

THE INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF PUPILS IN IKA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF DELTA STATE

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Abstract

This study surveyed the relationship between school and the community on academic achievement of the pupils. Two communities, rural and urban were compared in Ika South Local Government Area of Delta State. The population of the study was made up of 300 primary six pupils in four selected primary schools in both the rural and urban communities. Meanwhile, the sample was made up of 75 primary six pupils in the rural and urban communities, and 61 members of the communities. Instruments used for the collection of data were the mathematics achievement test (MAT), English language achievement test (EAT), Elementary science Achievement Test (ESAT), for the pupils and Questionnaires on cultural activities of the community (QCAC) for members of the communities. Three research questions were raised and answered using the mean (\bar{x}) and standard Deviation (SD) while, a hypothesis was tested at 0.05 alpha level using t-test. The result gotten after the data analysis showed that there was a significant influence on pupils academic achievement where there was a positive relationship between the school and the community. Based on this, some relevant recommendations were made.

Introduction:

Human beings live together in both small and large groups and in the process influence the activities of other members of the group. The influence could be positive or negative. When the influence is positive, there is the likelihood of development and productivity in the social progress of that group. The reverse is the case, however, when the influence is negative.

The Influence of School and Community Relationship on Academic Achievement

The existence of people in a given geographical location is termed community something in common. It may refer to smaller geographical area, housing project or development in rural area or possibly a larger geographically defined urban community.

One of the most outstanding social institutions that evolved from among the community of people is the school system. Musaaazi (1992) pointed out that a school operates directly as a nucleus for the betterment of the community. This means that the

community's participation in school affairs makes the link between the school and community more meaningful, hence, the school and community should regard

emselves as each other's partner. Onayase (1991), on the other hand, posited that the school and the community are interdependent and inter-related and for the relationship

to be meaningful, worthwhile, and productive, they must be willing to assist each other achieve their respective goals in a positive climate of mutual trust and cooperation.

Since the school derives its foundations and continued existence from the community, it then becomes an avenue for helping man to learn the ways the people mold the environment, the ways the pupils are taught and the ways the teachers' impart knowledge. A community with a well-defined environment will influence learning maximally. A well-defined environment will mean conducive atmosphere whereby the facilities for learning are in good order. An example of such conducive

learning environment is given in a community called Reggio Emilia in Northern Italy. According to Morison (2004) he reported that there is a uniform look everywhere. The colour of school walls, shape of learning furniture such as tables, desks, chairs, is very good order. In the classrooms, arrangement of simple learning objects on shelves and tables. Enough light from within and outside the classrooms, along with cross-ventilated windows. Paintings, beautiful drawings, paper sculptures are in full decorations in the classrooms. The surroundings are full of healthy green plants along with some nearby buildings in a safe neighbourhood, free from traffic and equipment for children in Reggio Emilia.

However, in a community where no such environment or a little similar environment like that of the Reggio-Emilia is available, academic achievement can be low. How does one imagine teaching and learning to be in a crumbled and dilapidated classroom, with broken ceilings, heat from the sun blazing in like fire, lizards darting in, here and there, and occasionally, snakes pursuing lizards into the classroom and children sitting on mats on the floor to learn.

Another way the community can influence learning in the school is through the established rules that govern the community. Most communities favour their dialect above other languages and give it a top priority in the school curriculum. Other languages including English Language are secondary. On the days of their cultural festivals, schools in the community are closed down for the periods the festivals would last, or there will be serious distraction. Market days (4 days interval) are regarded as holy days in some communities because of the belief in spirits of the ancestors who protect the community from sudden calamities; Hence, it is expected that every member of the community should be at home or at the market. Some community heads expect school children to clear and weed their farms and even fetch firewood for them. Failure to carry out these commitments can breed trouble between the school and the community. Apart from this area, local farming and fishing which are the major occupations in many communities, also contribute to poor academic achievement of the pupils in the schools. For example, when school children are expected to rush off to fetch firewood early in the morning before going to school and immediately after school they are also expected to be at the farm site for weeding, learning can then be

really difficult. The intervention of the Parents and Teachers Association (PTA)

can also influence the academic performance of the pupils. The school that does not liaise with the community to address issues and problems confronting the school may not find it easy in the teaching and learning of the pupils.

