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Research Article

INFLUENCE OF PARENTS' PARTICIPATION IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ZONE A SENATORIAL DISTRICT OF BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study was undertaken to investigate the influence of parents' participation in secondary school management on students' academic performance in Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The literature was reviewed under conceptual/theoretical framework, empirical studies and summary which identified the gap to be filled by this study. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of this study comprised 2,526 teachers in 102 secondary schools in Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State. 289 teachers from 10 secondary schools in Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State constituted the sample of the study. A 20-item structured four-point rating scale questionnaire constructed by the researcher titled influence of parents' participation in secondary school management Questionnaire (IPPSSMQ) was used for collection of data for the study. Data obtained from field study were then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the three research questions, while the chi-square (χ^2) test of goodness of-fit was used to test the three hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that: parents' participation in school financing, academic-related activities at home and discipline significantly influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State. It was recommended among others parents should be encouraged by appropriate school authorities to fully support the financing of their wards or children mostly by providing all the required learning materials and they should frequently and promptly pay their school fees.

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INTRODUCTION

Schools are social organizations in which members are tied in interpersonal relations in a complicated way. Only if those relationships are understood, the school organization can function and be managed effectively. School management is a collective activity. Sergiovanni (2000) stated that as everybody in school is connected to one another in networks through flows of information and patterns of cooperation just as bees in hives in his/her formulating school management as a hive of honey bees. This means that the queen bee is the manager and teachers, other personnel and students are workers. Just as honey nests are active and busy, principals, teachers and students in school are active and busy all the time. He also compared the way bees work and the way principal and teachers work in a school.

The provision of education is the responsibility of the government worldwide. In Nigeria, the government through the Ministry of Education provides administration and management for the betterment of the national education system. Key policy decisions regarding education and other educational services have always been made by the state at least since the attainment of independence. However, schools whether government aided or private, have stakeholders who undertake various activities. School management is therefore done through the coalition of stakeholders, performing different complementary functions in order to attain school objectives and goals.

The quality of management services determines the survival and progress of organizations such as schools although the planning and management of education has largely been the role of the state. Many people including leading economists

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have complained or criticized governments' direct involvement in service delivery. The government are been criticized for mismanagements inefficiency, corruption, lack of planning and related problems. In recent times, there has been a shift to community involvement in service delivery. Today, at primary, secondary and even tertiary education level, whether government aided or private, schools rely heavily on parents' financial and managerial contribution. Unless all stakeholders are involved, school achievements including students' performance may not be realized.

Parents are said to be partners, clients, consumers and educational assistants in as far as management of schools is concerned (Thomson, 2001). However, in Nigeria today, due to extreme poverty and financial constrains, there have been challenges in the provision of education. Parents may not afford providing school materials or paying fees which fund is used to pay teachers, buy scholastic materials and laboratory equipment or provide for the welfare of teachers and students in order to contribute towards the achievement of academic success.

Kaggwa (2003) observes that no administrator can effectively perform all administrative functions alone. School administrators have always called upon parents to motivate students' academic performance. Igukor (2008) defines students' academic performance as the measurement of the extent of academic success or failure in any examination undertaken by the students. It is determined by the extent of grade attained by students in test and examinations.

Parents' level of participation in school discipline is highly noticed today. Docking and Babirye (2006) argues that discipline as a managerial function is important in the process by which children develop and are enabled to perform in society although he appreciates the significance of the role played by parents in the discipline of children which has influence on the level of their academic performance. The importance of parental participation in school management should ultimately be vested in the improvement of academic standard of their children.

On the other hand, there has been serious issue of parents' involvement in funding schools in recent times. The consequences of this is the level of quality education been provided by the academic performance of students in secondary schools in Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State. Parents' participation in school funding includes payment of school fees, donations, provision of learning material which helps in improving students' academic performance.

Benveniste in Nkata (1998) defined participation as sharing of power or the exercise of 'voice' in the affairs of the organization. He also summarizes Catsambis (2001) ideas about participation through consultation on a particular issue, involvement in service delivery, contribution of resources material and labour, participation in decision making process and so on.

Parent's participation in secondary school management could also be considered in terms of their contribution both physically and cognitively towards the establishment, implementation and effective provision of education in schools.

Parents also participate in academic-related activities at home which help to make teaching of the students easier for the school. This tremendously affects their academic performance. Parents also participate in the provision of teachers in schools. This is done through Parents' Teacher Association. The teachers are taken care of by the PTA in support to the school management which tends to have positive influence on students' academic performance. This situation is also applicable to secondary schools in Zone a Senatorial District of Benue State.

