

INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS, KOGI STATE

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of school environment on Students academic performance in secondary schools in Idah Local Government Area, Kogi State. To do this, the researcher formulated three research questions, and three research hypotheses. The descriptive survey design was used for the study. The population of the study is made up of the principals and teachers across the twenty-two (22) government secondary schools in Idah Local Government Area of Kogi State, with total staff strength of 22 principals and three hundred and two teachers (302). The study sample of 200 was used and drawn by means of random sampling techniques. The instrument used for the study was questionnaire moderated based on a modified four points Likert type scale. A Cronbach Alpha method was used to establish reliability after a pilot study, which yielded reliability coefficient of 0.76. The data collected were analyzed using mean, percentage and standard deviation to answer the research questions. While T-test statistical technique was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The result revealed that; both the principals and teachers agreed on the ways infrastructural facilities, class size and teachers' personality influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in the study area. While the result of the three hypotheses revealed that, there is significant difference, hence, the hypotheses were rejected. Based on these, the following recommendations were made; Adequate classroom buildings to be provided in the public senior secondary schools to help promote effective teaching for students improved academic attainment, Government and communities should ensure that students have access to the schools nearest to their areas of residence.

Keywords: School environment, Academic performance, Principals and Teachers

Introduction

Nigerian children's poor academic performance has been a major concern for the government, parents, instructors, and even the pupils themselves. The efficient management of the school environment is just as important to the quality of education as the teachers' performance of their responsibilities (Ajao, 2001). That is to say that the environment where the child learns is a central determinant factor in the performance of students at all levels of education. This is due to the fact that the learner's mental preparedness for new learning is provided by their physical, social, and psychological surroundings. All of the physical, social, and psychological elements affecting people's lives and activities in a certain location can be referred to as the environment (Maller, 2009). This demonstrates that a child's environment encompasses both their physical home and the individuals they interact with on a social level. In this sense, a child's environment includes, among other places, their home, school, and peer group.

School environment therefore, comprises all the components of the school system that contributes positively or negatively towards effective teaching and learning (Blum, 2015). A good school environment, therefore, refers to all improved school conditions, such as availability of the right functional and usable infrastructures, availability of the right quality and quantity of teaching materials and workforce, standard class-size, proper location, good student teacher relationship and improved methodologies which combined to encourage teachers and students for effective teaching and learning (Blum, 2015). In addition, Bradley, and Sato (2018) assert that a supportive and favourable school environment enriched with enough learning facilities, and favourable climate makes students more comfortable, more concentrated on their academic activities that resulted in high academic performance and as such a proper and adequate environment is very much necessary for a fruitful learning of the child.

Hygge (2013) also postulates that learning is influenced by the nature of the environment, be it at home or school. A conducive environment is free from threat, stress and tension and includes adequate infrastructural facilities, standard class size, appropriate location of the school, teachers' motivation, adequate instructional materials, type of ownership among others. However, the focus of this paper is to find out the influence of school environment in the areas of infrastructural facilities, class-size and teachers' personality on students' academic performance. According to Blum (2015), infrastructural

facilities refer to the physical and spatial enablers of teaching and learning. These include schools, libraries, laboratories, workshops, playfields, school farms and gardens etc. They have to be of the appropriate quantity, size and quality to meet the minimum standards for promoting meaningful teaching and learning as well as students' academic performance. However, Hygge (2013) adds that these facilities are lacking in most secondary schools, thereby making teaching and learning more difficult for students to comprehend. Research by James (2012) revealed that there is a significant relationship between physical school environment and students' academic performance in senior secondary schools. The result indicated that students with adequate library, laboratory, schools and other physical facilities perform better than those in school with less or without such facilities. This is an indication that poor facilities and inadequate space, as well as the arrangement of items including seats in the school, library and laboratory, would affect the organization of learning environment since favourable school climate gives room for students to work hard and enhance their academic achievement.

