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COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS IN ILORIN- SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KWARA STATE

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Abstract

School and community are two separate entities that depend on each other for the attainment of their respective goals. It is against this background that this study was set to examine the relationship between Community Participation and School Effectiveness in Ilorin South Local Government Area Secondary Schools. Random sampling technique was used to select 280 teachers and 20 parents representing 37.3% of the total population of teachers in the Local Government Areas.

The instruments employed for data collection were Community Participation Questionnaire (CPQ) which was used to collect data on independent variable while a proforma tagged "School Effectiveness Proforma" was used to collect the data on students' academic performance as a measure of school effectiveness. The instrument was validated and the reliability was ascertained.

The result of the findings reveals that there was a significant relationship between community participation in the provision of school facilities and school effectiveness and also, there was a significant relationship between community participation in the maintenance of school plant and school effectiveness.

It was concluded that community participation had positive relationship with school effectiveness and it was therefore recommended among others that community should be further enlighten to take full participation in the school activities.

Introduction

Education is universally acknowledged as instrument for change and development of an individual and a nation. It is an essential tool in the process of national development and it is in the light of this that education is usually given a greater attention in national planning. This fact is well acknowledged by Nigerian Government as reflected in the budgetary allocation to education. The fundamental purpose of investment in education is to empower people with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to improve quality of life; enhance their productivity and their capacity to learn new skills and enable them participate more fully in the developmental process.

The launching of the Universal Primary Education in 1976 and Universal Basic Education in 1999 by the administration of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as a military and later as a civilian President in Nigeria has led to the increase in students' enrolment in Nigeria schools. The increase has resulted in overcrowded in schools classrooms, overpopulated schools, inadequacy of schools facilities among other, hence, there are needs for community members to support government efforts in the provision of schools' facilities and in other areas that could bring about effectiveness in schools. Obasanjo (1999) noted that as far as funding of education is concerned, the time has come for all Nigeria parents to appreciate the need to contribute to their children's education particularly at elementary level.

Although community participation in education is not new, many communities in the past have played significant roles towards ensuring access and quality education. There are still many places where communities solely operate schools for their children. However, community participation in education has not been fully recognized in some places. New strategies for making the public schools more effective have to be found through partnership which is aimed at achieving the respective goals of the school and the community. The Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) through the National Policy on Education encourages community participation in education in order to strike a balance between access and quality education.

Literature Background

Concept of Community Participation

Community participation is a concept that tries to bring different stakeholders together for problem solving and decision making. Sofoluwe (2004) defined community participation as the ability to control and manage resources to meet the social, cultural and economic needs of the populace. Community participation is an attempt to bring the community members close to the school to jointly carryout school's activities as a way of achieving the respective goals of the school and the community. Robert (2008) stressed that participation of parents and the community contributed significantly to the achievement of Universal Basic Education programme.

Education takes place not only in schools but also within families, communities, and society. Communities and society must support parents and families in the upbringing, socializing and educating their children. Schools are institutions that can prepare children to contribute to the betterment of the society in which they operate, by equipping them with skills that are important in society. Schools cannot and should not operate as separate entities within the society since

each group plays different role in contributing to children's education, there must be efforts to make a bridge between them in order maximize their contributions. Education takes place most efficiently and effectively when these different groups of people collaborate. Accordingly, it is important to establish and continuously attempt to develop partnerships among schools, parents, and communities. Many research studies have identified various ways of community participation in education, providing specific channels through which communities can be involved in children's education.

The goal of any kind of activity that attempts to involve community and families/parents in education is to improve the educational delivery so that more children learn better and are well prepared for the changing world. There are various reasons to support the idea that community participation contribute to achieving this goal. Extensive literature research has resulted in identifying the following rationales that explain the importance of community participation in education.

1. Maximizing Limited Resources

Most governments all over the world have been committed to delivering education for their children. Particularly after the World Conference on Education for All, assembled in Jomiten, Thailand in 1990, an increasing number of countries have attempted to reach the goal of providing education for all. However, governments have found themselves incompetent to do so because of lack of resources and capacities. Learning materials as well as human resources are limited everywhere, particularly in developing countries. The focus has shifted to finding efficient and effective ways to utilize existing limited resources. Although some communities have historically been involved in their children's education, it hasn't been fully recognized that communities themselves have resources to contribute to education, and they can be resources by providing local knowledge for their children.

