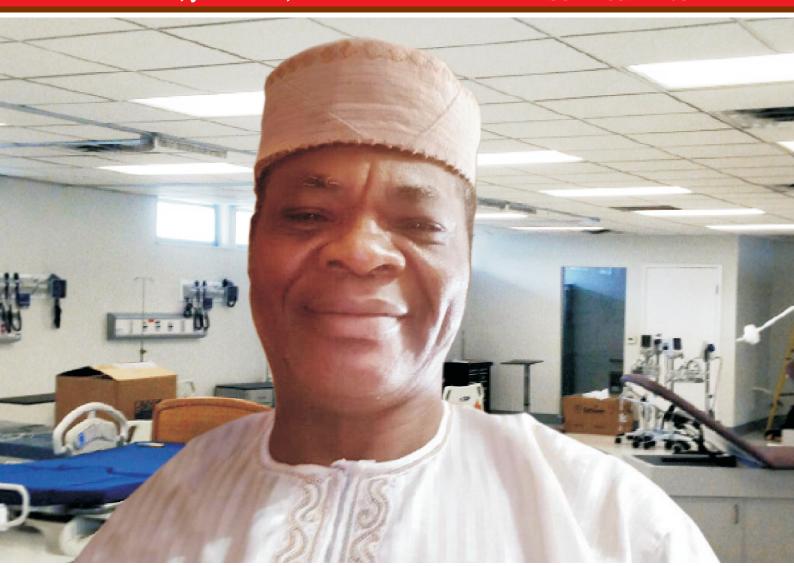


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### LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

ADETUNMISE OLUSEYI OLAJIDE Faculty of Nursing Science,

Ladoke Akintola University of Technology,

Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria. Phone No: 08037287328.

Email: adetunmiseolajide@gmail.com

ADERONKE JULIENNAADETUNJI School of Nursing,

Lagos University Teaching Hospital,

Idi-Araba, Lagos

Phone No: 08033308938

Email: ronkeadetunji56@gmail.com

**ADEYEMO FLORENCE O.** Department of Community/Public Health,

Faculty of Nursing Sciences,

Ladoke Akintola University of Technology,

Osogbo, Nigeria

doctoradeyemo@yahoo.com

+2348033579737

AGATHAOGUNKORODE Department of Nursing Science,

College of Medicine & Health Sciences, Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria; Phone No: 08065821012, +2349078129160

Email:ogunkorodeqo@abuad.edu.ng

**AJAYI, ANTHONY** Department of Physiotherapy,

Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital

Zaria, Nigeria

Phone No: +2348023639269 Email: ehichristo@yahoo.com

ANYEBE, EMMANUEL EJEMBI Department of Nursing Sciences,

Faculty of Clinical Sciences,

University of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria

Phone No: +2348036422771

Email: ejembianyebe@gmail.com;

anyebe.ee@unilorin.edu.ng;

AYISHETU U. MUSA-MALIKI Department of Nursing Sciences,

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria – Nigeria.

Email: aumusamaliki@abu.edu.ng,

aishaudu@yahoo.com

Phone Number: +234 7038159582

Twitter: @Ayi 1

**BARAKAT BOLAJOKO** Department of Nursing Science,

College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

Phone No: 08140551353

Email: ayooreoluwa@gmail.com

CHIKAC. H. ODIRA Department of Nursing Science,

Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka,

Anambra State, Nigeria

Email: chikachioma@gmail.com, Phone No: +2347030615243

CHRISTIANA OLANREWAJU SOWUNMI; Babcock University School of Nursing,

Ilishan Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria lanresowunmi@hotmail.com

+2348023500321

**CONSTANCE O. IZEKOR** School of Post Basic Nursing,

Irrua Specialist Teaching Hospital,

Irrua, Nigeria

Phone No: +234 8056461045

Email: constanceizekor@isth.com.ng

**DALHAT SANI KHALID** Department of Nursing Science,

Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, College of Medical Sciences,

Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria

Phone No:07035385167 Email: dksanni@abu.edu.ng

**DEBORAH TOLULOPE ESAN**Department of Nursing Science,

College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Afe Babalola University, P.M.B. 5454,

Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria esandt@abuad.edu.ng +234(0)8062484864

**DELIVERANCE BROTOBOR** Department of Nursing Science,

Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Nigeria

deliverancebrotobor@gmail.com

+234 9055468987

EHWARIEME TIMOTHY A. Department of Nursing Science,

School of Basic Medical Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City,

Edo State, Nigeria

Phone No:08060696870

Email timy4real12@gmail.com

**EDITH N. CHIEJINA** Department of Nursing Science,

Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka,

Anambra State, Nigeria Phone no: +2348037463279

Email:nkechichiejina@yahoo.com

EMMANUELA. OYEDELE Department of Nursing Science,

College of Health Sciences,

University of Jos, Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria

Phone No: 08038266157

Email: Juliedad2003@yahoo.com

**ESEOGHENE OGBURU** Department of Nursing Science,

College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

Phone No:08103769157

Email: aniogburu13@gmail.com

**EZEAKA PATIENCE** Nursing Services department,

Lagos University Teaching Hospital, Lagos

Phone No:08060627242

Email: ezeakafavour@gmail.com

**F. ELIZABETH OJO** Department of Nursing,

College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Afe Babalola University of Ado-Ekiti

Phone no: +2348034292020 Email: ojofe@abuad.edu.ng

**FOLASHADE WINA** Department of Nursing Science,

University of Jos, Jos. Plateau State, Nigeria

Phone no: 08065308349

Email:fshabal2002@yahoo.com.

GAKNUNG BONJI Department of Nursing Science,

University of Jos. Jos. Plateau State, Nigeria

Phone No: +2348033959627 Email bonjigaknung@gmail.com gaknungb@unijos.edu.ng

**GRACE O. DANIEL** Department of Nursing Science,

University of Jos, Jos. Plateau State, Nigeria

Phone no: +234 8036285950

Email:gracemola2002@yahoo.co.uk

**I. D. OWOEYE** Department of Nursing,

College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Afe Babalola University of Ado-Ekiti

Phone no: +2348034252290 Email: owoeyeid@abuad.edu

IDRIS ABDULRASHID DABAI Department of Nursing Science,

Bayero University, Kano Nigeria

08063375818

idrizdabai@gmail.com

**IRODI C. CANIS** Department of Nursing,

Igbinedion University, Okada, Edo State

Phone No: 08034901130. Email: Irodicanis@yahoo.com

**ISIBOR EWERE ANITA** Department of Nursing

University of Benin, Nigeria Phone No:08085893875 Email ewere85@gmail.com

MERCY OLUFUNKE IWAOLA Department of Nursing,

Babcock University Teaching Hospital, Ilishan Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria

Phone No: 07036138033.

Email olufunkeiwalola@yahoo.com

MOHAMMED, ZULAIHA BALA. Department of Physiotherapy,

Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital

Zaria, Nigeria

Phone No: +2347035106155 Email zulybal27@gmail.com

**NADYEN SHIKPUP JORDAN.** Department of Nursing Science,

University of Jos, Jos. Plateau State, Nigeria

Phone No: 070396424284.

Email nadyenshikpup@gmail.com

**NDIE, E. C.** Department of Nursing Science,

National Open University of Nigeria,

Abuja Nigeria,

Plot 91 Cadastral Zone, Jabi, Abuja.

Phone No:07066789961. Email: chubike05@yahoo.com

NZELUEAKA HELENA. Department of Nursing Science,

School of Basic Medical Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City,

Edo State, Nigeria. Phone No:07068813915

Email: nzelueakah@gmail.com

**OGUNLEYE O.R.** School of Nursing Ekiti State Teaching Hospital,

Ado-Ekiti

+2347061825698

Oyinlolaogunleye12@gmail.com

**OGWA, E. T.** Alex Ekwueme University Teaching Hospital

Abakaliki

Phone No: 08035074128

Email: favourogwa@yahoo.com

**OKO-OSE, JOSEPHINE** Department of Nursing

University of Benin, Nigeria joechiazor@yahoo.com

08034078785,

**OLADAPO T. OKAREH** Department of Environmental Health Sciences,

Faculty of Public Health, University of Ibadan, Ibadan Phone No: 08057311182.

