

## THE MENACE OF DILAPIDATED BUILDING: INVESTIGATING ITS EFFECT ON STUDENTS LIVE AND INTEREST IN STUDY

By  
Arc Peter Sunday USANGA  
Department of Architecture  
University of Uyo

And

Maria USANGA  
Department of Educational Foundations, Guidance and Counseling.  
Faculty of Education,  
University of Uyo.  
Uyo

### Abstract

*This study investigates the menace and effect of dilapidated buildings on students' lives and their interest in educational pursuits. Dilapidated school structures, characterised by poor maintenance, structural decay, and inadequate facilities, pose significant risks to students' physical safety and psychological well-being. The study examines the effect of dilapidated buildings on students' lives, which results in physical and health risks and social implications. The study further delves into the effects of dilapidated buildings on students' interest in studies, in which conditions create an environment of neglect and discomfort, leading to increased absenteeism, diminished academic performance, and a decline in students' motivation and engagement with their studies. The study emphasises that improving the physical learning environment is essential for enhancing student interest and concentration, ultimately contributing to better educational outcomes. The study concluded that addressing the issue of dilapidated school infrastructure is not only essential for ensuring students' safety but also for creating a learning environment that fosters academic engagement and personal development. One of the recommendations provided was that educational institutions should establish a routine schedule for the maintenance and inspection of buildings, and regular assessments by qualified professionals can help identify structural weaknesses, safety hazards, and other issues before they become critical.*

**Keyword: Building, Dilapidated, Student lives, Interest, and Study**

### Introduction

When a structure has sustained significant damage as a result of several components or pieces, primarily the structural ones, deteriorating and creating a significant imbalance in the load transfer system, the building is considered dilapidated. The threat posed by decaying structures in educational institutions is becoming a serious problem that has an impact on students' life and their desire in pursuing academic goals. Many places, particularly developing nations, tend to overlook the condition of school infrastructure, which results in an abundance of dilapidated structures. These buildings, characterised by leaking roofs, cracked walls, broken windows, and outdated facilities, pose significant safety hazards and create a learning environment that is far from conducive. According to Adeyemi and Ofala (2017), the physical condition of school buildings is closely linked to students' academic performance and overall well-being, highlighting the urgent need to address this pervasive problem.

It is impossible to overestimate the psychological effects of studying in deteriorating structures. Students who are exposed to these kinds of circumstances frequently feel stressed, anxious, and less secure, which can negatively impact their focus and engagement in their academic work. Omolayo & Bamidele

(2019) noted that students in schools with poor infrastructure reported higher levels of psychological distress compared to those in better-maintained facilities. This stress can lead to a lack of motivation and a decline in academic interest, as students may begin to associate their education with negative emotions and unsafe conditions. Moreover, the aesthetic quality and maintenance of school buildings play a crucial role in shaping students' attitudes towards learning. Udo and Emeka (2020) mentioned that students who attended schools with well-maintained and visually appealing buildings were more likely to be motivated and interested in their studies. On the other hand, children who learn in run-down settings frequently experience a sense of abandonment, which can cause them to become disengaged from their studies. Maintaining school infrastructure is crucial, as evidenced by the association found between students' academic motivation and the physical environment.

The relationship between the physical state of school buildings and academic performance has been substantiated by numerous studies. Olatunji & Funmi (2021) highlight that the deterioration of school infrastructure is often indicative of broader issues, such as inadequate funding and a lack of attention from educational authorities. This neglect not only affects the physical environment but also sends a message to students that their education is not a priority. As a result, students may become demotivated, leading to poorer academic outcomes and reinforcing the cycle of neglect. The health implications of studying in dilapidated buildings are another critical concern. Musa & Ibrahim (2022) explained that students exposed to such environments are at a higher risk of developing health problems, including respiratory issues, allergies, and other ailments caused by mould, dampness, and exposure to unsafe materials. These health issues may lead to a rise in absenteeism, which would further interfere with the educational process and lower academic achievement. These unfavourable feelings have a big effect on students' motivation to learn and their long-term interest in achieving academic objectives. The psychological toll that learning in these kinds of settings has on students' academic paths and general life results can be long-lasting.

