



Parents Variables and Their Involvement in Community-School Partnership on Pupils Learning Outcomes in Lower Primary Schools In Southwestern Nigeria.

Dr. V. O. Adediran

Institute of Education, Faculty of Education
Obafemi Awolowo University. Ile-Ife Nigeria.

Dr. B. A. Adeyemi

Institute of Education, Faculty of Education
Obafemi Awolowo University. Ile-Ife Nigeria.

Abstract

The study determined the levels of parent-school and school-community partnerships in lower primary school in Southwestern Nigeria, and examined the joint influence of parents' characteristics (age, gender, levels of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships) on pupils' learning outcomes in Southwestern Nigeria. These were with a view to providing information on the roles of parent-school and community-school partnerships in enhancing learning outcomes of lower primary school pupils in Southwestern Nigeria. The study employed survey research design. The population for the study comprised lower primary school class III pupils, their parents, teachers and head teachers in Southwestern Nigeria. The sample which comprised 1,980 participants (900 primary III pupils, 90 primary III teachers, 90 head teachers and 900 parents of the pupils) was selected using multi-stage sampling technique. Four research instruments were used for data collection, namely: Test of Numeracy and Verbal Reasoning (TNVR), Social Attribute Checklist (SAC), Parents-School Partnership Questionnaire (PSPQ), and Community-School Partnership Practices Questionnaire (CSPPQ). The data collected were analyzed using, simple percentages, chi-square statistics and multiple regression analyses. The results showed that the levels of parent-school partnerships in lower primary education in Southwestern Nigeria were high (13.4%), moderate (64.1%), and low (22.4%), while those of school-community partnerships were high (9.0%), moderate (49.6%) and low (41.4%). Also there was no joint influence of parents' characteristics (age, gender, level of education and their involvements in school-community partnerships) on social behaviour ($F = 16.480, p > 0.05$) whereas there was significant joint influence of the characteristics on pupils' academic achievement ($F = 2.606; p = 0.05$). The study concluded that parent-school and community-school partnerships had significant roles to play in enhancing learning outcomes of lower primary school pupils in Southwestern Nigeria.

Keywords: School-community partnership, Parent-school partnership, parents' characteristics learning outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

As far back as 2006, three World Bank economists Deon, Amer and Lant have proposed that Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) be replaced with Millennium Learning Goals, after 2015 which is the universal target year. The proposal is assessed from the perspective of human rights-based and social justice conceptualisations of education quality. The Millennium Development Goals for primary schooling completion has focused attention on measurable output indicators to monitor increase in schooling in poor countries. The more important

Millennium Learning Goal - is to monitor outcomes of learning achievement. In countries meeting of the MDGs of primary completion, it was found out that majority of youth are not reaching even minimal competency levels, lone the competencies demanded in a globalized environment (Deon, Amer and Lant 2006).

In the same vein, virtually in all the developing countries, including Nigeria, efforts are being made to address the issue of poor learning outcomes of pupils in public schools. The importance of education however cannot be underestimated as it is one of the most veritable instruments for social mobilization and the acquisition of important technical skills. Learning outcomes are goals that describe how pupils will be different because of learning experiences. More specifically, learning outcomes are the knowledge, skills, attitude and habit of mind that pupils take with them from a learning experience (Suskie, 2009).

Ololube (2011) supports this statement, that learning outcomes are usually expressed as knowledge, skills, or attitudes that flow from needs assessment. The needs assessment determine the gap between an existing condition and a desired condition. Borisade (2011) also highlights that learning outcomes are statements which describe a desired condition that is, the knowledge, skills, or attitudes needed to fulfill the need of pupils. This represents the solution to the identified needs or issues, providing direction in the planning of a learning activity and statements that specify what learners will know or be able to do, as a result of learning activities. Learning outcomes is also a written statement of what the successful pupil/learner is expected to be able to do at the end of learning experience. What precisely a learner is expected to acquire in terms of knowledge and/or skills after a successful completion of a period of learning. The education of pupils is a shared responsibility, benefiting all the society and economy as a whole. Therefore, parents and broader communities should have a reciprocal responsibility and to partner with schools. Educators sometimes are content to let parents take the initiative in participating in their children's education. This is because children spend the larger, if not largest, part of their young life in their direct home environment, interacting with their parents, siblings, other family members and neighbours.