Email: dapsy2001@yahoo.co.uk

OLAOLORUNPO OLORUNFEMI Department of Medical-Surgical Nursing,

Faculty of Basic Medical Science, Federal University Oye-Ekiti,

Ekiti State, Nigeria Phone: +2348034694675

Email:olaolorunfemi@yahoo.com https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9525-8757

OLAWALE JINAID JUBRIL Department of Physiotherapy,

Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital

Zaria, Nigeria

Phone No: +2347035106155. Email; jjolawale@yahoo.com

OLUBIYI BISOLA Research Hub, Africa

The bunker 3 Atabara Street, off Cairo Street,

Wuse 2, Abuja

Phone No:08038105402 Email: omotooke@gmail.com

**OLUBIYI M. VINCENT** Department of Physiology,

College of Health Sciences,

Kogi State University, Ayingba, Kogi State

Phone No: 09031151038

Email: mavolubiyi@yahoo.com

OLUBIYI SIMEON KAYODE Department of Nursing Sciences,

Faculty of Clinical Sciences, College of Health Sciences,

University of Ilorin Phone No: 08033617649

Email simeonolubiyi@gmail.com olubiyiskunilorin.edu.ng

**OLUBUNMI OLUWAKEMI YEJIDE** Department of Nursing,

National Open University of Nigeria,

Ado-Ekiti Study Centre Phone No: 08169074178

Email: olubunmikemi3@gmail.com

OLUFAYOKE VICTORIAMIDE-ATOLANI School of Nursing Ekiti State Teaching Hospital,

Ado-Ekiti

+2348068968892

mideatolanifayokemi@gmail.com

OLUWAFUNMILAYO ESTHER FADARE Department of Nursing Science,

College of Medicine & Health Sciences, Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria;

07063545905

phadarephunmie@gmail.com

OLUWASEUN ENIOLAADEGBILERO-IWARI Department of Community Medicine,

College of Medicine & Health Sciences. Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria.

07060826910

Seuneniola01@gmail.com

OLUWASEYI ABIODUN AKPOR Department of Nursing Science,

College of Medicine & Health Sciences, Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria;

Phone No: +234706851599. akporoa@abuad.edu.ng

OLAWUYI VICTORIA FEHINTOLA Department of Nursing,

National Open University of Nigeria,

Ado-Ekiti Study Centre Phone No: 08139380475.

Email: fehintideraa@gmail.com

OMOROGBE CHRISTIE E. Department of Nursing Science,

School of Basic Medical Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City,

Edo State, Nigeria Phone No: 08062304948.

FIIOIIC NO. 08002304948.

Email: omorogbechristie@gmail.com

ONASOGAA. OLAYINKA Department of Nursing Sciences,

Faculty of Clinical Sciences, College of Health Sciences,

University of Ilorin Phone No: 08064967578 Email yinka onasoga@yahoo.

**OPALUWA, SURAJO. AHMODU** Department of Medical Microbiology,

Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital

Zaria, Nigeria

Phone No: +2348034516359

Email: ahmed\_opaluwa@yahoo.co.uk

PATRICIA O. AKOWE Primary Health Care Department,

Etsako East Local Government Area, Agenebode, Edo State, Nigeria Phone No: +234 9026339245 Email:patakowe@yahoo.com

PAULINE O. M. EZENDUKA

Department of Nursing Science,

Faculty of Health Sciences and Technology,

Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka,

Anambra State, Nigeria

Email:poezendukap@gmail.com,

Email:+2348033476403

**PETER UDEH ADA**Department of Nursing Science,

University of Jos, Jos. Plateau State. Nigeria

Phone No: 08039365746 Email:petersclevery@gmail.com

QUEEN STELLA OTAIGBE Edo State School of Midwifery,

Benin City, Nigeria

Phone No: +234 7031841598 Email:otaigbeqs@gmail.com

RISIKAT IDOWU FADARE Department of Nursing Science,

College of Medicine & Health Sciences, Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria;

08034679248

fadareri@abuad.edu.ng

**SAROR, L.A.** Department of Nursing Services,

Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital

Zaria, Nigeria

Phone No: +234 8028483240 Email; awasaror2@gmail.com

SALIHU ABDURRAHMAN KOMBO Department of Nursing Science,

Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, College of Medical Sciences,

Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria

08061307902

aksalihu@abu.edu.ng

**SERAH OSAMUDIAMEN BOLAJI-OSAGIE** Department of Nursing,

University of Benin, UNIBEN Phone No: 07064938101 Email: princy\_911

SINEGUGUE.DUMA Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences,

University of Cape Town, South Africa.