### **Concept of building**

A building is an enclosed space, such a house or factory, that has walls and a roof and is typically stationary. Buildings may be found in a wide range of sizes, forms, and purposes. Throughout history, they have been modified for a number of reasons, including the availability of construction materials, the climate, land costs, ground conditions, certain applications, prestige, and aesthetic considerations. "A structure with walls and a roof that is more or less permanently erected in one location is called a building." Ndubuisi, Chukwujindu, and Kikanme (2021) affirmed that a building is regarded as an enclosure or "envelope" designed and constructed to provide a minimum level of comfort and convenience for man. A building provides safety, protects human inhabitants, animals, materials, and equipment from the effects of weather, and gives internal comfort.

Because it provides an area that is artificially regulated, shielded from precipitation and prevailing winds, and insulated from temperature and humidity fluctuations in the climate, buildings play a significant role in modifying the microclimate. Because it offers a place for people to live and conduct social and economic activities, a building is among the most important amenities. There are two primary physical resources used in building construction. Proskea & Schmid (2022) defined buildings as independently usable, covered structures that can be entered by people and are suitable or intended to serve the protection of people or animals. Buildings serve several societal needs, primarily as shelter from weather, security, living space, privacy, to store belongings, and to comfortably live and work. A building as a shelter represents a physical separation of the human habitat, a place of comfort and safety from the outside, a place that may be harsh and harmful at times.

Usanga & Edem (2024) buildings are normally constructed according to drawings and specifications prepared by architects or civil engineers. It is the process of putting structures together for the purpose of human settlement, amongst others. In addition, building construction is the technique and industry involved in the assembly and erection of structures, primarily used to provide shelter

### **Concept of dilapidated building**

The word "dilapidation" refers to the deterioration, harm, or state of a structure or its grounds. A structure that is considered dilapidated is one that is either vacant and unfit for human habitation because it is deemed uninhabitable and poses a risk to the public's health, safety, or welfare, or one that has been damaged or neglected to the point where it is in need of necessary repairs or is otherwise in a state of decay or partial ruin and poses a risk to any of these factors. It means a building has fallen into a state of disrepair or deterioration or has fallen into ruin to such an extent that the structure is a hazard to the health, safety, or welfare of the general public.

A dilapidated house does not provide a safe or healthy shelter for residents, and rehabilitation is not economically feasible. Bello (2020) proposed that a building is dilapidated when it has undergone severe damage due to the decay of different parts or members, mainly the structural members, causing a serious imbalance in the load transfer system. A dilapidated building is any state of disrepair resulting from owner misuse or neglect. Dilapidated buildings impact overall neighbourhood appearance, quality, and property values.

When a structure deteriorates, it indicates that its physical life is running out and it is getting close to the point when it is no longer suitable for use. A building may have this state for a number of reasons. The natural deterioration may be the cause. Usanga (2024) suggested that using natural components into green construction concepts, sustainable and eco-friendly designs aim to establish a healthy relationship between residents and their surroundings. In doing so, it can contribute to lowering energy usage, minimizing carbon emissions, enhancing indoor air quality, and fostering a healthier atmosphere. Some of the common causes of dilapidation of buildings according to Saranya & Mewa (2017) are; Natural decay and ageing, Improper or no maintenance, Misuse of buildings, Use of underspecified materials, Poor workmanship, Effect of aggressive environment, Natural disasters like cyclones, flood, earthquake and fire. In addition to these, other factors may also contribute to building deterioration.