It is against this background that the researcher wishes to undertake this study to find out whether parents' participation in the management of secondary schools influence students' academic performance in Zone A Senatorial District with particular focus on school financing, parents' participation in academic-related activities at home, discipline and provision of teachers.

Statement of the Problem

It has been observed that the academic performance of students in secondary schools in Zone 'A' Senatorial District of Benue State is below expectation, mostly where parents do not participate actively, even though they had qualified teaching staff, it is observed that, students whose parents take them to other schools in Benue State or elsewhere in the country where parents participate actively tend to excel or compete favourably in academics. This situation has bordered stakeholders emphasizing on the need for parents participation in secondary school management in the study area.

The researcher has also observed that secondary schools where parents are relatively active in issues of financing, discipline, academic-related activities at home, provision of teachers, policy implementation, provision of infrastructure and follow up of school management related activities, their children seemed to perform relatively better than those whose parents are reluctant to participate in school management. However, research has not been considerably conducted on the relationship between parents' low participation and the schools' academic performance. Although, it is clearly understood that parent's participation in school management may have influence on academic performance of students in the study area.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of parents' participation in secondary school management on students' academic performance in Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State. Specifically, the study intends to:

1. Determine the influence of parents' participation in schools financing on students' academic performance in Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State.
2. Examine the influence of parents' participation in academic-related activities at home on students' academic performance in secondary schools.
3. Find out the influence of parents' participation in school discipline on students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the influence of parents’ participation in school financing on students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Zone a Senatorial District of Benue State?
2. In what ways does parents’ participation in academic-related activities at home influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools?
3. How does parents’ participation in school discipline influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. Parents’ participation in school financing does not significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Zone a Senatorial District of Benue State.
2. Parents’ participation in academic-related activities at home does not significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools.
3. Parents’ participation in school discipline does not significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will offer to stakeholders (including education planners and managers at all levels, parents and students) information on the current levels of involvement of parents in management processes and what enhances or hinders effective school management especially in rural schools.

The findings of this study will also create awareness in the minds of educational planners and managers on the need for parents’ involvement in school financing, participating in academic related activities at home, management of school discipline and provision of teachers for enhancement of better academic performance of students in secondary schools.

The findings of this study will also encourage parents the more concerning their responsibilities for their children by way of continued support for the school in various ways that will ensure high quality education of their children.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study.

The population of this study comprised 2,526 teachers in 102 grant-aided secondary schools in Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State (TSB Makurdi, 2013).

A sample of 289 teachers representing 11.43% was selected from 10 secondary schools representing 10% in the study area for use. This agrees with Nworgu (1995) who asserts that a 10% - 15% representative sample of a population of 1000 and above is ideal. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample size using the hat and draw method of balloting without replacement in order to guarantee respondents’ equal chance of being selected.

Thus, some pieces of papers with an inscription of numbers was squeezed and dropped in a closed container with a small opening for some members of the population to pick without replacement. The process continued until the required sample was obtained. A questionnaire constructed by the researcher titled Influence of Parents’ Participation in Secondary School Management Questionnaire (IPPSSMQ) was used for data collection for the study.

The questionnaire was structured in two sections A and B. Section A obtained information on the name of the school of the respondents’ while section B elicits information on 4 clusters with 5 items each. This was divided according to the variables of the study namely; school financing, parents; participation in academic-related activities at home. The instrument was modeled on a four point rating scale with a response mode of strongly Agree – 4, Agree – 3, Disagree – 2 and Strongly Disagree – 1. These were attached to the items of the instrument for respondents to tick as option.

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions. A cut off mark of 2.50 was used for decision making. Any mean score less than 2.50 will be rejected as not having the desired influence while mean scores of 2.50 was accepted as having the desired influence. The chi-square (X²) test of goodness of fit was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Research Question One

What is the influence of parents’ participation in school financing on students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Zone a Senatorial District of Benue State?

The data that provided answer to the research question are presented on Table 1.

Table 1 Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of Teachers on the Influence of Parents’ Participation in School Financing on Students’ Academic Performance in Secondary Schools

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	X	ST.D	Decision
1	Parents always provide their children with scholastic materials necessary at school to improve their performance.	183	31	44	31	3.27	1.07	Accepted
2	Parents’ always pay their children’s school fees before the end of term.	109	103	51	26	3.02	0.96	Accepted
3	Parents are also involved in the budgeting process of their children’s school.	167	65	39	18	3.32	0.93	Accepted
4	Parents also participate in equipping school library and laboratory which help to boost their study habits.	155	61	50	23	3.20	1.00	Accepted
5	Parents fundraising and donations are used for the smooth running of the school to ensure high quality education of the child.	149	61	46	33	3.13	1.06	Accepted
Cluster mean/Standard Deviations						3.19	1	Accepted

Data presented on Table 1 showed that the mean ratings of items 2-6 are 3.27, 3.02, 3.32, 3.20, and 3.13 with the corresponding standard deviations of 1.07, 0.96, 0.93, 1.00 and 1.06 respectively.