Phone Number: +27 824492635 Email: dumas1@ukzn.ac.za

TOLULOPE FUNMILOLA OJO Department of Public Health,

Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

ojotolulopef@abuad.edu.ng

08169195591

TRENG NAANFWANG. URBANUS Department of Nursing Science,

University of Jos, Jos. Plateau State Nigeria.

Phone No: 08138250941 Email:trengurbanus@yahoo.com

**UMAR N. J.** Department of Nursing Sciences,

Faculty of Clinical Sciences, College of Health Sciences,

University of Ilorin Phone No: 08065482425 Emailumaribna@gmail.com

YAHAYA HAMZA SANI Department of Nursing Science,

Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, College of Medical Sciences,

Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria

+2347035385167

hamzayahaya@abu.edu.ng

YUSUF ABDURRASHID GAMBARI Department of Nursing Sciences

Faculty of Clinical Sciences College of Health Sciences

University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State

08072777457

yusufgambary@gmail.com

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# KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE OF SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

# OLUBIYI S. KAYODE; ONASOGA A. OLAYINKA; YUSUF A. GAMBARI; EZEAKA PATIENCE; IRODI C. CANIS; OLUFAYOKE V. MIDE-ATOLANI; OGUNLEYE O. R. & OLUBIYI BISOLA

#### **ABSTRACT**

The School Health Program (SHP) is a key component of national health promotion program that reduces the burden of preventable diseases among the school populace. To address this, we set out to determine the knowledge, attitude and practice of school health programs among teachers in selected secondary schools in Ikorodu, Lagos State. A cross-sectional descriptive design was used for this study and a random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 128 teachers for this study. Instrument used for this study is a self-developed structured questionnaire with a reliability coefficient score of 0.88 and data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings showed that (58.8%) of the respondents' level of knowledge of school health-program is above average and the attitude of teachers towards school health program is negative (25.3%). Also, the level of practice of school health program among the respondent is high 60.2%. In conclusion, the study showed that the respondents are knowledgeable about school health programme but the practice is low (40.8%). The government should place more priority on school health when making and implementing health policies.

# Keywords: Attitude, Knowledge, Practice, School Health, Teachers.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The School Health Programme (SHP) is an integrated set of planned, sequential, school affiliated strategies, activities and services designed to promote the optimal physical, emotional, social and educational development of students. The school health program is a basic and essential component of the educational system, and it is a major component of the national health promotion program as a whole. According to the World Health Organization (2019), over 2.3 billion school age children spend one third of their time in

school, and for many of them their first and most accessible point of contact with health services happens to be in a school. The school, next to the family is one of the primary means by which young people are developed, groomed and trained before being launched into the society as an independent being. With this knowledge, it is imperative to note the importance of school health programs, and its impact on the society at large.

The school health program (SHP) refers to all activities carried out in the school that is geared towards understanding, maintaining and improving the overall health of the school community such that they benefit maximally from the school system (Oluyinka & Ayodeji, 2019). School health programs are investments which a nation makes to secure its development in the future. In developing countries like Nigeria, with a high prevalence of infant and childhood morbidity and mortality could be easily prevented thus, a school age *child isa* survivor of *many diseases* (Odeyemi et.al., 2015).

The school health program is guided by a standard policy known as the National School Health Policy (NSHP). The goals of the national school health policy are to improve the quality of school health and provide a readily available environment for inter-sectorial collaboration in the advancement of child friendly school environment for teaching, learning and healthy development thus, promoting overall health of the school (UNICEF, 2012). The teacher has a huge part to play in the implementation of the school health program. Generally, the teacher instructs students, and secures application of the instruction in the daily life of the child, thereby impacting knowledge. They provide first -hand information about different health issues and consequences of an inactive lifestyle. They also test the student's knowledge in various ways to ensure that essential points are retained. Thus, the primary role of the teacher is health education in the promotion of the school health program (Cheprasov, 2016). According to Obembe et al (2016) teachers' knowledge and attitude on SHP is critical in determining the success of the programme.

