

School-Community Collaboration: A Correlate of Teachers' Productivity in Public Primary Schools in Enugu, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The productivity of primary school teachers is increasingly questionable, while head teachers seem helpless in the face of the situation. While seeking to improve the teachers' productivity, one wonders if the school's host community has no role to play. This study investigated the relationship between the host community's interaction with the school and the teachers' productivity in primary schools in Enugu state. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study comprised all the head teachers in the public primary schools in Enugu state. The study's sample size was 84 headteachers, representing 20% of the population. Random sampling procedure was used to draw the sample. Data was collected using a researcher made structured instrument titled "School-Community Collaboration and Teachers' Productivity Questionnaire" (SCTPQ). The instrument was validated by three experts and trial tested. An internal consistency reliability index of 0.76 was obtained using Cronbach alpha method. Simple linear regression analysis was utilized in analyzing the data collected. The study's findings revealed a positive relationship between school-community collaboration and teachers' productivity. The recommendation therefore, is that headteachers should maintain mutual and cordial collaboration with the schools' host community.

Keywords: School-community, collaboration, Teachers, Productivity and Public Primary school.

INTRODUCTION

The relevance of education as a tool for national growth and development can never be overstated. Through a well-orchestrated educational structure, every level of workforce needed in the community could be provided. Education is an agent of socialization that integrates an individual into the society that she/he belongs. To this effect, education is seen as a process of developing the physical, intellectual as well as the emotional strengths of an individual to participate actively in the life of the community (Okenyi et al. 2017). The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2013) clearly viewed education as a dynamic mechanism for national growth. Education, therefore, is developing and re-programming the potential, mental and physical powers, as well as the skills of an individual through formal schooling, which starts formally in primary school.

Primary school is an educational institution for children between 6 and 12 years old. Chukwu (2015) conceptualized primary school as an educational institution where children receive primary education. Brain (2014) insisted that primary school refers to an integrated educational and health model serving families and their children from birth through the transition to high school. Furthermore, Brain maintained that the vision and mission of the primary school focuses on socialization as well as the refinement of the sensibilities of the child. Primary school is an institution of learning with an integrated curriculum for children to receive the rudiments of education (Okenyi, et al. (2019). A primary school, therefore, is a school where children

receive primary education in preparation for secondary school education. Every primary school is therefore, situated in a geographical area called a community.

A community is a social unit occupying an area larger than a village. Community refers to a group of people living in a particular area and sharing some common characteristics. Community is a demarcated geographical location inhabited by different species of life that share common environmental settings (Okenyi et al., 2015). Scoth 2016 conceptualized community as a group of people living together, and communicate earnestly with one another sharing the same feelings. A community therefore, is a group of people living together in a particular geographical location sharing a common characteristic, cultural norms and traditions. Okenyi et al. (2017) maintained that each community must collaborate with her neighborhood school.

Effective school collaboration is inevitable. According to the FRN (2013), “the school system and consequently her management and day-to-day administration shall grow out of the life and social character of the community which she serves”. School-community collaboration refers to the interaction between the school and her immediate environment. School-community collaboration is a process through which the school is integrated into the community and receives intervention from her host community (Okenyi et al. 2015). School-community collaboration describes chains of calculated events as well as channels through which the school obtain information concerning her host community as well as inform the community of the programs, and needs of the school and so involve the community in planning, execution and evaluation of the schools’ policies and progress (Iremeka, 2018). School-community collaboration, therefore, is the mutual and symbiotic relationship between schools and their immediate communities, which aims at realizing the school’s objectives without jeopardizing the community’s societal goals.

School-community collaboration stimulates a collaborative process of using multi-dimensional ways to solve problems for the general good. Since the community constructs schools for her members’ benefit, it is self-evident that such schools should collaborate with the community to achieve the school’s desirable goals. School-community collaboration goes a long way to complement as well as reinforce values, cultures and learnings intended for the school to provide (Kemp, 2017). Similarly, Anake (2018) pointed out that in school-community collaboration, the community through the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) assist the school in numerous ways such as; fund-raising, provision and maintenance of school plants as well as improving school effectiveness in relation to learners’ academic achievement, physical and moral development. The PTA and her functions have been replaced with School-Based Management Committee (SBMC).

The process of repositioning education cannot be effectively and efficiently achieved without the intervention of the communities through school-community collaboration. Yet despite the efforts of the community members, the citizens are most often kept in the dark regarding the school’s challenges and prospects (Akinyemi et al. 2019). Emphasizing the importance of collaboration between the school and the host community, the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) stated that the local people, particularly parents, would be encouraged to participate in the school’s management. Thus, stating that government-takeover of schools, where applicable was without prejudice to community involvement and participation in the management of the school. Hence, the community participation in school management is receiving more attention in educational circles in Nigeria. Obviously, this resulted in the establishment of the SBMC mentioned earlier. Iqbal (2018) pointed out that the headteachers should engage the host communities and work in collaboration with parents and other stakeholders to create the community in the schools and schools in the community. This is imperative since the community’s acceptance of the ownership of the school is significantly dependent on her members’ understanding of the school, and the goals and objectives of the school. It is only when this understanding is made possible and positive through the school’s close and consistent interaction with the community that the community can be of help to the school staff

especially teachers.

