

# Impact of Physical Environment on Educational Experiences of Students at Primary Level: A Phenomenological Study of Non-Formal Basic Education Schools of Punjab

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## Abstract

Various factors influence the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process, including teaching skills, instructional strategies, standards for curriculum, and the physical classroom environment. Kimaro (2020), claims that positive and negative physical environments affect students' educational progress and experiences. The study was conducted to explore the impact of the physical environment of Non-Formal Basic Education (NFBE) schools on students' educational experiences and their future educational choices. The sample of this phenomenological study was purposively selected from four districts of the Lahore Division (Sheikhpura, Nankana, Lahore, and Kusr). A self-developed semi-structured interview protocol was used to collect in-depth qualitative data. The thematic analysis technique was used to analyze the data. The findings revealed a lack of educational resources such as proper blackboards, copies, stationery, books, etc. These schools also lack basic facilities such as desks, proper sitting arrangements for students, space, noise, proper ventilation, separate washrooms for boys and girls, clean drinking water, etc. The findings also revealed that a poor physical environment impacts negatively on students' learning. However, the findings showed that teachers' motivational and positive behavior help students to continue and make progress in their studies. The study's findings will be helpful for the Ministry of Literacy and Non-formal Basic Education (LNFBE), planners, and policymakers in developing plans and initiatives to improve the physical environment of NFBE schools in Punjab, enhancing the positive educational experiences of students.

*Key words:* School environment, physical environment, educational experiences

## Introduction

According to National Education Policy (2017), education is a vital investment for human and economic development and is influenced by the environment within which it exists. In general, formal education is a way to provide education to people, but sometimes it is impossible to reach the needs of underprivileged children through the formal education system (Al Mamun & Rahman, 2013). Non-Formal Education (NFE) is an alternative approach to formal basic education. Non-formal Education (NFE) facilitates those who left the formal education system before acquiring reading and writing skills (Janks, 2014).

Internationally, there are different models of non-formal education. A review of the literature reveals that a variety of literacy programs and non-formal models have been working successfully in providing education to a significant number of children who would otherwise be dropped out of the formal education system.

These programs also aimed to improve student learning outcomes and achievement levels (Ivanova, 2016). In the context of Pakistan, literacy programs generally focus more on adults and young people who remain out of school. Roughly 28,000 NFBE schools are working in Pakistan, serving close to 1 million students. In Punjab, the Non-formal basic education department provides primary level education from class nursery to fifth (Jumani & Bibi, 2011). Non-formal Basic Education (NFBE) schools provide high-quality opportunities to all illiterates and out-of-school children in Punjab through non-formal means. NFE claims to provide effective and integrated education for all (Malik & Rizvi, 2018). NFBE's vision is to develop a literate, educated, and prosperous Punjab by eliminating illiteracy and providing educational opportunities and experiences (Khan & Niazi, 2016).

Students' learning experiences can be described as their engagement with the teaching and their learning environment. The educational experiences usually occur in educational institutions. The interaction of students with teaching-learning strategies, interaction with their peers and teachers, direct observation of the environment, and participation in different events and activities in schools are referred to as educational

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experiences (Puteh et al., 2015). Literature indicates that positive educational experiences help to enhance student's educational aspirations and affect their ongoing academic performance. Educational experiences are the product of the learning environment of educational institutions (Fisher, 2008).

Several aspects influence learning efficiency, but one of the most significant aspects is the learning environment. The learning environment can influence learning outcomes. In general, the learning environment is defined as the physical place where learning occurs (Murugan & Rajoo, 2013). The school environment includes a healthy and safe school environment, sports for students' physical and mental health, academic environment, fairness in dealing with students, and evaluation methods (Zais, 2011). Zandvliet, Brok & Mainhard (2014) believed that the principal feature of the classroom setting that directly influences students' academic activity is the physical environment or physical facilities of the classroom. The physical environment of schools refers to the physical structure of the classroom, such as sitting arrangement in the classrooms, availability of audiovisual aids, proper ventilation and audiovisual arrangement in the classroom, availability of water and electricity, and other basic facilities and resources which are necessary for students in classroom or school. Ivanova (2016) argued that the learning experiences directly affect students' academic performance and educational aspirations. Furthermore, positive educational experiences help attain a high level of educational success (Zandvliet, Brok & Mainhard 2014). The present research study aimed to explore the impact of the physical environment on the educational experiences of Non-Formal Basic Education (NFBE) students.