The repeated outbreaks of deadly diseases and infections such as diarrhea, cholera, meningitis malaria, Lassa fever, and the recent corona virus outbreak, including non-communicable diseases; like diabetes, heart conditions and many more has led to the increased mortality and morbidity rate in the society. As a result of this, many children particularly school age children are more vulnerable especially when proper health measures are not put in place to protect the health of the school populace. Thus, it causes a decline in their academic performance, subsequently leading to failure and even disability. However, existing stuies have continuously point serious deficiencies regarding school health program and its implementation (Obembe et. al., 2016; Ademokun et al., 2014; Ofovwe & Ofili, 2007).

For instance, Ofovwe and Ofili (2007) reported that head teachers of private and public schools in Benin City, demonstrate such poor knowledge of school health programs and need for constant evaluation of the implementation of school health program to guide the concerned governmental agencies in developing correct policies and laws to improve the health of children nationwide (Abdulkadir,2017; Ofovwe & Ofili, 2007). The school health program plays a paramount role in the promotion of health, prevention of illness and improved wellbeing of students (Wankasi, et.al., 2020; Kwashabawa & Sarkin, 2017). The implementation and effectiveness of this program is dependent mostly on the input and manner of approach of the school teacher towards it. Therefore, this study seeks to find out the knowledge, attitude and practice of school health programs among teachers in selected schools in Ikorodu, Lagos State.

#### Objectives of the study

- 1. to assess the level of knowledge of teachers about school health program in two selected secondary schools in Ikorodu.
- 2. to identify the attitude of teachers towards the implementation of school health program in two selected secondary schools in Ikorodu, Lagos.
- 3. to determine the level of practice of teachers in the two selected secondary schools on school health programme.

#### Research question

- 1. What is the level of knowledge of the teachers in the two selected secondary schools in Ikorodu have knowledge about school health programmes?
- 2. What is the attitude of the teachers in the two selected secondary schools in Ikorodu towards the implementation of school health programmes?
- 3. What is the level of practice of school health programme by teachers of the two selected secondary schools on school health programme?

#### **METHODOLOGY**

**Design:** A cross-sectional descriptive study design was used for this study

**Target Population:** The population comprises of the teaching staff of Ipakodo Grammar School and Ikorodu High School and the total population of the two schools are one thousand and twenty-four (1024).

**Sample Size Determination:** Cochran Formula was used to determine the sample size of 128 with random sampling technique.

**Instrument:** A self-developed questionnaire comprising 32 well-structured question items was used as research instrument.

Face and content validity of the instrument was done by colleagues and experts in the field of study and correction effected before administration.

The reliability of the instrument was determined using Split half reliability test and reliability coefficient score of 0.88 was obtained.

**Data Collection**: Data were collected using three research assistants

**Data Analysis:** data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 24 and results were presented using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

The Ethical Clearance: was sought following an introductory letter to the management of the schools respectively. The purpose of the research study was given and consent obtained from the participants. Their confidentiality and anonymity were assured.

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#### RESULT

Table 1 shows that 88 (68.8%) of the respondents know that school health program is a series of activity carried out in the school environment that promotes and maintain the health of all individual. 107 (83.6%) of the respondents know that school health program is concerned with the health of the school staff only. 65 (50.7%) of the respondents know that the aim of school health services is to make sure that every child is as fit as possible to gain maximum benefits from his/her education. Further findings reveal that 41 (32.0%) of the respondents knows that another aim of school health services is to pay attention to early diagnosis of any disability so that early treatment can be started before the condition of the child becomes uncontrollable. 60 (46.9%) of the respondents know that health facilities within the school premises enhances healthful school environment. 3 (2.3%) of the respondents know that school environment is the presence of proper water supply, refuse disposal, sewage disposal, quality of school buildings, health inspection, nutrition, rest, recreation, absence of harmful objects and vectors of disease agents. Also, 108 (84.4%) of the respondents know that unsafe school environment has a high negative impact on the health of school students of the respondents. 56(43.7%) of the respondents know that unsafe school environment includes lack of adequate and safe water supply, poor sanitation facilities, dilapidated school structures, overcrowded and un-conducive classrooms. This study also observes that 112(87.5% of the respondents know that Health Education is a component of school health services meant to give the students the opportunity of early development insight into the implication of negative attitudes to issues affecting their health. 115(89.8%) of the respondents know that Nutritional care is another component of school health services aimed at ensuring that every school child is in good nutritional condition so as to be able to develop and grow normally.