### **Concept of student interest in study**

Interest is a psychological condition in which one is able to effectively respond to any subject of concentration. It also concerns with returning to and interacting with the same concepts, items, or occasions. Interest is described as a relationship between an individual and an item (i.e., a specific domain to learn) within the environment in the field of modern educational psychology. Murphy (1968) cited in Okono (2020) mentioned that learning covers every modification in behavior to meet environmental requirement. According to Harackiewicz (2016), interest is a powerful motivational process that energises learning, guides academic and career trajectories, and is essential to academic success. The potential for interest is in the person, but the object and the environment define the direction of interest and contribute to its development (Wong, 2020). In education, a student's interest refers to the inclination of the student towards a particular subject to which he or she is easily able to connect without any hassle or hurdle. Student's interest in education refers to the tendency of interest of students towards a particular subject or overall study. Bassey (2019) mentioned that education aims at changing an individual's behavior, attitude and mental discipline towards the acquisition of desire knowledge. The student may develop an interest in any

specific content or work in education. Without the students interest, it is not possible to achieve much. Thus, for achievement, teachers and academicians put efforts first to develop interest.

Student interest is a multifaceted concept encompassing affective and cognitive components that drive motivation. It involves affective and cognitive elements that drive motivation, transitioning from triggered situational interests through engaging, repeated, and intellectually stimulating experiences (Katrien, 2017). External factors can spark a student's interest in their academics, which can then develop into situational interest and, with encouragement, individual interest. Existing personal interests, objectives, perceived task relevance, feelings, self-efficacy, and a sense of belonging are some of the variables impacting student engagement. A student's performance, involvement, motivation, and desire to study may all be strongly impacted by their interest in the subject.

Interest in study accompanies the desire or ability to deliberate attention and liveliness that eventually give birth to a sense of fun in the form of a change in behaviour or attitude towards knowledge and skills. . The success or failure of any educational institute is highly dependent on the students' academic performance and the ability of such an institute to effectively impact the needed knowledge (Akpan & Ibokette, 2021). Interest in learning students can be seen in the feeling of likes and interests of students in the study, the need for students to learn, greater attention to the things they have learnt, and active participation in the activities (Arlianty, 2017).

### **Effects of dilapidated building on students' lives**

Educational institutions with dilapidated structures face serious threats and difficulties that can significantly affect the lives of their pupils. These impacts are multifaceted, including pupils' academic achievement, emotional health, physical safety, and general interest in learning. The following are the impacts that decaying buildings have on students' lives:

- **Physical Safety and Health Risks**

Dilapidated buildings often feature structural deficiencies, such as cracked walls, leaking roofs, broken windows, and malfunctioning electrical systems. These hazards increase the likelihood of accidents and injuries. Akande (2019) mentioned that collapsing ceilings or falling debris can cause severe harm to students and staff, creating an environment of fear and uncertainty. Moreover, poor sanitation and ventilation in such buildings can lead to the spread of diseases and respiratory issues, further compromising students' health.

- **Psychological Impact**

The psychological effects of studying in a dilapidated environment are profound. Students exposed to such conditions may experience stress, anxiety, and a sense of neglect. The perception that their learning environment is unsafe or unworthy can lead to feelings of demotivation and low self-esteem. According to Olanrewaju (2020), students in poorly maintained schools reported higher levels of anxiety and a lack of enthusiasm for school-related activities, which can negatively affect their academic performance.

- **Academic Performance**

The state of a school's physical environment directly influences students' ability to learn effectively. Dilapidated buildings, with inadequate lighting, uncomfortable temperatures, and constant disruptions due to repairs, create a challenging learning atmosphere. Research has shown that students in such environments often struggle to concentrate, leading to lower academic achievement. Uline & Tschannen-Moran (2016) indicate that students in well-maintained schools consistently outperformed their peers in dilapidated

settings, highlighting the critical role of infrastructure in educational outcomes.

- **Interest in Education**

A deteriorating school environment can diminish students' interest in education. When students perceive that their learning environment is not valued, they may become disengaged and less motivated to attend school regularly. This disinterest can lead to higher absenteeism rates and, in some cases, increased dropout rates. Ololube (2017) revealed that the condition of school facilities significantly influences students' attitudes towards learning, with those in dilapidated buildings expressing a greater desire to leave school early.