#### **Review of Related Literature**

Education plays a vital role in the progress of any country. The function of education has now been shifted. It was formerly thought to be a tool for human growth, but now it is considered a development tool in every sector, including political, economic, social, and human (Kong, 2008; Ning & Downing, 2012). Education requirements guide the teaching and learning process at all levels, notably at the primary level (Crescentini & Mainardi, 2009). Multiple elements influence the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process, including teachers' skills, instructional strategies, standards for curriculum, and classroom environment.

According to the findings of a study conducted by Kong (2008), students want clean and decorated rooms, a peaceful location, and a calm and relaxing place for study and seeking education. Bates (2018) discussed that, in developing countries, like Pakistan, most elementary and secondary classroom and school environments are not entirely student-friendly, especially in the Government sector. He further highlighted that classroom lighting, physical setting, and facilities promote a feeling of attractiveness in both students and teachers. According to Chukwuemeka (2013) noisy and distracting environment results in students' poor performance; however, a pleasant and safe school environment helps to improve students' learning outcomes. A positive school environment encourages effective teaching and various activities by teachers, which results in increased student knowledge and accomplishment (Taylor & Vlastos, 2009).

In conclusion, we may infer that a favorable school environment leads to improved educational and psychological

outcomes, whereas a hostile school environment prevents effective teaching and learning. Mutual trust and Responsibility for the well-being of students is also part of the school environment. Students' academic achievement improves due to these factors in the school environment. In a study, Mahmood and Gondal (2017) found that a happy and supportive environment in urban schools improved students' academic achievement considerably. In the same vein, Tran (2015) asserts that the school environment significantly impacts students' learning and development, including a substantial element of their sociological, emotional, and ethical development. Students are less likely to engage in substance abuse, violence, or other adverse conduct if they consider their school environment helpful and caring. According to Lawrence and Vimala (2012), supportive schools create these positive outcomes by encouraging children to *feel connected*, to have a sense of *belongingness*, or being a *part of a community*. These positive feelings of the children indicate a healthy and respectful relationship with their classmates and adults at school. As a result, supporting academic achievement through the development of a school community is a viable option. Students who see their school as a loving environment are more motivated, connected, and involved in their studies. Students' active connections with their teachers and their views that teachers care about them are what motivate them to work hard and engage in class.

Another study by Kimaro (2020) found a substantial difference in academic success between rural and urban schools pupils. According to him, the location of schools has a substantial impact on pupils' academic progress. He also mentioned that uneven resource distribution, poor school mapping, lack of facilities, unqualified teachers, inadequate teaching staff to work in isolated villages, and poor transportation facilities also contribute to a massive difference between rural and urban schools. The study findings by Kimaro (2020) concluded that urban students outperformed their rural peers in terms of academic performance. It further concluded that students from the urban areas benefitted from a positive learning environment that appeared to improve their academic achievement.

According to a study conducted by Bashir and Kaur (2017), there is a strong relationship between the physical school environment and students' educational experiences and aspirations. According to him, the physical school environment impacts pupils' academic progress in school. Its physical facilities and human resource determine the physical environment of the school. Students at schools with appropriate laboratory facilities perform better than those with insufficient or no laboratory facilities because laboratories enrich the physical classroom environment. Poor facilities, insufficient space, and the arrangement of items such as chairs in the classroom, library, and laboratory were determined to impact the organization of the school learning environment. Informal and non-formal institutions' positive school climate encourages pupils to work hard and improve their academic performance (Taylor & Vlastos, 2009).

