



Perceived Parental Involvement in School Activities in Secondary Schools in South-East Nigeria

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author JAA designed the study, managed the literature searches and wrote the protocol. Author LIA, wrote the first draft of the manuscript and performed the statistical analysis. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Aims: The study ascertained perceived parental involvement in school activities in secondary schools in South-east Nigeria.

Study design: Descriptive survey research design.

Place and duration of study: Secondary school students in South-east Nigeria, between 2019/2020.

Methodology: The study used simple random sampling technique to draw 520 (200 male and 320 female) senior secondary school II students from the total population. Specifically, the toss of die type of simple random sampling was used to draw the sample. The instrument for data collection is a structured questionnaire titled "Students perception on the extent of parental involvement in school activities questionnaire (SPEPISAQ)". The reliability of the instrument and internal consistency of the questionnaire items were established using Cronbach Alpha statistics which yield an overall reliability coefficient of 0.88, indicating a high-level reliability of the items in the instrument. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation (for research questions). The t-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses raised. The item analysis was

based on real limit of numbers ranging from 1.00-1.49 (very low extent) to 3.50-4.00 (very high extent), and the decision rule for the null hypotheses was thus; do not reject the null hypotheses if the significant value is greater than the p-value, otherwise reject the null hypotheses if the calculated value is less than the p-value at 0.05.

Results: A grand mean of 3.14 which indicates that students' perception on the extent of parental involvement in debate activities is to high extent. The standard deviation score ranges from 0.66 – 1.01, this shows that students are heterogeneous in their rating. The data analysis revealed that the significant value is greater than the alpha value (Sig. value = 1.021, P value=0.05), hence, the extent of parental involvement in debate activities in secondary schools is not statistically significant based on gender. The results further revealed a grand mean of 3.16 which indicates that students' perception on the extent of parental involvement in school publication activities is to a high extent. The standard deviation score ranges from 0.59 – 1.11, this shows that students are heterogeneous in their response. The corresponding hypothesis tested revealed that the significant value is greater than the alpha value (Sig. value = 0.006, P value=0.05). This goes to show that the extent of parental involvement in school publication in secondary schools is not statistically significant based on gender. More so, the analysis resulted with a grand mean of 2.12 which indicates that students' perception on the extent of parental involvement in school club activities is to a low extent. The standard deviation scores range from 0.49 – 0.94, this shows that students are homogeneous in their response. The result further showed that the significant value is less than the alpha value (Sig. value = 0.002, P value=0.05). this goes to show that the extent of parental involvement in school club activities in secondary schools is not statistically significant based on gender.

Conclusion: Based on the findings of this study it was concluded that, students' perception on the extent of parental involvement in debate activities is to high extent, the extent of parental involvement in school publication activities is to a high extent, the extent of parental involvement in school club activities is to a low extent. The extent of parental involvement in school publication in secondary schools is not statistically significant, Also, the extent of parental involvement in debate activities in secondary schools is not statistically significant. Finally, the extent of parental involvement in school club activities in secondary schools is not statistically significant based on gender.

Keywords: Students; parental involvement; school activities; secondary school.

1. INTRODUCTION

The issue of increasing decline of student's interest in academic activities has remained a source of concern to several scholars and researchers. These school activities are just as important as academic itself in the growth and development of school students. Hence it becomes imperative to integrate in the curriculum different extra-curricular activities ranging from sports, excursion and several entrepreneurship classes that could help in the all-round development of school students. According to [1], extracurricular activities are defined as the activities in which the students participate after the regular school day has ended. These activities may include high school athletics, school clubs, debates, marching band, chorus, orchestra, school publications and student leadership organizations. Nevertheless, it is important to note the differences between extracurricular activities and co-curricular activities. Co-curricular activities are activities

that occur during the normal class time [2]. Most students who participate in high school band, school debate, clubs and chorus, and school publications spend countless hours outside of the normal classroom activities. For this reason, these activities are classified as extracurricular activities.