In the same vein, James (2012) also notes that aside the insufficiency of both infrastructural and instructional facilities in secondary schools, the number of students per class outweigh standard class-sizes which may influence the kind of attention each student would receive from the teacher thereby thwarting learning and academic performance of students. Kwa (2017) in his research on school building assessment methods, he says that school building had an impact on the mental development of a student, he explains that schools that are properly build and attractive to look at motivated the children to stay in school and learn as well. A study by Nathaniel (2014) showed that school that rarely perform well in national examination cause their students to be de-motivated to work hard hence lose hope in pursuing higher education. Students from schools that perform well in national examinations have their students motivated to work hard and often focus their energies towards attaining good grade in school. Lauren, and Wang (2009) stated that education in an equalizer where those who do well are economically rewarded regardless of their economic background while those who do not well are not rewarded. Scheerens (2004) commented that education throughout the world has for many centuries emphasized a selective function regardless of available infrastructure in schools.

The nature of the class-size in a school determines to a large extent the success or failure of that school especially in terms of students' academic performance. In line with this, Lezotte (2001) noted that class size is an important determinant of a variety of students'

outcomes, ranging from test scores to broader life outcomes. Steinberg, (2006) observes that the percentage of time devoted to instruction in smaller classes increased from 80% compared to large classes, while the percentage of time devoted to non-instructional activities such as discipline and school arrangement decreased from 20% to 14%. Schneider (2012) noted that the teacher-student ratio of about sixty to one makes effective teaching and learning almost impossible as students outgrow the teacher's control. Eric (2009), also agrees with the assertion that students' disruption will occur frequently in classes that are poorly managed, where students are not provided with appropriate and interesting instructional tasks which are primarily caused as a result of over-crowded class size and that the academic performance of such students would likely drop. When a class is over-populated, there is a problem of the teachers not knowing the difficult areas of individual students and thereby not paying proper attention to them. Teachers find it difficult to give frequent exercises to help students work hard in order to retain what they have learnt and improve on their performances especially when the school is not sited in a proper location (Schneider, 2012).

Class size refers to the number of students in a given course or classroom, specifically either (1) the number of students being taught by individual teachers in a course or classroom or (2) the average number of students being taught by teachers in a school, district, or education system. The term may also extend to the number of students participating in learning experiences that may not take place in a traditional classroom setting, or it may also refer to the total number of students in a particular grade level or "class" in a school (although this usage is less common in public education). It should be noted that schools, districts, and state and federal education agencies commonly track and report "average class sizes." While average class sizes are commonly expressed as a ratio of students to teachers, a "student-teacher ratio" is usually different than average class size. Although class size reduction (CSR) may not always result in gains in student achievement, a majority of CSR research suggests that small classes have the greatest effect on increased student achievement in the primary grades, when class sizes are reduced below 20, and for gap groups, more specifically, minority and economically disadvantaged students (Biddle & Berliner, 2008; Bosworth, 2014; Fan, 2012; Filges et al., 2018; Finn & Achilles, 1999; Hattie, 2012; Lapsley et al., 2002; & Molnar et al., 1999). In these contexts, reductions in class size appear to benefit students.

For an effective teaching, a teacher should possess basic qualities such as

expertise on the subject matter, motivating for learning, awareness of student differences, planning the teaching process, knowing and using teaching-learning strategies, designing learning environment, effective communication and objective evaluation. Teachers' personality is one of the characteristics of achieving excellence among teachers (Steward, 2006). In other words, teachers themselves need to have a high personality first before attempting to develop students' personality and academic achievement (Zhang, 2000). The personality of teachers plays a role in influencing the students' character development, attitude to learning, passion for academic excellence among others (Curtis & Liying, 2001). Other than forming students' personality, the teachers' personality can also impact the performance of schools, effectiveness of Teaching and Learning activities, creativity of students and motivation (Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002).