Since the last decade, however, the amount of time children spend with their parents, in the community and neighbours, as well as the types of interactions with them, have changed due to factors, such as changing family structures and increasing maternal employment. Parents and the broader community are expected to play vital role in supporting successful learning outcomes for children. Where real partnerships occur, (i.e. parent-school partnerships and school-community partnerships), conscious efforts are usually made by the school to initiate the environment. In such partnerships, the school and the home (family/parents) or the school and the community share responsibility for children's learning. The relationship that exists in the partnerships is based on mutual respect and acknowledgement of the assets and expertise of each member. As stated by Ballen & Moles, (1994), parent-school and community-school partnerships give parents and community members' greater opportunities to determine options for school involvement, to participate in the wide range of involvement activities, and to assume key roles and responsibilities in school-improvement efforts, including participation in the school's decision-making processes. In other words, if a partnership is to succeed, it must be based on "mutual trust and respect, constant and correct exchange of information, agreement on goals and strategies, and a sharing of rights and responsibility.

Buttressing this, relationship with parents is regarded as partnership by schools in which school and home share responsibility for children's or pupils' learning. The results include

increase in the level of parents influence, increase in the types of parent involvement and an increase in the support that community demonstrate for the school. When this relationship is extended to the larger community, the benefits are greater, the most important of which is that pupils are able to see the connection between the curriculum in the school and the skills that are acquired in the real world. Cotton (2000) ascertains that the earlier the role of the community in the lives of young children is recognized, the better the chances children have of achieving at school and in life in general. For when the connection between schools and communities is strong, it is easier for children to develop the skills needed to be successful socially and emotionally, physically and academically (Edwards, 2008, Oakes and Lipton, 2007; OECD, 2006).

However, many of Southwestern primary schools are trying to develop effective strategies to collaborate with parents and community with the overwhelming evidence that parents' influence has positive effect on pupil's achievement. Parent-school and school-community partnerships bring about collaborative relationships and activities involving school staff, parents' community and other family members of pupils at school. Effective partnerships are based on mutual trust and respect, and shared responsibility for the education of the children and young people at the school. Parents are the first educators of their children and they continue to influence their children's learning and development during the school years and long afterwards. Schools have an important responsibility in helping to nurture and teach future generations. Parents rely on schools to provide educational foundations for their children's future. At the same time, schools need to recognise the primary role of the parents' characteristics such as age, characteristics, sex and education. This is why it is important for parents and schools to work together in partnerships.

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

Learning outcomes such as academic performance and social behaviour have been found to be determined by many factors. Studies have established that parents' characteristics such as gender, age and level of education and school factors consisting location and type of school, could separately influence the learning outcomes of learners without much information on the combined influence of parents-school and school-community relationships, which may be quite significant. There is therefore the need to empirically determine the influence of these interrelationships and joint contributions on the learning outcomes of primary school pupils in Southwestern Nigeria; hence this study.

Purpose of the Study.

This study examined parent-school and school-community partnerships as determinants of learning outcomes of lower primary schools pupils in Southwestern Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- a. determine the levels of parent-school and school-community partnerships in lower primary education in southwest Nigeria; and
- b. examine the joint influence of parents' characteristics (age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships) on pupils' learning outcomes in Southwestern Nigeria.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Question 1: What is the level of parent-school partnership in lower primary education in Southwest Nigeria?

Research Question 2: What is the level of school-community partnership in lower primary education in Southwest Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant joint influence of parents' characteristics (age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement) in-community-school partnership on the pupils' social behavior.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant joint influence of parents' characteristics (age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement) in-community-school partnership on the pupils' academic performance.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is hoped that apart from providing social behaviour and academic performance by parent-school and school-community partnerships in pupils learning outcomes the study would also provide information on the influence that parent-school and community-school partnerships have on the learning outcomes of pupils in lower primary school in southwestern Nigeria. It would also provide insight into parents' and school characteristics that influence pupils' learning outcomes.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focused on three states in Southwestern state of Nigeria based on the efficacy of Parent-School and School-Community Partnerships as Determinants of Learning Outcomes of Lower Primary Schools Pupils. Oyo, Osun, and Ondo States were borne out of the knowledge of the researcher how parent is regarded as a partnerships by schools in which school, parents, community and home share responsibility for children's and pupils' learning outcomes. Teachers head teachers, pupils together with their parents were involved in the study.