However, [3] states that there is a strong association between student participation in extracurricular activities and improved attendance, behavior, and academic performance [3] further explained that all students who participate in some type of extracurricular activity perform better than students who are not involved. This involvement includes participation in sports and other school sponsored activities. Students who are consistently exposed to some school activities perform better than students that are not exposed [4]. Furthermore, [4] reported that most states do not place any academic requirements on participation in student clubs, participation in

debates, and participation in school publications among others.

In the view of [5], debate groups in schools are geared towards improving students' level of enlightenment in academic, social and National activities. On the other hand, academic school clubs such as Jet clubs, Beta Club, Mathematical Club do require students with high academic achievement. In most cases, the school publication may have to meet with certain standards before publications are accepted. In the same vein, students are encouraged to write novels and story books for school publications. This enhances students' vocabulary and writing horizon [5]. On the other hand, [6] posited that individual differences in participation in academic activities have been linked to many factors including differences in intelligence, personality and school related factors. [6] observed that students with higher mental ability as demonstrated by IQ tests and those who are higher in conscientiousness linked to certain factors tend to achieve highly in academic settings.

Students at secondary school level shows changes at multiple levels which include biological and cognitive growth, social development and family relationship, especially the parent-child relationship and school-teacher relationship [7]. Parent-child interactions, specifically stimulating and responsive parenting activities, are important influence on a child's academic development [8]. This is because parents are the first teacher a child comes in contact with right from birth. The parent teaches the students their first language, pay school fees and eventually follow them up through their academic progress. Hence, it could be said that parents ought to be practically involved with their children's overall learning process from cradle.

Furthermore, [9] highlighted parental involvement in their children's school activities to include, home-based activities and school-based activities. Home-based activities include helping children with homework, encouraging reading, school attendance. Whereas school-based activities are attending Parents'/Teachers' Association Meeting, Parent/Teacher Conference and participating in fund raising activities, encouraging debate activities, sponsoring school publications, sponsoring school club activities, visiting their children's schools, meeting up with teachers

and counsellors. Specifically, students whose parents are more involved in their education/school activities are likely to have higher level of academic achievement than children whose parents are involved to a lesser degree. The influence of parent involvement on academic achievement has not only been noted among researchers, but also among policy makers who have integrated efforts aimed at increasing parent involvement into broader educational policy initiatives. Parental involvement in the context of this study is therefore seen as activities that parents engage in both at home and at school and positive attitudes parent's exhibit towards their child's learning, the school, and the teachers.

According to [10], effective and lasting participation in school activities is built on caring relationships and warm but challenging classroom and school environments. Therefore parents, schools and communities all need to work together to create an environment that facilitates healthy development of students both in core-curricular and extra-curricular. Similarly, if students do not feel a sense of belonging at school, they may not feel connected to the school and this may lower their likelihood to focus or be engaged in a meaningful school activity be it home-based, school based or extra-curricular. Observations have shown that, the Nigerian society places great emphasis on participation in school activities because it is believed to be an important aspect in individual and National development. However, it is believed that this can only be achieved if students, especially those at the secondary school level who are in the citadel of learning get actively involved in pursuits of academic excellence. This, however, seems not to be the case presently as researchers such as [11] and [12] had showed that students' interest in school activities is still on decline, especially those of secondary school.

Topor [13] study examined parent involvement in a child's education and potential mechanism of this association of the child's perception of cognitive competence and the quality of the student-teacher relationship in North Carolina, USA. Data were gathered from the child and the child's mother during two visits to the laboratory and from the child's teacher during one visit to the child's school. Four regression analyses were performed to test each potential mediator and variables considered as co-variants were controlled for in all regression equations. A

multiple mediation model was used to examine if both potential mediators jointly reduce the direct effect of parent involvement on a child's social engagement for intellectual development and to better understand the unique contribution of each individual mediator when the other mediator is controlled. Results indicated a statistically significant association between parent involvement and a child's social cognition, over and above the impact of the child's intelligence. A multiple mediation model indicated that the child's perception of cognitive competence fully mediated the relation between parent involvement and the child's social activities in general. The quality of student-teacher relationship fully mediated the relation between parent involvement and teacher ratings of the child's classroom academic performance.