Teachers are trained and deployed to schools for the sole purpose of teaching the learners. Teachers are persons recruited into an educational institution to inculcate knowledge into the learners who are enrolled into the institution (Iremeka, 2018). Teachers model the children, give them focus in life and arouse in them the desire for excellence as useful community members. Iremeka further stated that teachers are skilled in shaping and molding the children's morals, intellectual and social skills. The author added that a qualified teacher must have some requisite qualifications and capacity to fulfil some basic roles. Vallikat, (2020) outlined the roles of the teacher as follow; research and create evocative education experiences that may enable learners to solve real-life challenges. Take responsibility for the children's safety while in the school, control and manage learners' behaviours in the classrooms and in the school, maintain proper records of the children's progress and development, and give appropriate feedback to parents. Serve as a model to the children among others. The success and failure of the primary school system depends on the teacher's basic roles. Usman (2016) pointed out that the progress and the downturn of the education system as a whole is predicated on the effectiveness and productivity of the teachers.

Teacher's productivity refers to the extent a teacher is able to deliver in her/his roles and responsibility to the school and the pupils. Teachers' productivity is dependent on a number of variables including but not limited to professional trainings, attitudes, academic background as well as educational substructure of the Institution obtainable at a particular time (Ndugu, 2014). Iremeka (2018) conceptualized teacher's productivity as a soft skill made manifest in the teachers' expertise, competence, proficiency, and professionalism displayed in the instructional processes that result in achieving set educational objectives, which culminates in the learners' enhanced academic achievement. Teachers' productivity therefore, is the skills of the teacher to offer critical inputs such as adequate planning, effective and efficient delivery of lessons, adequate record keeping, monitoring and appraisal of learners, providing regular feedbacks on learners' performance, as well as improvisation of instructional materials, and suitable discipline of learners, to produce and improve anticipated learning outcomes in primary school.

Educational activities, which include but not limited to the above variables are statutory tasks of the teachers, and significantly determine the extent to which the set educational goals of the school is achieved. This seems to depend on the level of commitment of the headteachers and teachers in utilizing and adequately harmonizing the available human and material resources to ensure adequate and effective educational activities in the school (Oni et al. 2017). Teachers' productivity is essential in successful teaching-learning process and pupils' academic achievement. Teachers' productivity is generally measured through value added models, headteacher's or administrator's rating and learner's academic achievement among others (Sawchuk, 2015). Ndugu (2014) insisted that the most effective way to measure the teacher's productivity is by the learners' performance in terms of academic achievement, social skills acquisition, and in character. Contrary to this view, some scholars like Graham et al. (2020), argued that in education system, learners' test scores and grades only, might not be used to determine the quality of instruction in the school since many other factors influence learners academic achievement. To this effect, one cannot determine teachers' productivity only by the pupils' classroom achievement but by putting other factors, that aid the realization of the school set goals into consideration. Considering that the relationship between the schools and their host communities is a significant factor in the realization of the schools' educational set goals, one wonders if there is a relationship between school-community collaboration and teachers' productivity in primary schools. Thus, this study investigated the association between school-community collaboration and teachers' productivity.

In a study that examined the effect of the collaboration between the school and her host community on the efficiency of teachers in senior secondary schools, Iremeka (2018), found among others that positive school-community relationship positively influences teachers' productivity in secondary

school. Owan (2019) in another study that investigated school-community collaboration and the school success in secondary schools in Rivers State discovered that school community collaboration has significant influence on the school's success and the school staff's productivity. Similarly, Kwashabawa (2019) in a study that assessed school community relationship in secondary schools in Zamfara State found that a good rapport between the schools and their host communities positively impacts the schools' staff output.

The quality of teachers is possibly one of the nonnegotiable variables that influence the standard of education at all levels. The most prominent determinant of quality of education and instruction is the learners achievement which largely dependent on the quality of the teacher. In primary schools today, there abound cases of pupils' insubordination, lousiness, and mass failures in internal and external examination orchestrated by the low quality of teachers and teachers' unproductivity (Kwashabawa 2019). Poor professional ethics, truancy, lack of skilled teachers, teachers' absenteeism among others is the order of the day. Considering the magnitude of responsibilities and challenges faced by the Nigerian teachers, one finds out that the current teacher training program is not sufficient to equip the teacher and enhance his productivity (Okenyi, 2023). Nevertheless, such embarrassing situations such as insufficient fund, lack of instructional materials, inadequate human and material educational resources, irregular payment of salaries and allowances, non-existence of in-service training and teachers' welfare scheme, as well as lack of teachers' development programs in Enugu State seem to be on the increase, and so sabotaging teachers' productivity (Ezema et al, 019).