METHODS

The study adopted descriptive research survey design. The population of the study consisted lower primary school (class III) pupils, their parents, teachers and head teachers of public primary schools in Southwestern Nigeria. The sample size for this study consisted 900 primary III pupils, 90 primary III teachers, 90 head teachers of the schools used for the study and 900 parents of the pupils. The sample was selected using multistage sampling technique. Three states Ondo, Osun and Oyo were selected from the six states in Southwestern Nigeria using simple random sampling technique. One senatorial district from each state and two Local Government Areas (LGAs) in each senatorial district were selected using simple random sampling technique for both. In each of the selected LGAs, five (5) schools were also selected using simple random sampling technique. In each school, 10 pupils from one arm of primary III class were randomly selected with 1 teacher, 10 parents and 1 head teacher in each school. This amounted to 50 pupils, 5 teachers, 5 head teachers, and 50 parents in each LGAs; 300 pupils, 30 teachers, 30 head teachers, and 300 parents in a state and 900 pupils, 90 teachers, 90 head teachers and 900 parents from the three states all together. Four research instruments were used to collect data for the study. These are Test of Numeracy and Verbal Reasoning (TNVR), Social Attribute Checklist (SAC), Parents-School Partnerships Questionnaire (PSPQ), and Community-School Partnerships Practices Questionnaire (CSPPQ). Each of these questionnaires consisted of two sections. Section "A" addressed the socio demographic information of the respondents while section "B" consisted of the items that measure the intended constructs. The Test of Numeracy and Verbal Reasoning (TNVR) was used in the study to collect data that measure pupils' performance. The second instrument,

Social Attribute Checklist (SAC) was used in the study to collect data that measure pupils' social behavior.

The third instrument, Parents-School Partnership Questionnaire (PSPQ), were administered on teachers, head teachers and the parents and was used to measure parents-school collaboration strategies used for children's upbringing. While, the fourth instrument titled Community-School Partnership Practices Questionnaire (CSPPQ), was used to measure the role of schools and community. The four instruments were validated before use using Pearson Product Moment Correlation for (TNVR) with 0.67, Pearson Product Moment Correlation for (SAC) with 0.86, Cronbach Alpha for (PSPQ) with 0.78 and Cronbach Alpha also for (CSPPQ) with 0.64 Data collected were analyzed using simple percentages, chi-square and multiple regression analysis.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What is the level of parents-school partnerships in lower primary education in Southwestern Nigeria?

Table 1: Levels of Parents-School Partnerships in Lower Primary Education in Southwestern, Nigeria

Parents-School Partnership	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Low	231	22.4
Moderate	660	64.1
High	138	13.4
Total	1029	100.0

Table 1 shows the levels of parents-school partnerships in lower primary education in Southwestern Nigeria. As indicated in the above table, 22.4% of the parents and teachers described such partnerships as low, 64.1% of them described it as moderate while 13.4% of the parents and teachers described parents-school partnerships in lower primary education in Southwest Nigeria as high. There is an indication from this result that the kind of the existing partnerships among the parents and school towards the education of the pupils in lower primary schools tends to be moderate as evident by the assessment of more than half of the respondents.

Research Question 2: What is the level of school-community partnerships in lower primary education in Southwestern Nigeria?

Table 2: Levels of School-Community Partnerships in Lower Primary Education in Southwestern, Nigeria.

School-Community Partnership	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Low	426	41.4
Moderate	510	49.6
High	93	9.0
Total	1029	100.0

Table 2 shows the levels of school-community partnerships in lower primary education in Southwest Nigeria. As shown in the table, 41.4% of the parents and teachers described such

partnerships as low, 49.6% of them described it as moderate while 9.0% of the parents and teachers described such partnerships between the schools and community, in lower primary education in Southwestern Nigeria as high. This result therefore reveals that partnerships between the schools and community towards the education of the pupils at the lower primary schools is neither low nor moderate as it is clearly shown in their assessment of such relationships.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant joint influence of parents' characteristics (age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement) in community-school partnerships on social behaviour.