- **Social Implications**

The social environment within a school is also affected by the condition of its buildings. Dilapidated facilities can create a sense of inequity among students, particularly when compared to peers in better-funded schools with superior infrastructure. This disparity can foster feelings of resentment and social alienation, further exacerbating the challenges faced by students in underfunded schools. As noted by Buckley, Schneider, & Shang (2018), the quality of school infrastructure is closely linked to students' sense of belonging and overall satisfaction with their educational experience.

### **Effects of dilapidated building on students interest in studies**

The condition of a school's physical infrastructure plays a crucial role in shaping students' attitudes towards their education. Dilapidated buildings, characterised by structural decay, poor maintenance, and inadequate facilities, can have a significant negative effect on students' interest in their studies. Below are some key ways in which dilapidated buildings affect students' engagement with their education:

- ❖ **Demotivation and disengagement**

When students are required to study in poorly maintained environments, they often feel neglected and undervalued. This sense of disregard can lead to demotivation, making students less likely to engage with their studies. The physical environment of a school communicates a message about the importance of education; when that environment is neglected, students may internalise the belief that their education is not a priority. As noted by Earthman (2016), students who attend schools with poor infrastructure often exhibit lower levels of enthusiasm and motivation towards their academic work.

- ❖ **Increased Absenteeism**

The discomfort and lack of safety associated with dilapidated buildings can lead to increased absenteeism. Students may avoid attending school due to concerns about their physical safety or simply because the environment is unpleasant. Absenteeism is a significant barrier to academic success, as it reduces students' exposure to instructional time and learning opportunities. According to Oluremi (2017), there is a direct correlation between the quality of school facilities and student attendance, with better-maintained environments encouraging more consistent school attendance.

- ❖ **Decline in Academic Performance**

Students' interest in their studies is closely linked to their academic performance. In dilapidated buildings, the lack of adequate lighting, ventilation, and comfortable seating can make it difficult for students to concentrate and participate actively in class. This decline in the quality of the learning environment often results in lower academic achievement, which can further diminish students' interest in their studies. Students in schools with substandard facilities often perform worse academically, leading to a vicious cycle

of disengagement and underachievement. Isaac, Usoro, & Akpan, (2019) proposed that students of the programme require technical educational tools, equipment and environments whose primary aim is to help cultivate the desire to learn and create and not to simply communicate subject matter divorced from meaningfully and personalized activity.

#### ❖ **Negative Perceptions of School**

The physical state of a school building can shape students' perceptions of the institution itself. A school in poor condition may be perceived as an indicator of low educational quality or a lack of care from authorities. These negative perceptions can cause students to lose respect for their school and diminish their sense of belonging, which are key factors in maintaining interest in education. Lyons (2017) found that students in schools with well-maintained facilities were more likely to express positive feelings about their school, which in turn supported their academic engagement.

#### ❖ **Psychological Impact**

The psychological impact of studying in a dilapidated environment should not be underestimated. Such conditions can cause stress, anxiety, and feelings of inadequacy among students, all of which can lead to a reduced interest in education. Bakó-Biró (2018) highlights that the quality of the physical learning environment significantly affects students' mental well-being, which is directly linked to their engagement and interest in their studies.

### **How to mitigate the issue of building for students' interest and concentration in studies**

Mitigating the issues related to dilapidated buildings is essential for improving students' interest and concentration in their studies. Effective strategies should focus on both immediate interventions and long-term solutions that address the root causes of poor building conditions. Below are key approaches to mitigating these issues and building students' interest and concentration in their studies:

#### ➤ **Regular maintenance and upkeep**

One of the most effective ways to prevent buildings from becoming dilapidated is through regular maintenance. Educational institutions should establish comprehensive maintenance schedules that include regular inspections, timely repairs, and ongoing upkeep of school facilities. Regular maintenance not only prevents minor issues from becoming major problems but also ensures that the learning environment remains conducive to student concentration. According to Al-Hassan and Mabogunje (2018), schools that implemented systematic maintenance programs saw significant improvements in both the physical condition of their buildings and the academic performance of their students.