Non-formal facilitates those who left the formal education system before acquiring reading and writing skills. It is an alternative approach to formal basic education. The alternative of formal education means it provides education to those young and adult people who do not get a chance to acquire formal education (Suleman & Hussain 2014). It also

facilitates those children who left the formal education system before acquiring reading and writing skills. It is a type of education because non-formal education aims to make people literate, provide them with essential skills, improve their social development, reduce poverty, to increase productivity and national development (Ivanova, 2016). In the context of Pakistan, literacy programs generally focus more on adults and young people who remain out of school. Several agencies are working to provide non-formal education to underprivileged children. The non-formal agencies in Pakistan are working at the federal, provincial, and private levels. At the primary level, the non-formal education model focuses on a single room, single teacher, and multiple age students (Jumani & Bibi, 2011).

Gee (2016) researched to measure gender equality in learning outcomes in the NFE context. Akpama, Esang, Asor, and Osang (2011) evaluated the effects of NFE on poverty reduction in their study. The results revealed that skills acquisition significantly influences poverty reduction and enhances literacy. Uysalli (2017) conducted a doctoral study on women's empowerment through NFE. This study revealed that psychologically satisfied women are more empowered through non-formal education. Wabwoba (2011) conducted a research study to identify the factors influencing the implementation of non-formal education. The study was qualitative, and the results of this study revealed that lack of financial resources, less qualified teachers, communication gap between teachers and students, and the learning environment could influence the implementation of non-formal education.

Some research studies about non-formal education are conducted in the Pakistani context too. Malik, Jumani, Safdar, and Ghazi (2010) evaluated the role of non-formal education in rural development in Punjab. The findings of this study indicated that NFBE schools are playing a dynamic role in national development by uplifting the socio-economic status of the masses, especially in rural areas. On the other hand, the study also indicated that teachers' training programs, physical facilities, and the learning environment of non-formal schools need proper monitoring. Jumani, Rahman, and Bibi (2011) conducted a quantitative research study on non-formal primary education promoting women's education in Pakistan. Parents of the students who reside in rural areas of Pakistan are reluctant to educate their girls. Gujjar, Naoreen, and Aslam (2010) conducted comparative research on the study habits of formal and non-formal students in Pakistan. This research study indicated that students of traditional schools are significantly better at time management, exam preparation, attendance, and note-taking during lectures. On the other hand, students of non-formal schools are better in general studying strategies and textbook reading. The comparison revealed that the study habits of students from the formal school are significantly better. Educational experiences refer to the interactions and communications of students within educational institutions. In general, educational experiences refer to every incident and event they encounter within the school (Murugan & Rajoo, 2013). Students' learning experience can be a product of their engagement with the teaching-learning process and school learning environment (Galindo, Sanders & Abel, 2017). The learning experiences directly affect students' academic

performance and educational aspirations. Positive educational experiences.

Help attain a high level of educational success (Zandvliet, Brok & Mainhard 2014). Many studies have been conducted to evaluate the physical environment of schools, for example, and its effect on students' academic achievement, but the impact of the physical environment on Non-Formal Basic Education (NFBE) students' educational experiences is the less explored area in Pakistan.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The healthy and positive educational experiences of students play a significant role in enhancing students' educational performance and aspirations (Raabe & Wolfer, 2019). In the context of Pakistan, non-formal schools are often located in low developed areas. The resources and the facilities of NFE schools are less than those of developed and formal schools. The present research study investigated the educational experiences of NFE students. To investigate this phenomenon, the researcher first explored the condition of the physical environment in NFBE schools. The primary purpose of this study was to explore the impact of the physical environment on the educational experiences of students of non-formal primary education (NFBE).

#### **Significance of the study**

The learning environment plays a significant role in molding the innate potentialities of the individual, and school has always been regarded as an essential factor in a child's education (Taylor and Vlastos 2009).

The present research paper was exceptionally significant in studying the impact of the school's physical environment on the educational experiences of NFBE students. The study's findings will be helpful for educators, planners, and policymakers since it will consider the effectiveness of the school physical environment on the educational experiences of NFBE students of Punjab, Pakistan.

