enhance effective access to basic education.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to assess the diagnostic parameters for access to basic education in Akko Local Government Area, Gombe State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

- i. appraise the state of the availability of school facilities in all the basic education schools in Akko Local Government Area, Gombe State
- ii. ascertain the enrolment rates in all the basic education schools in Akko Local Government Area, Gombe State

Research Questions

1. What is the level of the availability of school facilities in all the basic education schools in Akko LGA of Gombe state?
2. What is the enrolment rate in all the basic education schools in Akko LGA of Gombe state?

Research hypothesis

1. There is no significant availability of schools' facilities in all the basic education schools in Akko LGA of Gombe State

Methodology

This study employed a survey research design the use of this design is justified because it is a type of research that gathers data from a large number of subjects from a representative sample of the population its scope is very vast and is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist, practices that prevail beliefs or points of view or attitudes that are held, processes that are going on, influences that are being felt and trends that are developing (Emaikwu, 2019). The adoption of survey research design is therefore necessary because of the vast scope of the study and concern about investigating the conditions, practices that exist and diagnostic parameters for access to basic education in Akko LGA, Gombe State. The study was carried out in the Akko Local Government Area, Gombe State. Akko has Kumo as its headquarters and consists of 11 wards with a population of 337,853 according to the 2006 census. It covers 2627 km² located west of Gombe at 10 degrees 17'00"N and 10 degrees 58'00"E. The population of the study consists of all the 1,984 primary school and lower junior secondary school teachers of Akko LGA. A sample of 322 subjects was drawn from the population using the proportionate stratified sampling technique. Taro Yamane (1967) formula was used to determine the sample size. The choice of the sampling technique is appropriate because the school and teachers are stratified based on primary and junior secondary school teachers. The data, which consisted of primary and secondary data, was collected by the researchers with the help of four (4) research assistants trained by the researchers for the purpose of the study. The data was collected using a checklist, questionnaire, hand-held GPS receiver and administrative map of the local government area, which is Akko LGA. The GPS receiver was used to capture the geographic coordinate points of basic schools. The data collected were presented in tables for easy comprehension. Descriptive statistics such as percentage, mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions to show the presence and variation in the data set, while inferential statistics such as chi-square were used to test the hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance in order to ascertain the nature and strength of the results gotten from percentage, mean and standard deviations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Checklist for Assessing the Availability of School Facilities (CAASF)

Checklist for School Facilities in Basic Education in Akko LGA Gombe State.

Instruction: Please tick (√) where applicable. Note: Status may mean construction ongoing, purchase being processed, construction nearing completion, while condition may mean functional and not functional.

Table 1: Checklist

S/N	Available	Not available	Status	Condition
1. Enough classrooms	60%	40%	Not Completed	Functional
2. Adequate desks and chairs	30.0%	70%	Not Completed	Functional
3. Library	15%	85%	Not Completed	Functional
4. School clinic	10%	90%	Not Completed	Functional
5. Clean source of water	56%	44%	Not Completed	Functional
6. Clean and well maintained toilet	18%	82%	Not Completed	Functional
7. Digital resources room	33%	67%	Not Completed	Functional
8. Internet connectivity	10%	90%	Not Completed	Functional
9. Sport facilities	53%	47%	Not Completed	Functional
10 Instructional materials	40%	60%	Not Completed	Functional
11 First aid kits	67%	33%	Not Completed	Functional
12 Well-stocked library	13%	87%	Not Completed	Functional
13 Access to school health attendants	14%	86%	Not Completed	Functional
14 Secure entrance and exit points	52%	48%	Completed	Functional
15 Security post	20%	80%	Not Completed	Functional
16 Dilapidated classrooms	25%	75%	Completed	Not Functional
17 Playground for sports activities	56%	44%	Not Completed	Functional
18 Teacher's tables and chairs	23%	77%	Not Completed	Functional
19 Chalkboard	30%	70%	Not Completed	Functional

20 Classroom well ventilated	24%	76%	Not Completed	Functional
21 Sanitation facilities	15%	85%	Not Completed	Functional
22 Fans fixed in classrooms	10%	80%	Not Completed	Functional
23 Fire extinguishers	05%	95%	Completed	Not Functional
24 Refuse bin	40%	60%	Not Completed	Functional
25 Counseling room	10%	90%	Not Completed	Functional
26 Staff room	20%	80%	Not Completed	Functional
27 Qualified teachers	35%	65%	Not Completed	Functional
28 Science/vocational laboratory	10%	90%	Not Completed	Functional
29 Guidance and counseling programme	30%	70%	Not Completed	Functional
30 Surveillance cameras	05%	95%	Not Completed	Functional
Grand percentage	22.6%	77.4%	Not Completed	Functional