In order to test this hypothesis, a multiple regression analysis method was employed in which age, gender; level of education and the level of involvement were treated as independent variables or predictors while social behaviour of the pupils was considered as dependent variable or outcome variable. The result is presented in Table 3

Table 3: Summary of multiple regression analysis of joint influence of parents' characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships on pupils' social behaviour.

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
Age Gender Education Levels of Involvement	0.085	0.007	0.002	16.75997	1.329	0.257
a. Predictors: (Constant), Levels of Involvement, Education, Gender, Age						
b. Dependent Variable: Pupils social behaviour.						

Table 3 shows that the joint influence of the parents' characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships on pupils' social behavior yield a coefficient of multiple regression (R) of 0.085 and a multiple correlation square (R²) of 0.007. These values are not statistically significant at 0.05 levels. This implies that the combination of parents' characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships had no significant influence on social behavior of pupils in lower primary schools in the Southwestern Nigeria. These variables only accounted for less than 1% of the observed variance in the social behaviour of the pupils. The relative contributions of each of the independent variables are presented in Table 4 below:

Table 4 shows the relative contribution of parents' characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships on pupils' social behaviour. As shown in Table 4, parent level of education and school-community partnerships had respective t-values of 1.492 and 1.105. Their respective beta weights are 0.056 and 0.041. Also, age and gender had t-values of 0.803 and -0.267 while their beta weights

respectively are 0.030 and -0.010. None of these variables had significant contribution to pupils' social behaviour at 0.05 level of confidence.

Table 4: Relative contribution of parents' characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships on pupils' social behaviour.

		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	69.235	3.190		21.701	0.000
	Age	0.378	0.471	0.030	.803	0.422
	Gender	- 0.343	1.286	- 0.010	- 0.267	0.790
	Education	0.412	0.276	0.056	1.492	0.136
	SCP	0.099	0.090	0.041	1.105	0.269

a. Dependent Variable: social behaviour

From the values of beta weights and t-ratio for each independent variable, it is shown that parents' level of education had the highest contribution to pupils' social behaviour. Next is school-community partnership, age of the parents while gender of the parents had the lowest contribution in the prediction of the dependent variable. In the light of these findings, the appraisal of this hypothesis may be resolved that there is no significant joint influence of parents' characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships on social behavior of the pupils in lower primary schools in the Southwestern Nigeria

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant joint influence of parents' characteristics (age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement) in community-school partnership on academic performance.

In order to test this hypothesis, a multiple regression analysis method was employed in which age, gender, level of education and the level of involvement were treated as independent variables or predictors while the academic performance of the pupils was considered as dependent variable or outcome variable. The result is presented in Table 5

Table 5: Summary of multiple regression analysis of joint influence of parents-school partnerships and school- community partnerships on pupils' academic performance.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
Age Gender Education Levels of Involvement	0.118	0.014	0.009	15.06214	2.606	0.035
a. Predictors: (Constant), Levels of Involvement, Education, Gender, Age						
b. Dependent Variable: Pupils performance						

Table 5 shows that the joint influence of the parents' characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships on pupils' academic performance yield a coefficient of multiple regression (R) of 0.118 and a multiple correlation square (R²) of 0.014. These values are statistically significant at 0.05 level. This implies that the combination of parents' characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships had significant influence on the academic performance of pupils in lower primary schools in the Southwestern Nigeria. These variables accounted for 1.4% of the observed variance in the academic performance of the pupils. The relative contributions of each of the independent variables are presented in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Relative contribution of parents' characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships on pupils' academic performance.