#### **Objective of the study**

1. To investigate the impact of physical environment on non-formal student's educational experiences.

#### **Research Question**

1. How the school physical environment impact on non-formal student's educational experiences?

#### **Methodology**

The current study is a qualitative investigation that employs a phenomenological research approach. This study approach was chosen because it helps develop a more comprehensive and deep understanding of participants' lived experiences with a phenomenon (Yin, 2018). Furthermore, it helps describe what all participants share when they experience a phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The focus is on describing the substance of the participants' lived experiences rather than explanations or interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Tracy, 2020).

#### **Instrument**

Qualitative research is beneficial when it presents us with someone's perceptions of a situation, allowing us to comprehend the participant's behavior (Crescentini & Mainardi, 2009). A self-developed semi-structured interview protocol was used to collect the data.

### Population/Sample

The accessible population of the present research study was students of non-formal Basic Education (NFBE) schools of Punjab. Due to the lack of time and resources, researcher was unable to collect the data from all districts of Punjab. So, the students of primary level of non-formal schools of four

districts (Lahore, Kasur, Sheikhpura, and Nankana) of the Lahore division were the sample of the present research study. Through purposive sampling technique, the researcher selected 4 students of non-formal schools from every district of division Lahore. The sample of the present research study comprised of 16 participants from four districts.

Sr. No.	District(Division Lahore)	Participants
1.	Lahore	4
2.	Kasur	4
3.	Sheikhpura	4
4.	Nankana	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>16</b>

### Procedure

Semi-structured interviews were carried out for the current study. The interview protocol was sent to participants about a week before their planned interview so that they could think about and prepare their responses to the questions. Throughout the interview, primarily open-ended questions were used to motivate participants to speak freely, reply honestly to the questions, and ask probing questions to encourage participants to build on or clarify an answer. The interviews were audio-recorded with participant permission to guarantee a complete transcript (Merriam, 2019). During all interviews, handwritten notes were collected, allowing the researcher to keep track of critical points to return to later in the interview. After data analysis, students do not have proper educational resources in non-formal schools.

for data analysis. All of the interview recordings were transcribed and translated into English language. Data were analyzed through the thematic analysis technique. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis is a method for detecting, interpreting, and reporting patterns (themes) in data.

### Data Analysis and interpretation

The process of arranging, reducing, and characterizing the acquired data is the first step in qualitative data analysis. The researcher used five-phase thematic analysis technique (Creswell & Clark, 2017). Firstly, the collected data was transcribed and initial codes were generated. Categories and themes were developed after detail analysis and accordingly data was reported under themes.

### Theme 1: Lack of educational resources

Data	Codes	Themes
1. Blackboard in the classroom is very old. Writing is quite difficult to understand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need of Blackboard</li> <li>• Need of stationary</li> <li>• Lack of books</li> <li>• Need proper sitting place</li> <li>• Face difficulties during extreme weather</li> </ul>	<b>Lack of Educational Resources</b>
2. Need stationary because this is unaffordable due to lack of money.		
3. Shortage of books provided by the government.		
4. Sitting on the rug is difficult in extreme weather.		

As NFBE department has a responsibility to provide free education and educational resources to those who cannot afford school fees and other educational expenses. But after an in-depth investigation of the physical environment of NFBE schools, this fact was revealed that there is a lack of educational resources such as books, copies, and stationery. Teachers have to arrange these resources on their own. For example a participant stated,

*"We have a blackboard in the classroom which is very old. When teachers write on that blackboard, we usually don't*

*understand it. Sometimes the teacher reads and tells us what she wrote on it and what she wants to teach us."* (S3)

Another participant discussed that,  
*"We also have some books provided by the government but those books are not enough for all of us, so we always share books during the study."*(S8)

In addition to this, a participant said,

*"We need stationary because most of times we don't have enough money to buy our pencil, eraser, and copies, etc."* (S4)

A participant said that,

*“There is lack of benches in the classroom. The department provided us a rug to sit on. In summer we sit on ground but in winter it is very difficult to sit on a thin rug.”* (S11)

It was found out that there is lack of facilities in schools. Though, government has provided some resources but they do not seemed sufficient.