All the mean ratings are above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means that the respondents agreed that parents always provide their children with scholastic materials necessary at school to improve their performance. Parents' always pay their children's school fees before the end of term. Parents are also involved in the budgeting process of their children's school. Moreso, parents also participate in equipping school library and laboratory which help to boost their study habits and that parents fundraising and donations are used for the smooth running of the school to ensure high quality education of the child. The cluster mean of 3.19 with the standard deviation of 1.00 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that parents' participation in school financing influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State.

Research Question Two

In what ways does parents' participation in academic-related activities at home influence students' academic performance in secondary schools?

The data that provided answer to the research question are presented on Table 2.

Table 2 Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of Teachers on the Influence of Parents' Participation in Academic-Related Activities at Home Influence Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	X	ST.D	Decision
7	Parents provide a good reading environment for their children at home to help improve their study habits.	150	61	46	33	3.19	0.97	Accepted
8	Parents sometimes supplement school supplies and libraries with reading materials for their children to improve in their academic performance in school.	85	94	66	44	2.76	1.04	Accepted
9	Parents' involvement in a child's learning activities in the home is associated with better cognitive attainment in school.	138	98	33	20	3.22	0.91	Accepted
10	Parents' participation in students' homework makes a big difference in their academic performance.	181	80	16	12	3.49	0.78	Accepted
11	Parents' homework involvement activities help to develop students attributes directly associated with school success.	152	82	37	18	3.27	0.91	Accepted
Cluster mean/Standard Deviations						3.19	0.91	Accepted

Table 3 Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of Teacher on the Influence of Parents' Participation in the Management of School Discipline Influence Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	x	ST.D	Decision
12	Parents' involvement in school discipline discourages students involving in anti-social behaviours.	194	41	29	25	3.4	0.98	Accepted
13	School administration always involves parents to punish a child when his/her behaviour becomes questionable.	165	81	33	10	3.39	0.82	Accepted
14	Students work hard to pass on their own when their parents put eyes on them.	149	78	36	26	3.46	0.86	Accepted
15	Parents' fulfillment of their home obligations to their children makes them better disciplined and hardworking in school.	173	76	22	18	3.21	0.98	Accepted
16	Some parents support their children's misconduct in school which leads to their academic doom	191	39	32	27	3.4	0.88	Accepted
Cluster mean/Standard Deviations						3.37	0.9	Accepted

Data presented on Table 2 showed that the mean ratings of items 7-11 are 3.19, 2.76, 3.22, 3.49, and 3.27 with the corresponding standard deviations of 0.97, 1.04, 0.91, 0.78 and 0.91 respectively.

All the mean ratings are above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means that the respondents agreed that parents provide a good reading environment for their children at home to help improve their study habits. Parents sometimes supplement school

supplies and libraries with reading materials for their children to improve in their academic performance in school. Parents' involvement in a child's learning activities in the home is associated with better cognitive attainment in school. More so, parents' participation in students' homework makes a big difference in their academic performance and that parents homework involvement activities help to develop students attributes directly associated with school success. The cluster mean of 3.19 with the standard deviations of 0.91 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that parents' participation in academic-related activities at home influence students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Research Question Three: How does parents' participation in the management of school discipline influence students' academic performance in secondary schools?

The data that provided answer to the research question are presented on Table 3.

Data presented on Table 3, showed that the mean ratings of items 12-16 are 3.40, 3.39, 3.46, 3.21, and 3.40 with the corresponding standard deviations of 0.98, 0.82, 0.86, 0.98 and 0.88 respectively.

All the mean ratings are above the cut-off point of 2.50.

This means that the respondents agreed that parents' involvement in school discipline discourages students involving in anti-social behaviours. School administration always involves parents to punish a child when his/her behaviour becomes questionable. Students work hard to pass on their own when their parents put eyes on them. Moreso, parents' fulfillment of their home obligations to their children makes them better disciplined and hardworking in school and

that some parents support their children’s misconduct in school which leads to their academic doom. The cluster mean of 3.37 with the standard deviations of 0.90 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that parents’ participation in the management of school discipline influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools.

Hypotheses Testing

In order to test the three hypotheses of this study, the chi-square (χ^2) test of goodness of fit was used to test the options of the teachers at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Hypothesis One

Parents’ participation in school financing does not significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State.