Teachers are enthusiastic about their topic and delight in sharing what they have learned. Sometimes it seems that they can go on forever about their specialty while denying the idea that they are an expert. Good teachers will tell you they are students, not teachers. These two qualities are the primary and distinguishing characteristics of a teacher: Love of knowledge and a love of contributing to the development of others. A teacher wants to recognize the hard work children have done even though it is expected from some of them. A teacher believes there are no bad students, just challenging ones. At times the primary characteristics become contaminated by other drives and needs such as the need for status, authority, exhibitionism and any of many human needs that make us less than who we want to be. Excellent teachers learn to control these needs and to keep them out of the teaching arena as much as possible. Some teachers are better at this than others and they are better or worse teachers because of their abilities to control the extraneous (nonteaching) factors (Salgado, 2003). However, the above personality attributes of teachers in the area of study (Idah Local Government Area of Kogi State) leave much to be desired as teachers do not show positive personality trait that is required of them.

However, extensive review of literature shows that, academic performance of students seems to have declined in recent times in Nigeria especially in Kogi State. Consequently, the issue of poor academic performance in secondary schools has reached the point where effective use of relevant strategies ought to be explored and employed. The researcher, therefore, deemed it fit to find out the influence of school environment on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi States,

Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In spite of the efforts of government, parents' teachers' associations, old boys associations, non-governmental organizations and the administrators of secondary schools in the Kogi state to ensure a conducive teaching and learning environment that will enhance students' academic performance, the problems associated with poor school environment seem to hamper and overwhelm these efforts. This may be due to the large number of students enrolment which leads to over- crowding in available classes, most schools seem to lack basic class-room furniture like seats, desks and tables resulting to some students' sitting on the floor or logs of wood; sometimes even the available classes lack ventilation which results in adverse health and academic implications. In fact, hardly will one come across a school where students' population in the class is normal. Worst of all, some schools seem not to be located in line with the laid down procedure for the establishment of schools, as they are located in a noisy and long trekking distance. One wonders how effective teaching and learning may take place in such school environment that may enhance students' academic performance especially in the secondary schools. It was against this background that the researcher deemed it necessary to investigate the influence of school environment on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi state, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of school environment on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. find out the influence of infrastructural facilities on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State.
2. determine the influence of class-size on students' academic performance in secondary schools.
3. determine the influence of teacher personality on students' academic performance.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. In what ways do infrastructural facilities influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State?

2. How does class-size influence students' academic performance in secondary schools?
3. What is the influence of teacher personality on students' academic performance?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Infrastructural facilities have no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State
2. Class-size has no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools
3. Teacher personality has no influence on students' academic performance

Methodology

The design for this study is descriptive survey. It is to provide the opinion of the respondents on the Influence of school environment on the academic performance of secondary schools in Idah Local Government Area of Kogi State. The population comprises of all the principals and teachers in the 22 government secondary schools in Idah Local Government Area of Kogi state. The numbers of principals and teachers are 324 in secondary schools. Ten (10) secondary schools in Idah Local Government Area of Kogi State out of twenty-two (22) secondary schools were used. 200 respondents (comprising of 10 principals and 190 teachers) were selected for the study. A structured instrument titled: "Influence of School Environment on Academic Performance Questionnaire" (ISEAPQ) was used. The instrument was subjected to both face and content validity, and it was validated by three experts from Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba. One from measurement and evaluation, the other two from Educational Foundations. The internal consistency reliability coefficient of 0.76 was obtained. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation for research questions. A mean response of 2.5 was used as the cut off point for decision making. The hypotheses formulated for the research were tested using inferential statistics of T-test at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The instrument was administered directly by research assistants and retrieved at the spot. All 200 copies of the questionnaire administered were found usable. Tables were used for

data presentation and analyzes.

Research Question One

In what ways do infrastructural facilities influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Idah LGA, Kogi State?

Table 1: Mean of the respondents on ways infrastructural facilities influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Idah LGA, Kogi State

S/N	ITEMS	Mean X 10= Principal	SD	Decision Rule (2.5)	Mean X SD 190= Teachers	Decision Rule (2.5)	
1	Large school building creates a better students-teacher relationship which influences students' academic performance	3.7	.81	Accept	2.9	.75	Accept
2	Small school building makes it difficult for frequent contact with the students and this can lower their academic performance in schools	3.5	.85	Accept	3.8	.96	Accept
3	Over-crowded schools make classroom management difficult this reduces students' academic performance	3.6	.90	Accept	3.9	.88	Accept
4	Quality of the school building provide a favourable learning environment for students and teachers to interact and this influences their performance	3.8	.92	Accept	2.8	.85	Accept
5	The lack of good school building makes teaching ineffective and this reduces students' academic performance.	3.7	.92	Accept	2.8	.82	Accept
Cluster mean		3.7	.90	Accept	3.3	.85	Accept