Further stating, [14] stated that engaging students in planning for their future including career and personal goals assists them in mapping out steps with which they can meet their goals and opening up possibility for socialization and stronger relationships with students. This idea further emphasized the need to encourage the need to make a concerted effort to reach out to students, to create conducive atmosphere where the students could be made to have a sense of belonging. From the foregoing, it could be deduced that students' feeling of support and encouragement in school is an important determinant of students learning experience and participation in school activities. Similarly, the involvement of parents in their child's participation in school activities is critical to their success or failure and the overall engagement in school activities. These school activities have led to an overall academic achievement in both internal and external assessments. Apparently, the decline in interest in school activities like debate competitions, school publications and school clubs among students has been on the increase. This is such that schools are gradually losing its reputation in external competition, which could likely result in loss of confidence in the students of these schools. More so, if not rectified, this situation could lead these young students into being involved in societal crimes such as drug abuse, dropping out of school, loss of interest in academic activities both extra-curricular and core-curricular and some may turn out to become street urchins. Alternatively, when parents are directly involved in their children's school activities, they tend to be noticeable difference in their academic pursuit

and outcome. Students gender has overtime been seen as another factor which tend to influence their level of participation in school activities. Thus, it has been a source of major concern to many and research effort has been geared towards investigating factors in parents' involvement in their students' school activities. Hence, despite efforts made, there is an existing gap in determining the extent of parental involvement in school activities in secondary schools in South-east Nigeria. Based on this unsatisfactory state of affairs the present study determined perceived parental involvement in school activities in secondary schools in South-east Nigeria. Specifically, the study will determine perceived parental involvement in debate activities in secondary schools, perceived parental involvement in school publication activities in secondary schools, perceived parental involvement in school club activities in secondary schools in South-east Nigeria.

1.1 Research Questions

1. What is the extent of parental involvement in debate activities in secondary schools in South-east, Nigeria?
2. What is the extent of parental involvement in school publication activities in secondary schools in South-east, Nigeria?
3. What is the extent of parental involvement in school club activities in secondary schools in South-east, Nigeria?

1.2 Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. The extent of parental involvement in debate activities in secondary schools is not statistically significant based on gender (male & female).
2. The extent of parental involvement in school club activities in secondary schools is not statistically significant based on gender (male & female)
3. The extent of parental involvement in school publication activities in secondary schools is not statistically significant based on gender (male & female).

2. METHODOLOGY

This study on perceived parental involvement in school activities in secondary schools in South-east Nigeria adopted descriptive survey

research design, which according to [15] is aimed at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner the characteristics, features or facts about a given population. Descriptive survey design is considered appropriate for this study because the study sought to describe certain variables (parental involvement) in relation to the population (academic activities) in secondary schools. The study was carried out in South-east, Nigeria. The target population of the study comprised of all senior secondary school students in the 1,352 secondary schools in south-east Nigeria. However, the accessible population is 1026 senior secondary school II students (760 male and 266 female) in public secondary schools in Onitsha south education zone. Through this, a sample size of 520 (204 males, 316 female) secondary school II students was selected. The procedure for selection was the multi-stage sampling procedure. Using this sampling procedure, the toss of die was employed, simple random sampling technique was used to select twenty secondary schools in the Education Zone. Secondly, proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select 26 SS II students from each secondary school drawn earlier (proportion = 0.26). The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers. The instrument was structured from insight gotten from the review of related literature. This was done in two sections A and B. section A contained information on demographic data of the respondents. Section B comprise three clusters covering school activities (debate activities, school club activities, school publication activities). The questionnaire was validated by two experts, the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.85 for the cluster 1, 0.78 for cluster 2, and 0.81 for cluster 3 respectively, with an overall reliability coefficient of 0.88, indicating a high reliability level of the items in the questionnaire. Copies of the instrument were administered personally by the researcher with the help of two research assistants. In data analysis, descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used for answering research questions 1, 2 and 3. The responses of the respondents (students) was rated thus, 3.50-4.00 = very high extent, 2.50-3.49 = high extent, 1.50-2.49 = low extent, 1.00-1.49 = very low extent. The t-test for independent sample was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. The analysis was done using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS 23).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: What is the extent of parental involvement in debate activities in secondary schools in South-east Nigeria?

Hypotheses 1: The extent of parental involvement in debate activities in secondary schools is not statistically significant.