Similarly, 17 (13.3%) of the respondents know that Child Guidance Clinic is a part of school health services, meant to help both children and parents when there is emotional maladjustment in a child's relationship with other pupils. 115(89.8%) of the respondents knows that establishment and management of School Meal Service is carried out by provision of trained food vendors. 120(93.8%) of the respondents knows that food vendors are regularly inspected to ensure that they maintain regular cleanliness and they are periodically screened to ensure that they are not carrier of diseases. 40(31.2%) of the respondents knows that the aim of the oral health education is to influence that oral health knowledge, attitude, beliefs and behaviours of individuals towards oral health. This study concludes that level of knowledge of school health-program among teachers is average (58.8%)

Table 1: Level of Knowledge of School Health-Program among Teachers

Table 1: Level of Knowledge of School Health-Program among Teachers					
S/N	Items	Yes	No		
1	School health program is a series of activity carried out in the	88(68.8%)	40(31.2%)		
	school environment that promotes and maintain the health of all				
	individuals found in the school community	10=(0= 50()	-1/15/10/		
2	School health program is concerned with the health of the school	107(83.6%)	21(16.4%)		
2	staff only The sim of school health services is to make sum that every shild	(5(50.70/)	62(40, 20/)		
3	The aim of school health services is to make sure that every child is as fit as possible to gain maximum benefits from his/her	65(50.7%)	63(49.3%)		
	education.				
4	Another aim of school health service is to pay attention to early	41(32.0%)	87(68.0%)		
•	diagnosis of any disability so that early treatment can be started	11(52.070)	07(00.070)		
	before the condition of the child becomes uncontrollable				
5	Health facilities within the school premises enhances healthful	60(46.9%)	68(53.1%)		
	school environment.				
6	school environment is the presence of proper water supply, refuse	3(2.3%)	125(97.7%)		
	disposal, sewage disposal, quality of school buildings, health				
	inspection, nutrition, rest, recreation, absence of harmful objects				
7	and vectors of disease agents.	100(04 40/)	20(15 60/)		
7	Unsafe school environment has a high negative impact on the health of school students	108(84.4%)	20(15.6%)		
8	Unsafe school environment includes lack of adequate and safe	56(43.7%)	72(56.3%)		
	water supply, poor sanitation facilities, dilapidated school	- ( ) ) ) )	, = (0 0.0 / 0)		
	structures, overcrowded and un-conducive classrooms.				
9	Health Education is a component of school health services meant	112(87.5%)	16(12.5%)		
	to give the students the opportunity of early development insight				
	into the implication of negative attitudes to issues affecting their				
10	health	115(00.00/)	12(10.20/)		
10	Nutritional care is another component of school health services aimed at ensuring that every school child is in good nutritional	115(89.8%)	13(10.2%)		
	condition so as to be able to develop and grow normally.				
11	Child Guidance Clinic is a part of school health services, meant to	17(13.3%)	111(86.7%)		
	help both children and parents when there is some emotional	17(10.070)	111(001,70)		
	maladjustment in a child's relationship with other pupils.				
12	Establishment And Management of School Meal Service is	115(89.8%)	13(10.2%)		
	carried out by provision of trained food vendors.				
`3	food vendors are regularly inspected to ensure that they maintain	120(93.8%)	8(6.3%)		
	regular cleanliness and they are periodically screened to ensure				
1.4	that they are not carrier of diseases.	40/21/20/	0.0((0.00/)		
14	The aim of the oral health education is to influence that oral	40(31.2%)	88(68.8%)		
	health knowledge, attitude, beliefs and behaviours of individuals towards oral health.				
	Total	58.8%	41.2%		
	40004	2010/0			