In the above table, item 1 shows a mean and standard deviation of 3.7 (.90) and 3.3 (.85). Therefore, the decision level shows that the both respondents have mean scores ranging from 2.82 to 3.88 and standard deviation of .75 to .96, respectively. This implies that both the principals and teachers agreed on the ways infrastructural facilities influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in the study area.

Research Question Two:

How does class-size influence students' academic performance in secondary

schools?

Table 2: Mean of the respondents on how class-size influence students' academic performance in secondary schools.

S/N	ITEMS	Mean \bar{X} 10= Principa l	SD	Decision Rule (2.5)	Mean \bar{X}	SD 190= Teachers	Decision Rule (2.5)
6	Large class size have significant influence on student's academic performance	3.7	.92	Accept	3.5	.72	Accept
7	Small class size have significant influence on students' academic performance	3.4	.60	Accept	3.4	.67	Accept
8	Conducive and well-equipped classrooms influence students' academic performance	3.6	.90	Reject	2.8	.70	Reject
9	A good class room size helps in shaping the learning ability of the students	3.5	.92	Accept	3.9	.83	Accept
10	A well-structured class room provide a good learning environment for the study	3.7	.72	Accept	2.9	.73	Accept
Cluster mean		3.4	.85	Accept	3.1	.75	Accept

Table 2 above shows a mean of 3.4 and 3.1. Therefore, the decision level shows that the both respondents have mean scores ranging from 2.9 to 3.9 and standard deviation of .60 to .92, respectively. This implies that both the principals and teachers agreed that class-size influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in the study area.

Research Question Three: What is the influence of teacher personality on students' academic performance?

Table 3: Mean of the respondents on the influence of teacher personality on students academic performance.

Principals		Teachers	
S/N	ITEMS	Mean \bar{X} 10= SD	Decision Mean \bar{X} SD 190= Decision

		Principal	Rule (2. 5)	Teachers Rule (2.5)
11	Teachers' personality has effect on students' academic performance	3.98	.87 Accepted 3.67	.64 Accepted
12	Poor qualification of teachers has effect on students' academic performance	2.71	.28 Accepted 2.64	.41 Accepted
13	Low level teachers has low faculty and that affects students' performance in the class rooms	3.41	.81 Accepted 3.32	.52 Accepted
14	Teachers' personality has effect on students' academic performance	3.55	.67 Accepted 3.12	.32 Accepted
	Cluster mean	2.81	.04	2.75 .42 Accepted

Table 3 above shows a mean of 2.81 and 2.75. Therefore, the decision level shows that the both respondents have mean scores ranging from 2.9 to 3. 9 and standard deviation of .28 to .81, respectively. This implies that both the principals and teachers agreed on the influence of teacher personality on students' academic performance in the study area.

Testing of Hypotheses

Ho1. Infrastructural facilities have no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Idah LGA, Kogi State.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of the Difference in the Mean Scores of principals and teachers on Infrastructural facilities on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Idah LGA, Kogi State.

Status	No	X	SD	Dif	t-cal.	Sig	Decision
Principals	10	3.7	.90	198	-	.005	Accept
Teachers	190	3.3	.83		3.700		

The result of the hypothesis which states that Infrastructural facilities have no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State was accepted. This is because the t-calculated of -3.700 is less than the critical value of .005 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, there is no significant difference between mean scores of principals and teachers on the influence of Infrastructural facilities on students' academic performance.

Ho2. Class-size has no significant influence on students' academic performance in

secondary schools.

Table 5: t-test Analysis of the Difference in the Mean Scores of teachers and students on Class-size on academic performance of Secondary School Students in Kogi State.