Source: field survey, 2025

Table 1 above shows that 60% of the schools visited by the researchers have available functional classrooms, while 40% of the schools do not have enough available classrooms; The researchers submitted that 30% of schools visited have adequate functional desks and chairs available, while 70% of schools are without available adequate desks and chairs; 15% of the schools had available functional libraries, while 85% do not have available libraries. In a related development, only 10% of the schools had available and functional school clinics, while 90% do not have them, with 56% having functional clean sources of water while 44% of the schools do not have available functional sources of clean water and also only 18% of the schools in Akko LGA had functional clean and well-maintained toilets, while 82% of the schools do not have them. Only 33% of the schools visited had a digital resources room, while 67% of the schools do not have an available functional digital resources room; internet connectivity is also available in 10% of the schools visited while 90% of the schools visited do not have available internet connectivity; sports facilities were available in 53% of the schools visited and 47% do not have them. The research also revealed that 40% of schools visited had available and functional instructional materials, while 60% of the schools do not have functional instructional materials; first aid kits are available and functional in 67% of the schools visited in Akko LGA while not available in 33% of the schools.

Furthermore, while 13% of the schools also had well-stocked and functional libraries, 87% did not. Data collected also indicate that only 14% of the schools in Akko LGA had available access to school health attendants indicating that 86% of the schools did not have; only 52% of schools in Akko LGA had available and functional secure entrance and exit points while 48% the schools did not; security posts were available in

20% of the schools in Akko LGA with 80% of the school without functional security posts; schools in Akko LGA are not free of dilapidated classrooms as the table shows that 25% of the schools visited had dilapidated structures which are not functional while 75% of school visited shows not to have dilapidated buildings; playground for sports activities were also available and functional in 56% of the schools visited in Akko LGA while 44% of the schools did not have available functional playground for sports; teacher's tables and chairs were 23% available and functional in Akko LGA schools while 77% of the schools did not have functional and available teacher's table and chairs; availability of chalkboards in the school visited in Akko LGA is not different from the number of classrooms available in the study area as only 30% of the schools visited had available functional chalkboard with 70% of the schools without available and functional chalkboard; data in table 1 also shows that 24% of the schools in Akko LGA had well ventilated and lit and functional classroom while 76% of the schools were without well ventilated and functional classrooms.

Sanitation facilities were also available in only 15% of the schools visited in the study area while 85% of the schools were without functional sanitation facilities. The data in the table also observed that only 10% of the schools had functional fans fixed in classrooms, while 90% of the schools were without functional fans in their classrooms; The data also did not exempt fire extinguishers, where only 5% of the schools visited had functional fire extinguishers, while 95% of the schools were without functional fire extinguishers; It is also clear from the record that 40% of the schools visited in Akko LGA had functional refuse bins, while 60% of the schools did not have them. The result in the table shows that only 10% of the schools visited had counselling rooms, while 90% of the schools did not have them, and 20% of the schools also had functional staff rooms, with 80% of the schools not having them.

Thus, the schools visited in Akko LGA had 35% of qualified teachers, with 65% of the schools visited being without qualified teachers; science/vocational laboratories were also functionally available in only 10% of the schools visited while not available in 90% of the schools, with only 30% of the schools running guidance and counselling programmes while 70% of the schools did not have available guidance and counselling programmes. The data in table 1 also revealed that only 5% of the schools visited in Akko LGA had functional surveillance cameras, while 95% of the schools were without functional surveillance cameras.

The grand percentages from table one revealed that only 22.6% of the schools in Akko LGA had available and functional material resources listed on the checklist, while 77.4% of the schools were without available and functional material resources listed.

Research Question One

What is the level of the availability of school facilities in all the basic education schools in Akko LGA of Gombe State?

The research question was answered by using the overall mean and standard deviation of the responses at basic education in Akko LGA of Gombe State using a decision rule of 2.5.

The data generated for answering this research question are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Availability of school facilities at Basic Education in Akko LGA of Gombe state.

S/N	Items statement	Mean	Std deviation
1.	There are enough classrooms in my school	2.32	0.732
2.	The classrooms are well-maintained for conducive teaching and learning in my school	2.28	0.827
3.	The schools' playgrounds are safe	2.62	0.897
4.	My school playgrounds are well maintained	2.51	0.983
5.	My schools' sanitation facilities are clean and hygienic	2.51	0.983
6.	My school have adequate textbooks and learning materials for all subjects	2.51	0.769
7.	There is a library in my school	2.14	1.221
8.	The library in my school is well stocked with relevant books and resources	2.40	0.980
9.	My school has ICT laboratory	2.07	0.808
10.	The ICT laboratory in my school has sufficient computers for students to use	2.35	1.029
11.	My school has reliable internet connectivity	2.10	0.999
12.	My school uses educational software to support teaching and learning	2.27	0.882
13.	My school has a system for reporting and addressing safety concerns	2.97	0.979
14.	My school provides adequate support for learners with special needs	2.14	0.702
15.	My school has a functional guidance and counseling programme	2.23	0.879
	Grand mean	2.36	0.895

Decision rule: 2.50

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 2 shows that the overall mean score of the responses of the respondents from the questionnaire and checklist was 2.36 and a standard deviation of 0.895. This indicates that there are no available and functional school facilities at basic education in Akko LGA of Gombe State. However, in order to take a final decision on this result hypothesis one was tested.