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	78.424	2.834		27.671	0.000
	Age	-0.559	0.418	-0.050	-1.336	0.182
	Gender	-1.270	1.142	-0.041	-1.112	0.266
	Education	-0.060	0.245	-0.009	-0.245	0.806
	SCP	0.395	0.080	0.180	4.937	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Table 6 shows the relative contribution of parents' characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships on pupils' academic performance. As shown in Table 14, school-community partnerships and age had respective t-values of 4.937 and -1.336. Their respective beta weights are 0.180 and -0.050. Also, gender and parents level of education had t-values of -1.112 and -0.245 while their beta weights respectively are -0.041 and -0.009. Only school-community partnership had significant contribution at 0.05 level of confidence while variables such as age, gender and parents level of education had no significant contribution to pupils' academic performance. From the values of beta weights and t-ratio for each independent variable, it is shown that level of involvement in school-community partnership had the highest contribution to pupils' academic performance. Next is age of the parents, gender of the parents while parents' level of education had the lowest contribution in the prediction of the dependent variable. In the light of these findings, the appraisal of this hypothesis may be resolved that there is significant joint influence of parents' characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships on academic performance of the pupils in lower primary schools in the Southwestern Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Looking at the levels of parent-school and school-community partnerships in lower primary education in the study area, the result showed that more than half of the respondents indicated that there exist a moderate partnership between the parents and the schools towards the

education of the pupils in lower primary schools. The parents and teachers described parents-school partnerships in lower primary education in Southwestern Nigeria as moderate. There is an indication from this result that the kind of the existing partnerships among the parents and school towards the education of the pupils in lower primary schools tends to be moderate as evident by the assessment of more than half of the respondents.

Also the finding in this study showed that the combination of parents' characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships had significant influence on the academic performance aspect of learning outcomes of pupils in lower primary schools in the Southwest Nigeria. In the light of these findings, the appraisal of this hypothesis may be resolved that there is significant joint influence of parents' characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and the level of their involvement in community-school partnerships on academic performance aspect of the learning outcomes of the pupils in lower primary schools in the Southwest Nigeria. This is in line with the statement of Feinstein (2006) which stated that it would appear that involving parents and community in schooling leads to more engagement in teaching and learning processes. The importance of parent's educational attitudes and behaviours on children's educational attainment has also been well documented especially in the developmental psychology literature. This evidence shows that different elements of parents' 'educational attitudes and behaviours, such as the provision of a cognitively stimulating home environment, parental involvement in children's activities and parental beliefs and aspirations, have been identified as having a significant effect on children's levels of educational achievement' (Feinstein, 2006). From the foregoing, despite the facts that parents are more interested in the cognitive aspect of their children's learning than the behaviour and social aspect of learning, yet it can be seen that the collaboration of parent-school and school-community partnerships is a determinant of pupils learning outcomes, and become very helpful and useful tools for stimulating pupils to learn.

CONCLUSION

From the findings it may thus be concluded that this study established that parent-school and school-community partnerships which can be established in Southwestern states of Nigeria will be a necessary and useful tool in guiding systemic educational reform, research, and evaluation and can be the determinants of pupils learning outcomes. Thinking about "types" of partnerships can enable practitioners, policymakers, and researchers to determine more systematically the conditions needed to support a particular partnership as well as the obstacles that need to be overcome to accomplish often ambitious goals. A clear, comprehensive typology can illuminate the possibilities and constraints of the varying approaches that are easy to lose sight of if partnerships are not differentiated by purpose, implementation requirements, theory of action, or other key analytic dimension.

This research has shown that the 'hard to reach' parents and community have a disproportionately positive effect on pupils' learning and achievements. In other words, where schools have succeeded in partnership with these groups of parents and community, the impact on achievement has been shown to be greater than that resulting from the other groups. Any successful partnerships will involve parents, careers and communities in preparation, planning, implementation and review of school to effect and determine effective learning outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Any successful partnership will involve parents, careers and families in preparation, planning, implementation and review. A dedicated school-community action team of teachers, school leaders and parents to develop and coordinate partnership plans and activities can provide the basis for improving partnerships more broadly.

1. School policies and procedures which explicitly state and clearly integrate the principles and practices of effective partnerships;
2. Support networks, to enable school-community to share ideas, issues and best practice; and accountability to the community, to report on successes and drive improvement in partnerships.
3. Policy makers should offer clear guidance about parent-schools and school-community rather than involvement that provide direction to schools about the relationships between forms and purposes for parent-school and school-community partnerships in their children's education.
4. Create policies that clarify the range of ways in which parents and community can be productively partnerships with schools and ensure that the purposes for this collaboration are explicit in policies that address parent-school and community partnerships in schools.

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