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Table 2 reveals that 44(34.4%) of the respondents strongly agree that, there is need for school health program in schools, while 75(58.6%) agree, 0(0%) are undecided, 7(5.5%) disagree and 2 (1.5%) strongly disagree. 10(7.8%) of the respondents strongly agree that, teachers require training on school health program while 11(8.6%) agree, 0(0%), 37(28.9%) disagree and 70(54.7%) strongly disagree. 7(5.5%) of the respondents strongly agree that there is need for school health program in schools, while 2(1.5%) agree, 44(34.4%) disagree and 75(58.6%) strongly disagree. This study also notes that 10(7.8%) of the respondents strongly agree that training of school vendors is not necessary, while 11(8.6%) agree, 37(28.9%) disagree and 70(54.7%) strongly disagree. 5(3.9%) of the respondents strongly agree that every school need a public health nurse and other health personnel while 6(4.7%) agree, 51(39.8%) disagree and 66(51.5%) strongly disagree.

Futhermore, 7 (5.4%) of the respondents strongly agree that there is need for every school to have a well-equipped health bay while 2(1.5%) agree, 44(34.4%) disagree and 75(58.5%) strongly disagree. Further findings indicate that 7(5.4%) of the respondents strongly agree that school should have a medical record of all students, while 2(1.5%) agree, 20(15.6%) are undecided, 28 (21.8%) disagree and 71(55.4%) strongly disagree. 7(5.5%) of the respondents strongly agree that School health program will improve the academic performance of students, while 8 (6.3%) agree, 8 (6.3%) are undecided, 58(45.3%) disagree and 47(36.7%) strongly disagree. Lastly, 7 (5.1%) of the respondents strongly agree that school health program would promote and maintain the health of individuals in the school community effectively while 4(3.1%) agree, 72(56.3%) disagree and 45(35.2%) strongly disagree. This study implies that the attitude of teachers towards school health program is negative (25.3%).

Table 2: Attitude teachers towards school health program

Table 2: Attitude teachers towards school health program					
Attitude of teachers of towards	SA	A	U	D	S D
school health program					
There is need for school health	44(34.4%)	75(58.6%)	0(0%)	7(5.5%)	2(1.5%)
program in schools					
Teachers require training on school	10(7.8%)	11(8.6%)	0(0%)	37(28.9%)	70(54.7%)
health program					
Adding school health program to	7(5.5%)	2(1.5%)	0(0%)	44(34.4%)	75(58.6%)
schools' curriculum is cumbersome					
The negative impact of school health	28(21.9%)	71(55.9%)	7(5.5%)	2(1.6%)	20(15%)
program is minute					
Training of school vendors is not	10(7.8%)	11(8.6%)	0(0%)	37(28.9%)	70(54.7%)
necessary	<b>7</b> ( <b>2</b> 00 ()		0 (00 ()	<b>7.1</b> ( <b>3.0</b> 0.0 ()	
Every school needs a public health	5(3.9%)	6(4.7%)	0(0%)	51(39.8%)	66(51.5%)
nurse and other health personnel	<b>-</b> ( <b>-</b> 10 ()	2/1 70/	0 (00 ()		(-0 -0()
There is need for every school to	7(5.4%)	2(1.5%)	0(0%)	44(34.4%)	75(58.5%)
have a well-equipped health bay	<b>5</b> (5, 40()	0(1.50/)	20/15/00/	20/21 00/	<b>51</b> ( <b>55</b> 40 ()
School should have a medical record	7(5.4%)	2(1.5%)	20(15.6%)	28(21.8%)	71(55.4%)
of all students	7(5,50/)	0// 20/)	0(( 20/)	50(45.20/)	47(2( 70/)
School health program would	7(5.5%)	8(6.3%)	8(6.3%)	58(45.3%)	47(36.7%)
improve the academic performance					
of students	7(5 10/)	4(2 10/)	0(00/)	72(5( 20/)	45(25, 20/)
School health program would	7(5.1%)	4(3.1%)	0(0%)	72(56.3%)	45(35.2%)
promote and maintain the health of					
individuals in the school community					
effectively TOTAL	10.3	1.5	2.7	20.7	44.2
IUIAL	10.3	15	2.7	29.7	44.2