Hypothesis 1: There are no significant availability of school facilities in all the basic education schools in Akko LGA of Gombe state.

The hypothesis was tested by subjecting data from the checklist and questionnaire to chi-square statistical test. The result is presented in table 3.

Table 3: Chi-square of significance of the availability of school facilities in all basic education schools in Akko LGA of Gombe State.

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly disagreed	39	80.5	-41.5
Disagreed	280	80.5	199.5
Agreed	1	80.5	-79.5
Strongly agreed	2	80.5	-78.5
Total	322		

Test statistics

Availability	
Chi-square	670.870 ^a
Df	3
Asymp sig	.060

P < 0.05

Table 3 revealed that, at the availability of school facilities level P value of 0.060 is greater than p at 0.05 level of significance (p<0.05). Based on this result the test statistic is not significant and therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

This therefore, implies that there are no significant available school facilities in Akko LGA of Gombe State.

Research question two

To what extent is the enrolment rate in all the basic education schools in Akko LGA of Gombe State?

The research question was answered by using the overall mean and standard deviation from the responses of the respondents on the extent of enrolment rate in all the basic education schools in Akko LGA of Gombe State.

Table 4: Basic School Enrolment rate in Akko LGA

S/N	Items statement	Mean	Std deviation
1.	Enrolment rate in my school in Akko LGA is impressive	2.66	0.793
2.	There is low enrolment of pupils/students in my school	3.00	0.793
3.	Only educated parents enroll their children to basic education in my area	2.77	0.789
4.	Enrolment into basic education schools in my area is based on first come first serve	2.71	0.709
5.	Every child in my area has access to basic education	2.84	0.907
6.	All children between the age of 1 – 12 are enrolled into basic education in my area	3.10	0.645
7.	Parents in my area are very much aware of basic education policy	2.87	0.689
8.	Basic education is affordable for every parents in my area	3.21	0.906
9.	Students/pupils in basic educational schools in	3.02	0.020

my area access free government policy on school at ease		
10 Students/pupils enrolment into basic school in my area is inclusive in nature.	2.76	1.002
11 Students/pupils in my area have proximity advantages to basic educational schools.	2.92	0.900
12 There is high rate of students/pupils dropout in basic education in my area	2.94	0.725
13 Community leaders in my area sensitize parents to enroll their children into basic education	2.87	0.801
14 Quality of teachers in my area encouraged students/pupils enrolment into basic education	2.93	0.808
15 Parents education enrolment in my area depends on the parents social status	2.83	0.846
Grand mean	2.89	0.822

Decision rule: 2.50

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 4 shows that the overall mean score of the responses from the questionnaire was 2.89 and a standard deviation of 0.822. This indicates that, there is high rate of students'/pupils enrolment in basic education schools in Akko LGA of Gombe State meaning that the enrolment is impressive and every child within the school age has access to basic education and also inclusive.

Summary of major findings

1. Material resources are limitedly available and not functional in basic education schools of Akko LGA of Gombe State.
2. There is a high rate of pupils'/students enrolment in basic education schools in Akko LGA of Gombe State.

Discussion of findings (Results)

The results presented shows that material resources are limitedly available and not functional in 77.4% of the schools visited in Akko LGA. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Yusuf (2024) who stated that the level of materials resources is generally low in Taraba State.

In a different development the study also revealed that there was a high rate of students'/pupils enrolment in basic education school in Akko LGA of Gombe State. This finding is in contrasts to the findings of the National Education Data survey report (2016) and Yusuf (2024) which upholds an unstable trend in enrolment rates instead of the steady flow of increment in pupils' enrolment trends in Akko LGA which agrees with the study of Mordi (2013) and Adams (2009) which both revealed that learning environment greatly support students learning and increase enrolment as reflected contrary in the present findings.

Recommendations

1. Government should ensure enough supply of material resources in basic education schools in Akko LGA so as to bridge the gap and shortfalls in material resources.
2. More effort should be made to sustain the high enrolment rate of pupils/students in Akko LGA.

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