Table 4 Chi-square Test of the Influence of Parents’ Participation in School Financing on Students’ Academic Performance in Secondary Schools

Opinions	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	df	Level of sig	χ^2 -cal	χ^2 -tab	Decision
No Influence	75(26%)	144.6(50%)	1	0.05	134.29	3.84	Rejected
Influence	214(74%)	144.6(50%)					

Values in parentheses are percentages { $\chi^2 = 134.29$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.05 > 0.00$ }

Table 4 showed that, the descriptive and inferential statistics of percentages and chi-square were used to test the hypothesis that parents’ participation in school financing does not significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State. The results showed that 74% of the respondents agreed that parents’ participation in school financing significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools as against 26% respondents who disagreed.

The result also showed that the chi-square calculated value of 134.29 was greater than the chi-square table value of 3.84 checked at 0.05 level of significance and at 1degree of freedom. The hypothesis was therefore rejected. This implies that parents’ participation in school financing significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State.

Research Hypothesis Two

Parents’ participation in academic-related activities at home does not significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools

Table 5 Chi-square Test of the Influence of Parents’ Participation in Academic-Related Activities at Home on Students’ Academic Performance in Secondary Schools.

Opinions	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	df	Level of sig	χ^2 -cal	χ^2 -tab	Decision
No Influence	55(19%)	144.6(50%)	1	0.05	143.01	3.84	Rejected
Influence	234(81%)	144.6(50%)					

Values in parentheses are percentages { $\chi^2 = 143.01$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.05 > 0.00$ }

Table 6 Chi-square Test of Influence of Parents’ Participation in School Discipline on Students’ Academic Performance in Secondary Schools

Opinions	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	df	Level of sig	χ^2 -cal	χ^2 -tab	Decision
No Influence	43(15%)	144.6(50%)	1	0.05	212.14	3.84	Rejected
Influence	246(85%)	144.6(50%)					

Values in parentheses are percentages { $\chi^2 = 212.14$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.05 > 0.00$ }

Table 6 showed that the descriptive and inferential statistics of percentages and chi-square were used to test the hypothesis that parents’ participation in academic-related activities at home does not significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools. The results showed that 81% of the respondents agreed that parents’ participation in academic-related activities at home significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools as against 19% respondents who disagreed.

The result also showed that the chi-square calculated value of 143.01 was greater than the chi-square table value of 3.84 checked at 0.05 level of significance and at 1degree of freedom. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This implies that parents’ participation in academic-related activities at home significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools

Parents’ participation in school discipline does not significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools

Table 6 showed that the descriptive and inferential statistics of percentages and chi-square were used to test the hypothesis that parents’ participation in school discipline does not significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools. The results showed that 85% of the respondents agreed that parents’ participation in school discipline significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools as against 15% respondents who disagreed.

The result also showed that the chi-square calculated value of 212.14 was greater than the chi-square table value of 3.84 checked at 0.05 level of significance and at 1degree of freedom. The hypothesis was therefore rejected. This implies that parents’ participation in school discipline significantly influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State.

Based on the results of the analysis of the three research questions and testing of the three research hypotheses of this study, the following findings are stated and discussed one after the other below for clarity.

The first finding of this study revealed that parents' participation in school financing significantly influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State. This finding is in line with the view of Docking (2000) who observed that parents' participation in school funding is done through paying of school fees in time, fundraising for schools, donating and participating in the planning for the allocation of these resources. The second finding of the study revealed parents' participation in academic-related activities at home significantly influence students' academic performance in secondary schools. This finding is in consonance with the opinion of Ames (1993) who maintained that parental involvement in students' homework makes a big difference in their academic performance in school and increases the status of the school in terms of academic excellence.

The third finding revealed that parents' participation in school discipline significantly influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State. The finding is in agreement with the views of Burden (1995) who noted that teachers and parents work together as a group to provide mutual agreed upon obligations and expectations regarding discipline, the results of academic performance as related to discipline should not only be attributed to teachers but to parents as well.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was established that parents' participation in school financing, academic-related activities at home and school discipline significantly influence students' academic performance in secondary schools Zone A Senatorial District of Benue State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents should be encouraged by appropriate school authorities to fully support the financing of their wards or children mostly by providing all the required learning materials and they should frequent and promptly pay their school fees.

2. Parents should also be given orientation by school authorities and government on the need for them to also contribute in educating their children at home and disabuse their mind that the education of their children is solely the responsibility of teachers. Thus, they should check their children's academic materials at home, help them revise what they were taught in school as well as provide an enabling environment for them to study when at home.
3. Parents should also be involved in the disciplinary committee where their children are schooling and should be encouraged to work in collaboration with school authorities to fight the ills in their children and stop supporting their children unnecessary when they are wrong.

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