Community Collaboration on Health and School Facilities

It is difficult for many families to provide for the total health needs of the children against most deadly diseases like poliomyelitis, tuberculosis, diarrhea, malaria. The Influence of School and Community Relationship on Academic Achievement

and so on. Through collaboration, it is possible to make healthy living a reality for all school children in the community. The combined efforts of the community can draw the attention of the government and community Public Health care workers to create the best health care services, nutrition, and safety education for the community school children. However, school children suffer health care services where there is no such collaboration.

Collaboration is also vital in the development and maintenance of the school facilities, building new classroom blocks and canvassing for man-power, since Federal Government of Nigeria has stopped education grants to State Government and the load shifted to the community. (Osuagwu 2005).

Community Roles on Religious Rights

In a community where a particular religion dominates and becomes almost compulsory for everyone in the community to practice, the individual rights is thereby violated. School children may face persecution and academic disruption through expulsion when they tend to exercise their religious rights.

An example is a report given of some Christian Religious sect sometime ago known as the Jehovah's witnesses (JW), who will not sing the National Anthem, the National pledge, sing from the dominant religious Hymn Books or recite their prayers. These school children were either severely punished or expelled.

Prior to the 21 century, formal education was regarded as the major means of community growth and national development. However, in Nigeria, it is sad to say that about 93 million people in different communities are still illiterate, according to Global monitoring team on education. What could then be the reason for this? Is it entirely the fault of the government? Can the community in their various practices and culture be

hostile to learning secularly by the children?

It was on this ground that, this study was designed to examine two primary schools each from a rural and urban communities to ascertain the influence of school and community relationship on academic achievement of the pupils.

Statement of the Problem

The recent Global monitoring team on Education (2013) reported that about 93 million people in Nigeria are illiterate. These people are from different communities in Nigeria. Recently, the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) (2013) gave a statistical summary of students' performance from 2007 to 2011 as disheartening since the performance was always very low. Now, the last senior secondary school certificate examination by WAEC (2014), the Junior secondary School certificate examinations, (JSSCE) and the primary six leaving certificate examination (PSLCE-2014) also revealed a very low academic achievement of the children. In a woeful statement, the former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar (2014), said "the students' failure is the nation's failure." This will also mean that the nation's failure is the community failure. Usually, whenever there is a problem on the academic achievement of school children, accusing fingers are always pointed at the teachers as the only influence on academic achievement of the pupils and students. No one is interested in other variables that can influence academic achievement of the pupils. This is why among the many problem areas of studies carried out in education on pupils' academic achievement, none has been centred purely on school and community relationship to influence academic achievement of the pupils. It is against this background that this study was aimed at finding out the school and community relationship in the academic achievement of the pupils in Ika South Local area of Delta State.

Purpose of the Studies

This study was designed to ascertain the school and community relationship on academic achievement of the pupils, with the view of promoting a positive school climate in the Nigerian educational system.

Research Questions

What is the influence of the use of languages in the community on the mean score of pupils in English language, mathematics and Elementary Science in the rural and urban communities?

What influence is there in the cultural practices of the community on the mean score of pupils in mathematics, English language and Elementary Science in the rural and urban communities?

What is the influence of school facilities on academic achievement of the pupils in English language, Mathematics and Elementary Science in rural and urban communities?

Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis tested was at 0.05 alpha level:

There is no significant difference in the academic achievement of pupils in rural and urban areas in English language, Mathematics and Elementary Science irrespective of cultural practices.

Methodology

This research adopted the descriptive survey research design. A survey research is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered fit. The survey research design is appropriate for the study because it studied a group of two community people by collecting and analyzing data from only a few of the people to ascertain the influence of the community on the academic achievement of

the pupils.Ukwuije(2003).The population of the study was made up of 300 primary six pupils in four selected primary schools in both the rural and urban communities.The sample however was made up of 75 primary six pupils each from the rural and urban communities.