#### ➤ **Renovation and modernisation**

Renovating and modernising outdated school buildings can significantly enhance the learning environment, thereby increasing students' interest and concentration. Modernisation efforts should focus on improving the basic infrastructure—such as lighting, ventilation, and acoustics—as well as incorporating new technologies that support interactive and engaging learning. Schools that invested in modern facilities experienced a marked improvement in student engagement and academic outcomes, particularly in subjects requiring high levels of concentration like science and mathematics.

#### ➤ **Government and community involvement**

Active involvement from both government bodies and local communities is crucial in addressing the issue of dilapidated school buildings. Governments should prioritise funding for the renovation and maintenance

of educational facilities, particularly in underserved areas. Additionally, community involvement through volunteer efforts, fundraising, and advocacy can help bridge gaps in resources. Schools with strong community support were more successful in securing the necessary resources for building improvements, which in turn had a positive impact on student morale and focus.

#### ➤ **Designing for Comfort and Functionality**

The design of school buildings should prioritise both comfort and functionality to foster an environment conducive to learning. This includes ensuring that classrooms are well-lit, properly ventilated, and equipped with comfortable seating arrangements that facilitate concentration. Furthermore, incorporating flexible spaces that can adapt to different teaching styles and learning activities can help maintain student interest. Barrett, Zhang, Moffat, and Kobbacy (2019) emphasised the importance of ergonomics and environmental factors in classroom design, noting that well-designed spaces significantly boost students' ability to concentrate and stay engaged.

#### ➤ **Use of Green Building Practices**

Implementing green building practices not only improves the physical environment but also promotes sustainability and a positive learning atmosphere. Green buildings often feature better air quality, natural lighting, and temperature control, all of which contribute to a more comfortable and stimulating learning environment. Students in green schools have been found to have better health outcomes, which directly correlate with improved concentration and academic performance. The World Green Building Council (2018) reported that students in green-certified schools showed higher levels of academic achievement and engagement, attributed to the healthier and more comfortable learning conditions.

#### ➤ **Monitoring and evaluation**

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation are essential for ensuring that improvements to school buildings have the desired effect on student interest and concentration. Schools should regularly assess the condition of their facilities and gather feedback from students and teachers to identify areas for further improvement. Implementing data-driven approaches to building management allows for continuous improvement and ensures that investments in infrastructure yield positive educational outcomes. Schools that actively monitored and evaluated their facilities were more successful in creating environments that supported student engagement and academic success.

### **Conclusion**

The issue of dilapidated buildings in educational institutions is a complicated problem that affects students' lives, health, and interest in study. The physical, psychological, and emotional challenges posed by such environments demand urgent attention from educational authorities and policymakers. Addressing the issue of dilapidated school infrastructure is not only essential for ensuring students' safety but also for creating a learning environment that fosters academic engagement and personal development. Ensuring that school buildings are well-maintained and conducive to learning is essential for fostering student engagement and promoting academic success.

### **Recommendations**

1. Educational institutions should establish a routine schedule for the maintenance and inspection of buildings. Regular assessments by qualified professionals can help identify structural weaknesses, safety hazards, and other issues before they become critical.



2. Adequate funding from both government bodies and educational institutions is essential to addressing infrastructure issues. Governments should prioritise the allocation of resources to repair and renovate dilapidated school buildings.
3. Engaging the local community in efforts to improve school infrastructure can lead to more sustainable solutions. Raising awareness about the importance of safe and well-maintained educational facilities can foster community support and encourage collective action.
4. Governments and educational authorities should enforce strict safety standards for school buildings. This includes ensuring that all educational facilities meet minimum requirements for structural integrity, electrical safety, sanitation, and accessibility.



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