### Theme 2: Lack of basic facilities

Data	Codes	Themes
1. Lack of adequate classrooms in extreme seasons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face difficulties in summer</li> <li>• Lack of toilet</li> <li>• Lack of clean drinking water</li> <li>• Need new books for students</li> <li>• Lack of proper lightening</li> </ul>	Lack of Basic Facilities
2. Toilets and other necessities are not enough according to the number of students.		
3. Need clean drinking water.		
4. Need a proper decorated classroom with basic educational facilities.		
5. I want our class to have the proper lighting. In low light, we often cannot see words.		

The lack of basic facilities in the classroom is one of the most mentioned problems during data collection. There is a lack of separate toilets for girls and boys in some schools, fresh drinking water, insufficient lighting, and sitting space in the classroom. Almost all the students mentioned that they do not like to sit on the ground and they need benches or chairs as other schools have. For example a participant said that, *“Our classroom is in open space, therefore, we feel very hot.”* (S8)

About the lack of basic facilities another participant reported that,

*“Our school has only one toilet and most of the time we have to stand in the waiting line. So we also need a washroom here.”* (S14)

A participant stated that,

*“I want clean drinking water in our school so that we don't have to fetch water from our houses.”* (S5)

Students also face lightening problem as one participant reported that,

*“I want our class to have the proper lighting. In low light, we often cannot see words written on the board”* (S11)

Another participant stated that,

*“We need a big classroom where we can sit properly and study with concentration. We need copies and course books. They don't give us course books every year and sometimes we have to use old textbooks.”* (S6)

Data revealed that students do not have basic facilities such as clean drinking water, proper light and ventilation, toilets, and a comfortable and relaxing environment in the classroom.

### Theme 3: Challenges Faced by Students

Data	Codes	Themes
1. School buildings are not properly situated in peaceful places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise pollution</li> <li>• Lack of space</li> <li>• Lack of concentration during studies</li> <li>• Dark and small class room</li> <li>• Electricity problems</li> </ul>	Challenges faced by students
2. Congested space for students sitting in classroom.		
3. Electricity issues are very common in NFBE schools because they usually situated in rural areas.		

After the analysis of qualitative data, it is concluded that students face many problems during their education in NFBE schools. It is also revealed that students also face a lack of space and noise problems in their classrooms. For example a participant stated that,

*“Our school is very close to the road that is why there is a lot of noise from cars passing outside the school. There is a huge shrine near the school, often most of the beggars of the shrine come with Dhol to ask for donations...we can't focus on our studies”* (S4).

Another participant reported that,

*“We often face problem with electricity. Because we have a dark and small classroom so if we don't have electricity we cannot read or write properly. Often workers of electricity department take off our meter and then we face difficulty. This happens when the electricity bill is not paid on time. Our teachers have to pay the bills to restore the electricity”* (S5).

A participant said that,

*“We face problem due to the lack of space. Due to this congested space of sitting, we face difficulties in our school. First of all, we cannot study with concentration because junior classes make noise and disturb everyone.”* (S6)

Participants reported that problems such as noise problems during studies, electricity problems and lack of space create disturbance and hurdles in their educational process.

#### Theme 4: School infrastructure

Data	Codes	Themes
1. Students need some separate classrooms for junior and senior classes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of separate class rooms</li> <li>• Lack of benches</li> <li>• Lack of technology room</li> <li>• Wish to take admission in formal school due to facilities</li> </ul>	School infrastructure
2. Some students admire formal schools but cannot take admission due to financial issues.		
3. They want to take admission with my friends to the government school where all the facilities are present but their parents don't have enough money to pay my school fees.		

The perception of students about school buildings is not very positive. Some students compare their school with other formal schools. Their friends and other children go to those schools and tell them about the facilities provided there. NFBE students sometimes compare their schools with other formal schools. In their point of view, those schools are better than their NFBE schools. For example a participant from NFBE schools reported that,

*“My school has not enough facilities like other schools. My friends told me that in their formal schools, there are separate*

*rooms for each class and there are benches for sitting. They also have a computer in their schools.”* (S8)

Another participant also stated that,

*“I want to take admission with my friends to the government school where all the facilities are present but my parents don't have enough money to pay my school fees.”* (S16)

Findings highlighted that students sometimes get demotivated due to poor infrastructure and low facilities of the building. A few students drop from the schools and some students want to take admission in formal schools due to the lack of resources and facilities.