The instrument used for the collection of data are the Mathematics Achievement test (MAT)English Language Achievement Test (EAT)Elementary Science Achievement Test (ESAT) for the primary school pupils while the questionnaire on Cultural Activities of the Communities(QCAC)was designed for members of the communities.These Instruments,(MAT),(EAT)and (ESAT)were constructed based on the standardized examination questions for primary six by the various subjects'experts using both the face and content validation method.

Meanwhile to test reliability of the instruments and to bring out the degree of the relationship of the instruments and determine the internal consistency of the instrument,cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was used hence a reliability coefficient of 0.73, 0.83, and 0.88 were obtained. These were considered reasonably reliable and the instruments dependable, it was therefore empirically valid for the study. The instruments were made up of 100% items of multiple choice questions only, while the duration was 50 minutes. The Mean (\bar{x}) and Standard Deviation (SD) were used to answer the research questions 1 and 2 while the t-test was used to analyze the null

hypothesis. On the other hand, the questionnaire instrument on the cultural activities of the community was designed based on the likert type five points scale of strongly agree (SA), Agree (A) undecided (UD) Disagree (D) strongly Disagree (SD).

Meanwhile SA = 5, A = 4, U = 3, D = 2 and SD = 1 points respectively. This questionnaire was used to quantify the attitude, values and interest that the people in the community have in relationship to the school in the community, sixty-one (61) members of the communities including staff of the school in the community were selected to respond to the 11 item statements in the questionnaire.

Table 1

Analysis of questionnaire based on research question 1 on the use of language in the rural community and school relationship.

	Statement	Responses by staff					\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	\bar{x}	Decision
		SA	A	U	D	SD					
	The community values their own language above other	20	30	2	5	4	240	15.5	15.5	3.1	Accepted
	The community language prevails in school environment above others	28	28	0	2	5	261	16.2	16.2	3.2	Accepted

Table 2

Analysis of questionnaire based on the research question 2 on the use cultural practices in the rural community and school relationship

	Statement	Responses by staff					X	S D		X	Decisi on
		S A	A	U	D	SD					
	Cultural festival activities always disturb school activities	25	20	5	5	6	236	15.4	15.45	3.08	Accepted
	Farming is the major and only occupation in this community	30	20	0	6	5	247	15.7	1575	3.14	Accepted
	Everybody must be involved in the farm work at any time, including school children	35	20	0	6	5	272	16.4	1645	3.3	Accepted
	The school has a reliable PTA	10	10	5	25	11	166	12.9	12.95	26	Rejected
	School children most times pay homage to the community head	20	20	15	4	2	235	15.3	1535	3.08	Accepted
	There is regular health care services to the school from health workers in the state in collaboration with the community	5	6	2	38	10	141	11.9	119	3.14	Rejected
	The community religion/denomination is compulsory	30	20	0	6	5	247	15.7	15.75	3.3	Accepted

Table 3

Analysis of questionnaire based on research question 3 on the use of school infrastructure or facilities of the rural community and school relationship.

	Statement	Responses by staff					X	S D	X	X	Decisi on
		SA	A	U	D	S D					
10	The school infrastructures or facilities are new, adequate and not dilapidated	0	0	6	35	20	108	10.4	10.45	2.08	Rejected
I	The school environment is very conducive for learning	3	4	1	13	30	100	10.0	10.05	2.0	Rejected

Benchmark: x of 3.00 and above, accepted. x Less than 3.00 rejected

The response to statement No 1 and 2 on table 1 above with the xw of 3.1 and 3.2 indicated that the community valued its own language above other language like English in the school. Response to 10 and 11 with the xw of 2.08 and 2.0 showed that both the school facilities and environment for learning are not conducive. This is followed by the xw of 3.08 to statement no 5 to show that some cultural festivals that may engulf the entire community can disturb school activities.