Status	No	X	SD	Dif	t-cal.	Sig	Decision
Principals	10	3.4	.60	198	-.960	.005	Accept
Teachers	190	3.1	.92				

The result of the hypothesis which states that Class-size have no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State was accepted. This is because the t-calculated of -.960 is less than the critical value of .005 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, there is no significant difference between mean scores of principals and teachers on the influence of Class-size on students' academic performance.

Ho3. Teacher personality has no influence on students' academic performance

Table 6: t-test Analysis of the Difference in the Mean Scores of teachers and students

Status	No	X	SD	Dif	t-cal.	Sig	Decision
Principals	10	2.81	.09	198	-.560	.005	Accept
Teachers	190	2.75	.22				

The result of the hypothesis which states that Teacher personality has no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State was accepted. This is because the t-calculated of -.560 is less than the critical value of .005 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, there is no significant difference between mean scores of principals and teachers on the influence of Teacher personality on students' academic performance.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the hypothesis which states that Infrastructure facilities have no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Idah LGA, Kogi State was accepted. This is because the t-calculated of -3.700 is less than the critical value of .005 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, there is no significant difference between mean scores of principals and teachers on the influence of Infrastructural facilities on students' academic performance. The result of this hypothesis was in consonance with the work of James (2012) who revealed that there is a significant relationship between physical school environment and students' academic performance in senior secondary schools. The result indicated that students with adequate

library, laboratory, schools and other physical facilities perform better than those in school with less or without such facilities. This is an indication that poor facilities and inadequate space, as well as the arrangement of items including seats in the school, library and laboratory, would affect the organization of learning environment since favourable school climate gives room for students to work hard and enhance their academic achievement.

The result of the hypothesis which states that Class-size have no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State was accepted. This is because the t-calculated of -960 is less than the critical value of .005 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, there is no significant difference between mean scores of principals and teachers on the influence of Class-size on students' academic performance. This result is in agreement with the work of (Biddle & Berliner, 2008; Bosworth, 2014; Fan, 2012; Filges et al., 2018; Finn & Achilles, 1999; Hattie, 2012; Lapsley et al., 2002; & Molnar et al., 1999) who stated that, although class size reduction (CSR) may not always result in gains in student achievement, a majority of CSR research suggests that small classes have the greatest effect on increased student achievement in the primary grades, when class sizes are reduced below 20, and for gap groups, more specifically, minority and economically disadvantaged students. In these contexts, reductions in class size appear to benefit students.

The result of the hypothesis which states that Teacher personality has no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State was accepted. This is because the t-calculated of -560 is less than the critical value of .005 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, there is no significant difference between mean scores of principals and teachers on the influence of Teacher personality on students' academic performance. This study conforms with the work of Zhang, (2000) who noted, teachers' personality is one of the characteristics of achieving excellence among teachers. Similarly, Curtis and Liying (2001), noted that, teachers themselves need to have a high personality first before attempting to develop students' personality and academic achievement. It also agrees with Judge, Bono, Ilies, and Gerhardt (2002) who in their various studies noted that, the personality of teachers plays a role in influencing the students' character development, attitude to learning, passion for academic excellence among others. Other than forming students' personality, the teachers' personality can also impact the performance of schools, effectiveness of Teaching and Learning activities, creativity of

students and motivation.

Conclusion

This study has established that the ability of schools to run effectively educational programmes is predicted on the availability of physical school environment, good quality teachers, quality library service, and central school location accessible to students. These include: the provision of buildings (classroom), sport recreational facilities, library books and materials, laboratory facilities to enhance academic performance of secondary school students. It was also discovered that most schools lack basic amenities like sport equipment, functional library and perimeter fencing to boost the security of the school as well as the administration. This affects learning and teaching thereby resulting in poor academic performance of students generally and particularly in the science subjects.

Recommendations

Based on findings and conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government should provide adequate classroom buildings in the public senior secondary schools to help promote effective teaching for students improved academic attainment.
2. Government and communities should ensure that students have access to the schools nearest to their areas of residence, this can be achieved by establishing more schools.
3. Efforts should be made by government and education stakeholders to boost teachers' moral, thereby enhancing their personality in the society, which can be realized through enhanced welfare packages.
4. The communities, teachers and other stakeholders should imbibe local facilities into their school climate or environment.