#### Theme 5: Impact of physical environment on student's education

Data	Codes	Themes
1. Lack of physical facilities sometimes effects on education and students feel demotivated. But the appreciations of teachers make them energetic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effects of less facilities on education</li> <li>• Teachers motivation</li> <li>• Wish to have a school with more facilities</li> <li>• Use to live with less facilities</li> <li>• Need quality education</li> <li>• Teachers motivation an encouragement</li> </ul>	Impact of physical environment on student's education
2. They need more facilities because they want some change in their schools.		
3. Sometimes students get depressed.		
4. Teachers' encouragement always makes students feel happy and motivated.		

The findings indicated that the physical environment of non-formal Basic Education schools is not conducive for students but the motivational behavior of teachers and students' desire to being educated and lead a successful life impact positively on their education. For example a participant reported that,

*“Sometimes lack of facilities also affects education, but my teacher and I always try that the lack of facilities does not affect my education and we continue our educational process and study hard.”* (S13)

Another participant discussed that,

*“I want more facilities to be provided here so that we can study very well but still I don't think the lack of facilities is a big problem because I don't have many facilities in my house. We live in a slum and we know how to live with fewer facilities. I just want good education here.”* (S7)

Despite the poor facilities in schools, students with less privileged areas accommodate themselves to carry on with the non-formal school since they do not have any other provision of education in their area.

**Theme 6: Educational experiences of students**

Data	Codes	Themes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students are becoming better in their literacy skills.</li> <li>2. They feel intellectual change in themselves.</li> <li>3. Students want to take admission in formal school as soon as possible.</li> <li>4. Students improved their intellectual skills during their classes.</li> <li>5. Teachers provide extra free tuition classes in evening to their students.</li> <li>6. Students observed a positive change in their personalities.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement in literacy skills</li> <li>• Wish to take admission in high school</li> <li>• Students dropout due to lack of facilities</li> <li>• Some students continue studying in non-formal schools because they do not have any other choice</li> </ul>	Educational experiences of students

Positive educational experiences play a vital role in progressing and continuing education. An in-depth conversation with non-formal school students revealed that they face many problems due to their poor physical environment. It was also noted that positive behavior of their teachers motivates them to carry on with their study. For example a participant stated that,

*“When I took admission in this school I could not read and write. After three years now I can read and write Urdu and English. I want to study more. I want to go to high school after completing this school which is quite far from here but I still want to go there. When I pass fifth grade here and will take admission at high school, I will be able to save money by doing some job and cover my education expenses.”* (S4)

Another participant also discussed that,  
*“I like studying in my school, but as soon as possible I want to finish my education here and went to formal school. Some students in our school dropout due to lack of facilities, but me and my few class fellows are still studying here only because of good education here.”* (S8)

A participant reported that,  
*“When I enrolled in this school, I was not very smart in my studies. I took time to memorize concepts. Even I didn’t know about simple addition. But my teacher gradually teaches me with love and dedication. She also gives me extra free tuition classes in the evening. I also notice some positive changes in my personality.”* (S9)

It was noted that educational experiences of students are still positive and high despite having fewer facilities in the schools. They expressed their wish to continue with their studies. After completing their primary class they want to join mainstream formal schools.

**Discussion**

Literature suggests (i.e. Tran, 2015; Lawrence & Vimala (2012) that there is a significant relationship between healthy physical environment and positive educational experiences of students. The poor quality of resources or lack of resources discourages not only students from their studies but also affects their learning process. The present research study was

conducted in a Non-formal schools context with a qualitative phenomenological research design. It was a methodological contribution of the present research work. The present research may consider being the first research study in Pakistan in which the researcher directly investigated the lived experiences of non-formal students.