Statement No 6 and 7 had the response xw of 3.1 and 3.3 to show that the only means of survival in this community was through farming, school children must be involved either before school hours or after school hours. The school did not even have a link to the community through the Parents/ Teacher Associaton (PTA). This was shown in the xw of 2.6 as a response to statement No 8, except the homage the school children pay to the community leaders through farm services as shown in the xw of 3.1. There was also an indication that the regular health care services eluded the children in this community against kiler diseases, this was shown in the response to statement No 9 wih the mean weighttof 3.8

Table 4

Analysis of Questonnaire based on Research Queslon 1 on the use of language in the Urban Community and school relationship.

	Statement	Responses by staff					X	SD	$\frac{X}{SD}$	$\frac{X}{SD}$	Decision
		SA	A	U	D	SD					
1	The community values its own lan. guage above other languages	0	1	0	20	30	104	10.2	10.25	2.0	Rejected
2	The community language prevait above others in the school environ men	2	5	10	20	24	124	11.1	11.5	2.2	Rejected

Table 5

Analysis of Questionnaire on Culural Actviies of the Urban Communiy on School Relationship.

	Statement	Responses by staff					X	SD	X	X	Decision
		SA	A	U	D	SD					
3	Culural festival activities always disturb school activities	2	8	10	21	20	104	10.2	10.25	2.0	Rejected
4	Farming is the major and only occupation in this community	2	10	5	24	20	133	11.5	1155	2.3	Rejected
5	Everybody must be involved in the farm work at any time, including school child ren	1	9	5	25	21	127	11.3	1135	3.2	Accepted
6	The school has a reliable PTA	30	20	2	8	1	253	15.9	15.95	3.2	Accepted

school children most times pay omage to the community heac	0		0	3 0	3 0	9 4	9. 7	9.7 5	1. 9	Rejete d
There is regular health care ser ices to the school from healtl sorkers in the state in colaborsa uon with the communiti	2 0	2 6	4	5	6	23 2	15 . 2	15. 2 5	3. 1	Accepte d
The community religion/denomj. nation is compulsory	0	0	5	2 0	3 6	9 1	9. 5	9.5 5	1. 9	Rejete d

Table 6

Analysis of questionnaire based on research question 3 on the use of school infrastructure or facilities of the urban community and school relationship.

	Statement	Responses by staff										
		S A	A	U	D	S D	X .	SD	X	X		Dccision
1 0	The school infrastructures or facilities are new,adequate and not dilapidated	3 5	2 0		3	3	26 4	162	162 5	3. 3		Accepted
	The school environment is very condu- cive for learning	4 0	2 0	1	0	0	28 3	16. 8	168 5	3. 4		Accepted

The response to statement No 1 and 2 on table 4 above,with the xw of 2.0 and 203 showed that the community never valued its own language above others like English language in the school.

The xw of 3.3 and 3.4 showed that the facilities and environment for learning were conducive.The xw of 2.0 to statement 5 showed that cultural festivals cannol obstruct school activities.

The xw of 2.3 and 2.3 to statement No 4 and 5 was an indication that farming was not the major occupation in this community and school children were not involved compulsorily.The school had a reliable PTA as shown in No 6 with the xw of 3.2 and school children are never disturbed to pay homage to their coinmunity leaders.The statement No 8 with the response xw of 3.1 indicates that there were regular health care service available to the school children in collaboration with the community and government health workers.

Table7

Summary of mean(x) and standard deviation (SD) of pupils academic acheivement in the rural and urband community based on research question 1-3.

School and community	No.of partic ipant	Subject	X	SD
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Rural	75 pupils	English language	42.2	6.5
Urban	75 pupils	English language	68.4	8.3
Rural	75 pupils	Mathematics	41.1	6.4
Urban	75 pupils	Mathematics	58.6	7.7
Rural	75 pupils	Elementary Science	60.4	7.8
Urban	75 pupils	Elementary Science	80.5	8.9

The table above showed the academic achievement of primary school pupils in rural and urban communities in English language, mathematics and elementary science.