Data presented in Table 1 shows the item mean scores of students' perception on the extent of parental involvement in debate activities in secondary schools in south-east Nigeria. The students' rated item 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7 to a high extent, while items 2 and 5 were rated to a low extent. On the whole, the analysis resulted in a grand mean of 3.14 which indicates that students' perception on the extent of parental involvement in debate activities is to high extent. The standard deviation scores rages from 0.66 – 1.01, this shows that the respondents' responses are heterogeneous (spread apart) from the mean.

This finding is supported by the findings of [13] which reports a statistically significant association between parent involvement and a child's academic performance, over and above the impact of the child's intelligence. This could be due to parent's beliefs about what they should do in the context of their child education. Consequently, understanding the psychological foundations of parent involvement is critical in designing and implementing programs, policies, and practices for students in secondary schools which the researcher believes could still be lacking among the school system in Nigeria.

Data presented in Table 4 shows the t-test summary on the extent of parental involvement in debate activities in secondary schools based on gender. The analysis showed that the significant value is greater than the alpha value (Sig. value = 1.021, P value=0.05). This goes to show that the null hypotheses is accepted based on the decision rule. Hence the extent of parental involvement in debate activities in secondary schools is not statistically significant based on gender. The findings of this study is in agreement with [14] who found that engaging students (male and female) in planning for their future including career and personal goals assists them in mapping out steps to meet their goals and opening up the possibility for socialization and stronger relationships with

students. This idea further emphasized the need to encourage the need to make concerted effort to reach out to students, and create conducive atmosphere where students could have a sense of belonging.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of parental involvement in school publications activities in secondary schools in South-east, Nigeria?

Hypothesis 2: The extent of parental involvement in school publication activities in secondary schools in south-east is not statistically significant.

Data presented in Table 2 shows the item mean scores of students' perception on the extent of parental involvement in school publication activities in secondary schools in south-east Nigeria. The students' rated items 12 to a very high extent, 9, 10, 13 and 14 to a high extent, while item 8 was rated to a low extent. On the whole, the analysis resulted in a grand mean of 3.16 which indicates that students' perception on the extent of parental involvement in school publication activities is to a high extent. The standard deviation score ranges from 0.59 – 1.11, this shows that the respondent's responses are heterogeneous (spread apart) from the mean. These findings align with [16] who sampled grade 4 students (male and female) and found that that parents' contribution to their children's education has a consistent and positive effect on academic achievement. This from the findings of this study includes other school activities such as school publications.

Data presented in Table 5 shows the t-test summary on the extent of parental involvement in school publication in secondary schools based on gender. The analysis showed that the significant value is greater than the alpha value (Sig. value = 0.006, P value=0.05). This goes to show that the null hypothesis is accepted based on the decision rule. Hence the extent of parental involvement in school publication in secondary schools is not statistically significant based on gender. This finding agrees with the finding of [13] which indicated a statistically significant difference in the mean rating of students on perceived parent involvement and a child's academic performance, over and above the impact of the child's intelligence. A multiple mediation model indicated that the child's

perception of cognitive competence fully mediated the relation between parent involvement and the child's performance on a standardized achievement test.

Research Question 3: What is the extent of parental involvement in school club activities in secondary schools in South-east, Nigeria?

Hypotheses 3: The extent of parental involvement in school club activities in secondary schools is not statistically significant?

Data presented in Table 3 shows the item mean scores of students' perception on the extent of parental involvement in school club activities in secondary schools. The students' rated items 17 and 18 to a high extent, items 16 to a low extent, and items 15, 20 and 21 to a very low extent. On the whole, the analysis resulted in a grand mean of 2.12 which indicates that students' perception on the extent of parental involvement in school club activities is to a low extent. The standard deviation scores range from 0.49 – 0.94, this shows that the respondents' responses are homogeneous (spread within) with the mean. This disagrees with the study of [17] which found that findings from the study shows that parenting style and type have correlation with the adolescents and not psychological adjustment of the adolescents.