There are numerous cases of crisis between the school teachers and school host communities. Thi situations have always been on the ground of allegation of the community member encroaching into the school land, vandalizing the school property among other. To this end, many school teachers and headteacher have devoted more time to seeking justice and apprehending the pepetrators of such acts than teaching the learners. On this basis therefore, one wonders if teachers' productivity could be enhanced if a reciprocal collaboration existed between the schools and their host communities. Such a collaboration that binds the schools and their host community members, materials and some other resources together culminating in a desirable school environment for attainment of set educational goals. The problem of this study therefore is, to determine if there is any correlation between school-community collaboration and teachers' productivity in primary schools in Enugu, Nigeria.

Research Question

1. What is the relationship between school-community collaboration and teachers' productivity in public primary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance

Ho₁: School-community collaboration has no significant relationship with teachers' productivity in public primary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

METHODS

The study adopted a correlational research design, which according to Formplus (2020), the researcher investigates the relationships between two or more variables without manipulating any of the variables. This study examined the relationship between school-community collaboration and teachers' productivity in Enugu State.

This design has was successfully used by Achagh et al. (2020), Eya et al. (2020), Ezema et al. (2019), Gana

et al. (2019), Okenyi, et al. (2021) Ugwuanyi and Okeke (2020), Ugwuanyi et al. (2020a, b, c) in similar studies.

The population of the study comprised 1,226 head teachers in the entire 1,226 public primary schools in the seventeen (17) Local Government Areas in Enugu State. The study’s sample size was 85 head teachers, 5 each from every local government drawn through Random Sampling technique. The strata were 48 female and 37 male head teachers. This represents 20% of the population. The instrument for data collection was researcher-made questionnaire titled “School-Community Collaboration and Teachers’ Productivity Questionnaire” (SCTPQ). Three experts validated the questionnaire validated the questionnaire validated the questionnaire; one each from Childhood Education Unit, Education Administration and Planning Unit, and Measurement and Evaluation Unit, all of the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The instrument was grouped into two (2) clusters of thirteen (13) items. Cluster A (7) items was on school community relationship while cluster B (6) items was on teachers productivity in Enugu State public Schools. The instrument was trial-tested in Benue state which has the same characteristics with the study area. The instrument’s reliability was ascertained using Cronbach alpha method, which yielded reliability indices of 0.75 for school-community collaboration questionnaire and 0.79 for teachers’ productivity questionnaire, indicating that the instrument is adequate for the study. Data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question: What is the relationship between school-community collaboration and teachers’ productivity in public primary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Regression analysis of the relationship between school-community collaboration and teachers’ productivity in public primary schools

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.773 a	.598	.593	2.85479
a. Predictors: (Constant), School Community Collaboration				

Table 1 shows that there is a high positive correlation coefficient between school-community collaboration and teachers’ productivity, $R(85) = .773$, $R^2 = .598$. This indicates that 59.8% positive teacher productivity change can be attributed to school-community collaboration.

Ho₁: School-community collaboration has no significant relationship with teachers’ productivity in public primary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Table 2: Analysis of variance of the relationship between school-community collaboration and teachers’ productivity

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1004.787	1	1004.787	123.289	.000 b
	Residual	676.437	83	8.150		
	Total	1681.224	84			
a. Dependent Variable: Teacher Productivity						
b. Predictors: (Constant), School Community Collaboration						

Table 2 revealed that there is a relationship between school-community collaboration and teachers' productivity, $F(1, 83) = 123.289, p = 0.000$. This implies that the null hypothesis was rejected ($p < 0.05$).

DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS

School-community collaboration is an indispensable factor for the achievement of the objectives of the primary schools. As indicated in table 1, the relationship between the primary school teachers and the school host community in Enugu state is high and positive. In addition, the analysis in table 2 indicated a significant relationship between teachers' productivity and school-community collaboration. This is because 59.8% of positive teacher productivity change was attributed to school-community collaboration.

The findings of the study collaborated with the findings of Iremeka (2018), Owan (2019) and Kwashabawa (2019), who found out that school community collaboration has a positive influence on school staff's (teachers inclusive) efficiency and productivity in secondary schools. The study therefore concluded that there is a positive correlation between school community collaboration and teachers' productivity in public primary schools in Enugu state, Nigeria.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded therefore, that school-community collaboration is a vital factor for the achievement of the objectives of the primary schools since, it significantly and positively influences the efficiency and productivity of the teachers as well as other school staff. This means that a cordial interaction and collaboration between the primary school and her host community improves the primary school teachers' productivity. Hence, it is recommended that the headteachers and the primary school managers should ensure a robust, mutual and cordial school-community collaboration between the primary school and her host community. Again, the Ministry of Education should regularly organize workshops for primary school staff and community leaders on school-community collaboration.

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