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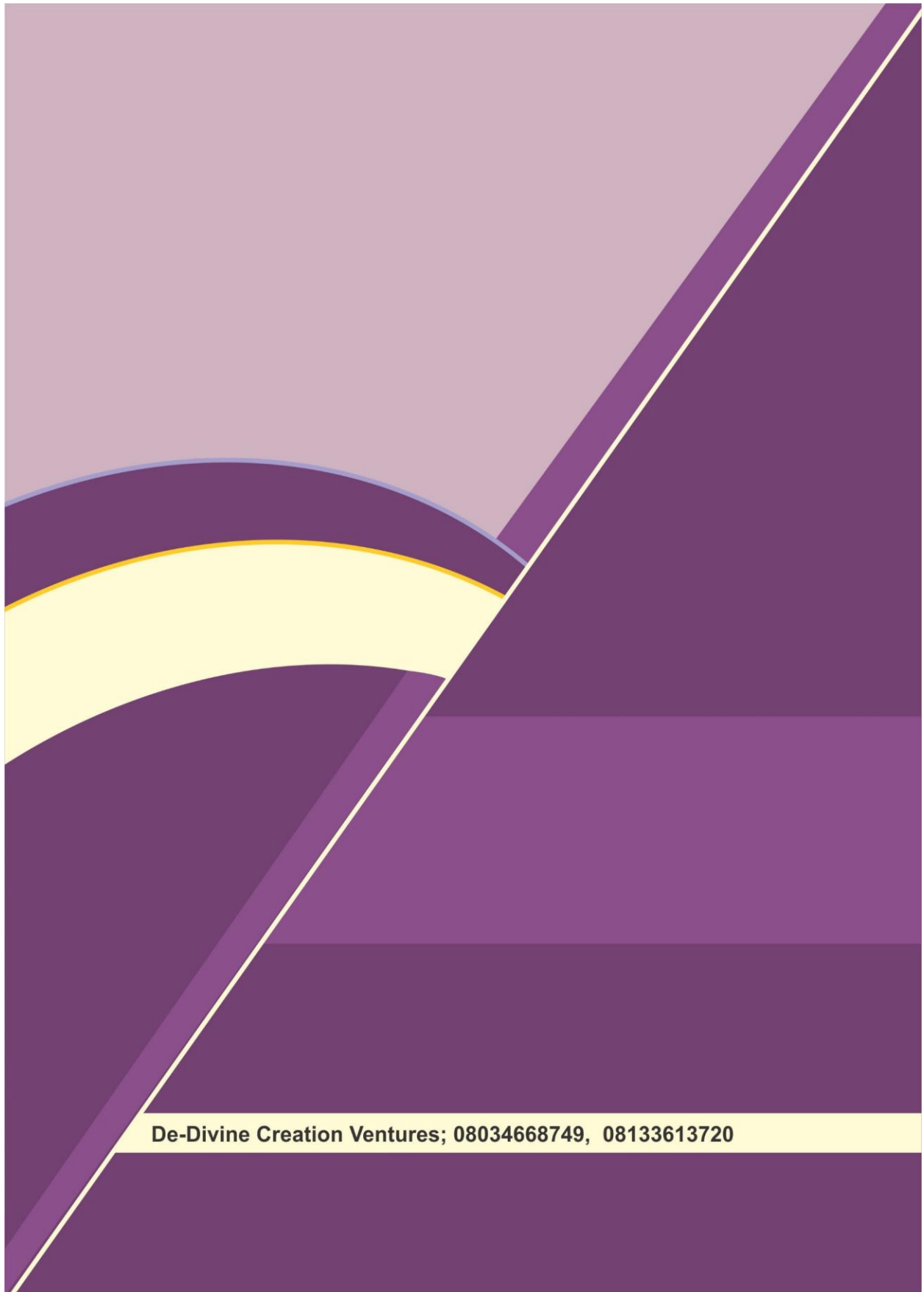
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