Data presented in Table 6 shows the t-test summary on the extent of parental involvement in school club activities in secondary schools based on gender. The analysis showed that the significant value is less than the alpha value (Sig. value = 0.002, P value=0.05). This goes to show that the null hypothesis is not accepted based on the decision rule. Hence the extent of parental involvement in school club activities in secondary schools is not statistically significant based on gender. This finding disagrees with the findings of [18] who researched on the relationship between parental contribution in students' addiction and adolescent academic achievement. It was found that adolescents who perceived their parents' communication with them as better, performed well in school, while those that perceived their parents' communication as poor did not perform well. The adolescent performance among others recorded include activities carried out in school clubs.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation on the extent of parental involvement in debate activities (N=520)

S/N	Items on parental involvement in debate activities	Mean	SD	Remark
1	My parents are involved in the planning of debate session in my school	3.22	1.01	High extent
2	My parents are involved in rehearsing debate lines with me	2.32	.66	Low extent
3	My parents are involved in the use of encyclopaedias for search of debate terminologies	3.11	.95	High extent
4	My parents attend all the debates organized in my school	3.26	.66	High extent
5	My parent have initiated contact with at least two or more teachers in the debate organizing committee	2.39	.84	Low extent
6	My parents encourages me to participate in on air debate programmes	3.41	.71	High extent
7	Debate related books are purchased by my parents to enable me study for any debate session	3.26	.82	High extent
	Grand mean	3.14		High extent

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation on the extent of parental involvement in school publication activities (N=520)

S/N	Items on parental involvement in school publication activities	Mean	SD	Remark
8	My story books are read by my parents for school publication	2.21	1.03	Low extent
9	My parent is a member of the school publication committee	3.14	.83	High extent
10	My parents buys all monthly publications from my school	3.45	1.11	High extent
11	My parents are involved in all school magazines	3.18	.91	High extent
12	My parents support my interest in the school press activities	3.77	.59	Very high extent
13	My parents financially supports my school publication	3.15	.81	High extent
14	All novels written by students are insights from parents	3.25	.88	High extent
	Grand mean	3.16		High extent

Table 3. Mean and standard deviation on the extent of parental involvement in school club activities (N=520)

S/N	Items on parental involvement in school club activities	Mean	SD	Remark
15	My parents are involved in my registration with school clubs due to subject difficulty	1.26	.56	Very low extent
16	My parents are involved with the JET club in my school	2.30	.94	Low extent
17	My parents attend PTA meetings held in regards to school club activities	3.02	.59	High extent
18	My parents selects school clubs I should join based on their interest	3.44	.82	High extent
19	I have a choice of which school club to belong	2.37	.49	Low extent
20	My parent prefers me helping out in their businesses instead of participating in school clubs	1.33	.77	Very low extent
21	My parents embraces the ides of school clubs because they are aware of how it promotes learning	1.11	.79	Very low extent
	Grand mean	2.12		Low extent

Table 4. T-test summary on the extent of parental involvement in debate activities in secondary schools based on gender (520)

Sources of variable	Mean	SD	N	t _{value}	df	Sig. value	Alpha value	Decision
Male	10.30	0.69	204	10.74	518	1.021	0.05	Not statistically significant
Female	12.61	0.51	316					

Table 5. T-test summary on the extent of parental involvement in publication activities in secondary schools based on gender (520)

Sources of variable	Mean	SD	N	t _{value}	df	Sig. value	Alpha value	Decision
Male	13.18	0.13	204	13.83	518	0.062	0.05	Not statistically significant
Female	10.07	0.41	316					

Table 6. T-test summary on the extent of parental involvement in school club activities in secondary schools based on gender (520)

Sources of variable	Mean	SD	N	t _{value}	df	Sig. value	Alpha value	Decision
Male	16.11	1.08	204	9.03	518	0.002	0.05	Statistically significant
Female	12.71	0.63	316					

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study it was concluded that, students’ perception on the extent of parental involvement in debate activities is to high extent, the extent of parental involvement in school publication activities is to a high extent, the extent of parental involvement in school club activities is to a low extent. The extent of parental involvement in school publication in secondary schools is not statistically significant, Also, the extent of parental involvement in debate activities in secondary schools is not statistically significant. Finally, the extent of parental involvement in school club activities in secondary schools is not statistically significant based on gender.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, respondents’ written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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