The study revealed that students do not have proper educational resources such as proper blackboards, enough books, bags, uniforms, and stationaries. But they still want to continue their education. When students who do not have any other choice to receive education; they are compelled to carry on with the same school with less facilities. In these schools, though, government provides the basic facilities but it do not seemed to be sufficient to meet the requirements of the students. Teachers themselves do not have economic capacity to provide the facilities in the schools. The monthly salary of the teachers is 8000 per month and few teachers rented some places outside for schools since they do not have enough space at their homes. The study revealed that teachers of non-formal schools always motivate their students to carry on with their studies. Teachers in their own limited capacity try to meet the requirements of the students.

The study concluded many students want to enroll themselves in mainstream schools after completing their primary level from NFBE schools. It shows that although the physical environment is not conducive for students but they still feel encouraged for their education due to the positive and motivational behavior of their teachers.

Students, teachers, and the learning process are all affected by the physical characteristics of the school. When classroom and staffroom furniture, as well as library and laboratory equipment, are accessible, they help to establish a suitable educational environment. Students, for their part, want classroom furniture that allows them to be comfortable while receiving teachings in the classroom, copying notes on the blackboard, writing exams, tests, assignments, and other classwork that is essential to their educational experiences.

## Recommendations

The findings revealed that the government and other education stakeholders should work together to construct classrooms and rehabilitate infrastructure in non-formal schools. This would assist to address the issue of dropouts in non-formal schools and would go a long way toward creating a conducive teaching and learning environment. In non-formal schools, education stakeholders should strive to offer enough class furniture (chairs, lockers, or desks), and students should be taught how to maintain these facilities, as most students damage them on their own. Non-formal teachers should be encouraged to use instructional materials in the course of presenting their lessons, and they should be required to keep up to date on their knowledge and skills in the improvisation of instructional materials through seminars, workshops, and conferences organized by government and professional bodies.

## Conclusion

Non-formal education plays a vital role in providing education to dropouts and neglected children. The NFBE department has its literacy centers or school in rural areas or less developed areas. The department provides a blackboard, some textbooks, a water cooler, and a rug for school. It was concluded that students usually come from unstable and less developed families so they cannot afford copies, stationaries,

and even bags also. Some students use shopping bags to carry their books. Teachers try to give them facilities and resources to motivate them to continue their education. Students' educational experiences are influenced by the physical environment of the classroom. If we give all physical facilities, such as furniture, well-painted walls, drinking water, electricity, charts, and model, students will be more engaged in their studies and get positive educational experiences (Galindo, Sanders, & Abel, 2017). Whether students are brilliant or not, the classroom environment has a significant impact on their academic progress (Lawrence, & Vimala, 2012).

The non-formal Basic Education department has to take some initiative to enhance the quality of the physical environment in NFBE schools. Students need more encouragement in the form of some incentives, gifts, and rewards to join NFBE schools. Government should provide some funds and facilities which can motivate students to be literate. To increase the literacy rate through non-formal Basic Education schools Government needs to develop some plans for the betterment of the department and its services. It was recommended that the department should pride an effective, well-managed, energetic, and favorable classroom environment for students for the teaching and learning to enhance the positive educational experiences of students. To simulate the educational process, the NFBE classrooms should be equipped with basic advanced facilities.

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## Appendix I

### Interview Protocol for NFBE students

#### Demographic Information

Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Locale: Rural ( ) Urban ( )

District \_\_\_\_\_

Age and Gender \_\_\_\_\_

School Name \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Father occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Fathers' education \_\_\_\_\_

Mothers' Education \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Siblings \_\_\_\_\_

Childs occupation (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Family Supporter \_\_\_\_\_

#### Part 2

##### Physical Environment

1. Which facilities do you have in your classroom?
2. Which facilities do you want in your school?
3. Which problems do you face in this school?
4. Are the facilities in your school are sufficient for your education?
5. How do you feel about the structure of your school?
6. Have these resources impacted on your education?

##### Lead Question

7. Share your whole educational experiences in school.