The pupils in rural community had the mean (x) scores of 42.2, 41.1 and 60.4 in

English language, mathematics and Elementary Science with the standard deviation of 6.5, 6.4 and 7.8 respectively,

While the pupils in Urban community had the mean scores of 68.4, 58.6 and 80.5 in English language, Mathematics and Elementary Science, with standard deviation (SD) 8.3, 7.7 and 8.9 respectively.

Table 4

Summary of mean (x) and standard deviation (SD) and test analysis of pupils' academic achievement in Rural and Urban communities. Based on Research Question 1-3

School and community	No. of participant	Subject	X	SD	DF	Alpha cal	T. Cal	T. crit	Decision
Rural	75	English Language	42.2	6.5	28	0.951	9.7	2.048	Rejected
Urban	75	English Language	68.4	8.3					
Rural	75	Mathematics	41.1	6.4	28	0.05	6.7	2.048	Rejected
Urban	75	Mathematics	58.6	7.7					
Rural	75	Elementary Sci	60.4	7.8	28	0.05	6.48	2.048	Rejected
Urban	75	Elementary Sci	80.5	8.9					

Benchmark: t-crit less than T-cal rejected

The hypothesis tested at 0.05 alpha level showed the significant effect on academic achievement of primary school pupils in rural and urban communities.

The calculated t-value of 9.7, 6.7 and 6.48 in English language, Mathematics and Elementary Science respectively is greater than the table value of 2.048. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. The rejection signifies that there is a significant difference in the academic achievement of primary school pupils in urban communities with conducive learning environment, supportive relationship between the communities and the school more than the pupils in the rural community where no such supportive relationship is available.

Discussion of Results The high academic achievement of pupils in the urban community as a result of collaboration of the community with the school in providing healthy environment for learning is in agreement with the research work by Morrison (2004) in Reggio Emilia in which there is attention to detail everywhere; in the colour of the school building, conducive learning environment, good infrastructure, cross-ventilated window, good lighting, and so on, to influence high learning and academic achievement. But when such supports and collaboration are not there from the community the result is low academic achievement as reflected in the rural community. When the rural community is compared with the urban community in terms of relationship and intervention in school infrastructures, school environment, health care services, use of English language in communication, PTA formation and occupation of the people, the result was a very poor one. The poor relationship was reflected in the academic achievement of the pupils, who had a mean(x) score of 42.2, 41.1 and 60.41 in English language, Mathematics and Elementary Science respectively. And a standard deviation (SD) of 6.5, 6.4 and 7.8. The tested hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level showed that the calculated t-value greater than the table-value was rejected.

These findings are an eye-opener to the communities generally on the reasons why 93 million Nigerians are still illiterates, why there is poorer academic achievement in the rural areas than in the urban areas, and why rural community children face higher risks of having poliomyelitis, diarrhea, measles, diphtheria etc than urban community children.

Recommendations

Since it is a known fact that education is the only means to move our various communities into developments and to promote a positive climate in the Nigerian educational system, the following recommendations are hereby given. Every community, especially the rural community should brace up to the responsibilities of providing good infrastructures, such as good classroom blocks, chairs, benches, tables etc for the schools in their community. As a follow up of No 1 recommendation, the community Heads, Chiefs and King can levy themselves and members of the community, certain amount of money periodically to invest on the school in the community, for conducive learning environment.

Aforesighted community head could forbid school children to go to farm during school hours except on holidays and weekends and fine would be imposed on parents who violate the rules.

While cultural activities such as festivals should not obstruct school activities, school children should be exempted from such activities during school sessions. The school heads in the community should always have a good rapport with the community heads through a strong P.T.A where problems, prospect and suc- cesses of the school are regularly tabled.

The community heads should establish a liaison committees between the com- munity and the Government where matters affecting the community are discussed.

Lastly,governmeht should endeavour to reach every community,especially the rural ones and concentrate on developing them,through the provision of good facilities in the school,healthy environment and health care services.

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