2. Developing Relevant Curriculum and Learning Materials

Communities' and parents' involvement helps achieve curriculums and learning materials that reflect children's everyday lives in society. When children use textbooks and other materials that illustrate their own lives in their community, they can easily associate what they are learning with what they have already known.

3. Identifying and Addressing Problems

Communities can help identify and address factors that contribute to educational problems, such as low participation and poor academic performance.

4. Realizing Democracy

Where schools are perceived as authoritarian institutions, parents and community members do not feel welcomed to participate in their children's education. They are not capable of taking any responsibility in school issues and tend to feel that education is something that should be taken care of by educational professionals at schools. Many people, especially minority groups in many developing countries, develop this kind of negative attitudes towards schools because they are not treated by teachers with respect.

5. Increasing Accountability

Parental involvement in education, particularly in school governance, is seen as a means of making schools more accountable to the society which funds them.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this paper is to determine the relationship between Community Participation and School Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State. Specifically, the study aims at the following:

1. to determine the relationship between Community participation in the Provision of School Facilities and School Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Ilorin South Local Government Kwara State.
2. to find out the relationship between Community participation in the Maintenance of School Plant and School effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State.

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were raised to guide the focus of this paper.

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between Community participation in the provision of School Facilities and School Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between Community participation in the Maintenance of School Plant and School Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State.

Methodology

This paper adopted a descriptive survey of correlation type. The target population for the study consisted of the entire secondary schools' teachers in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State. The total number of secondary schools teachers in the Local Government Area is 1,096. From this population, a sample of 280 teachers and 20 parents were randomly selected for the study. This represents an average of 37.3% of the total population of teachers in the Local Government Area.

Instrumentation

A questionnaire entitled: "Community Participation Questionnaire" (CPQ) and a Proforma entitled: "School Effectiveness Proforma" (SEP) were used for data collection. These instruments were subjected to face and content validity while a test-retest method was used to determine their reliability through a pilot study involving 20 teachers outside the sample teachers at an interval of three weeks. The reliability coefficients were calculated to be 0.87 and 0.86 respectively using Pearson product-moment correlation statistic.

Results and Discussion

The following results were obtained after the administration of the instrument and analysis of the data collected using Pearson product-moment correlation statistics.

Hypothesis Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Community participation in the provision of school facilities and school effectiveness in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State.

Table 1
Community participation in the provision of school facilities and School Effectiveness

Variable	N	X	SD	df	Cal r-value	p-value	Decision
CPSF	300	1.54	.3587				
				298	.560	.000	H ₀₁ Rejected
SE	300	114.76	38.129				

$p < 0.05$

Note:

CPSF: Community Participation in the provision of school facilities

SE: School Effectiveness

Table 1 shows that p-value (0.000) is less than the alpha level of significance (0.05) for 298 degrees of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between community participation in the provision of school facilities and school effectiveness is rejected.

The findings confirmed the finding of Ahmed (2009) who in her study, found out that when community participate in the provision of school facilities there is tendency to guarantee administrative effectiveness which is an indication of school effectiveness.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between community participation in the maintenance of school plant and school effectiveness in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State.

Table 2

Community participation in the maintenance of school plant and School Effectiveness

Variable	N	X	SD	df	Cal r-value	p-value	Decision
CPSP	300	2.537	.3065				
				298	.365	.000	Ho ₂ Rejected
SE	300	114.76	38.129				

$p < 0.05$

Note:

CPSP: Community Participation in the maintenance of school plant

SE: School Effectiveness

Table 2 shows that p-value (0.000) is less than the alpha level of significance (0.05) for 298 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between community

participation in the provision of school facilities and school effectiveness is rejected.

This finding corroborated the findings of Oyelami (2007) who investigated community participation and performance in secondary schools in Oyo and Osun State, Nigeria. In his study, it was revealed that community participation in the maintenance of school facilities would help to put them in good shape and bring about cost reduction in the running of school system which would no doubt enhance school effectiveness.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Community participation had high positive relationship with school effectiveness which means that it is a necessity to incorporate host community in school's affairs in order to ensure school effectiveness.
2. Involvement of community in the maintenance of school plant would certainly guarantee the durability of school plant and as well provide security for school plant and put the school plant in a functional state that would facilitate its usability.

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

1. There should be constant forum should be organized by the government to continue to enlighten community members on the need to support the schools in the provision of school facilities.
2. Artisans among community members should be encouraged to fully participate in the maintenance of school plant by way of their involvement in the renovation and repair of school plant as this would likely reduce the cost and guarantee the durability of the school plant.

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