25.3

In table 3, 46.9% of respondents agree to health inspection of student being carried out at least once a week while 53.1% dissagree. 45.3% of respondents agree to schools having health education curriculum and teaches health education at least twice a week, while 54.7% dissagree. 28.1% of respondents agree to School offering counseling services for the promotion of student mental well being while 71.9% issagree. 24.2% of respondents agree to physical education being placed on the time table and regular practice of physical exercises be encouraged, 74.2% dissagree. Findings of this study also show that 24.2% of the respondents agree to School having a functional first aid box and

do offer first aid to student with minor injuries then refer to the school clinic and 73.4 dissagree. 88.3% of respondents agree to School providing free school meals for the students, while 9.4% dissagree. 53.6% of respondents agree to medical screening for the staff and pre-medical examination for the student is compulsory while, 43.8% dissagree.

11.7% of respondents agree to Infection control practices and promotion of hygiene practices in the school environment and 83.3% disagree. This study therefore implies that the level of practice of school health programme is low (40.8%)

Table 3: Practice of school health program among teacher

Variable		Yes		0
	$\mathbf{N}$	%	$\mathbf{N}$	%
Health inspection of student is carried out at least				
once a week	60	46.9	68	53.1
School has a school health education curriculum				
and teaches health education at least twice a week	58	45.3	70	54.7
School offers counseling services for the				
promotion of student mental well being	36	28.1	92	71.9
Physical education is on the timetable and regular				
practice of physical exercises is encouraged	33	25.8	95	74.2
School has a functional first aid box and do offer			o <b>-</b>	
first aid to student with minor injuries then refer to the school clinic.	31	24.2	97	75.8
School provides free school meals for the students.	113	88.3	15	11.7
Medical screening for the staff and pre-medical				
examination for the student is compulsory	72	56.3	56	43.8
Infection control practices and promotion of	15	11.7	113	88.3
hygiene practices in the school environment is encouraged				
		40.8%		59.2%

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#### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

This study aims at assessing the knowledge, attitude and practice of school health programs among teachers in selected schools in Ikorodu, Lagos State. The result of this study observes that level of knowledge of school health-program among teachers is average. This study corroborates Obembeng et al. (2016) where majority of their respondents demonstrate good knowledge about school health programme. However, in contrast to this finding is that of Boaten (2008) that reports poor knowledge of school health programmes among the respondents in Kwabre District.

This study implies that the attitude of teachers towards school health program is negative. This study is not in line with the study conducted by Odeyemi and Chukwu (2015) where majority of the respondents show positive attitude towards school health programme. However, this study corroborates with a study carried out by Almohaif et. al (2020) and Bisi-Onyemachi et. al. (2017) where majority of the teachers have negative attitude towards school health programs due to absence of vital readiness to partake in health training activities.

This study reveals that the practice of school health program is low. This study corroborates with the study of Kuponiyi et al (2016) who noted that implementation of school health programme in Nigeria is minimal but better in private own schools. This study also support Gowri and Missiriya (2017) who observed that majority of teachers involved in their study engage in poor practice of school health programme.

#### Implication for Nursing

A healthy pupil is a good learner and school health programmes entrenched the promotion of the health of learners in schools which are critical steps towards quality achievement in education. Nurses contribute the largest health care professional in school health services, hence, their knowledge and attitude towards the programmes dictate to a larger extent the success of school health services. School proprietors, regulators and policy makers must give priority to school health services and nurses must play their roles to ensure that the school health programme are pupils' friendly, easily available and accessible to the school community.

#### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study reveals good awareness of school health programmes in the study setting, furthermore, an assessment of attitudes of respondents towards school health services revealed positive attitude, however, the practice of many programmes in school health services are reported to be poor. Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations are made: School health services should be strengthened to assist in promoting school pupil physical and mental well-being. Nurses working in school clinics should be trained regularly to be able to discharge their responsibilities effectively. There is need for synergy between school nurses and teachers especially and the aspect of health promotion to achieve desire objective of disease prevention

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