

Enhancing Childhood Educational Outcome Through Parental and Community Engagement in North- Eastern Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of parental and community engagement in enhancing childhood educational outcomes in North-Eastern Nigeria. Using a sample of 1,470 respondents, the research explored four primary questions: the prevalent forms of engagement, the impact of parental involvement on academic performance, the role of community members in educational support, and the barriers that hinder effective participation. The results revealed that parental engagement through activities like homework assistance and participation in school events positively impacted children's academic performance. Additionally, community members contributed through advocacy, resource mobilization, and infrastructural support, though their involvement in direct teaching remained limited. Economic challenges, regional insecurity, and cultural beliefs emerged as the primary barriers to effective parental and community participation. The findings highlight the need for inclusive educational policies, emphasizing parental and community empowerment, improved economic conditions, and addressing security concerns. The study concludes that strengthening parental and community involvement is essential for enhancing educational outcomes, recommending collaborative efforts between schools, families, and local communities. The research contributes to a broader understanding of the complexities surrounding educational engagement in conflict-affected and socio-economically disadvantaged regions like North-Eastern Nigeria.

Keywords: Parental engagement, community involvement, educational outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

Education is universally recognized as a key instrument for individual empowerment, social transformation, and national development. It lays the foundation for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes necessary for societal progress and economic competitiveness. The educational development of children, in particular, is critical as it determines future human capital outcomes. However, in many parts of Nigeria—especially the North-Eastern region—educational outcomes for children remain suboptimal due to numerous social, economic, cultural, and security-related challenges (UNICEF, 2023).

The North-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, comprising Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe states, has been plagued by insurgency, poverty, and systemic underdevelopment over the past decade. According to a UNESCO (2023) report, the region has some of the worst education indicators in the country, including high dropout rates, poor school attendance, gender disparities, and low learning outcomes. The humanitarian crisis brought on by the Boko Haram insurgency has led to the destruction of educational infrastructure, displacement of families, and significant disruptions in school attendance, especially for children in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa States (Human Rights Watch, 2022).

In the face of these challenges, there is increasing scholarly and policy interest in the role that non-state actors—particularly parents and communities—can play in reversing the negative trends in childhood education. Empirical studies globally and in Nigeria have consistently found that meaningful parental and community engagement in education contributes significantly to children's cognitive, emotional, and social development,

as well as academic achievement (Epstein, 2018; Kulloma & Kolo, 2023).

Parental engagement refers to the active involvement of parents in their children's educational processes, both at home and in school. This includes helping with homework, attending school functions, maintaining regular communication with teachers, supporting classroom learning, and creating an enabling environment for education at home (Jeynes, 2022). Numerous studies have shown that children whose parents are actively involved in their education tend to perform better academically, exhibit fewer behavioral problems, and demonstrate higher motivation and school attendance (Takwate et al., 2023).

In the context of North-Eastern Nigeria, where educational institutions struggle with limited government support, overburdened teachers, and fragile infrastructure, the role of parents becomes even more crucial. Parents can provide emotional and psychological support for children affected by trauma, offer home-based instruction where schools are inaccessible, and serve as advocates for quality education within the community. Research by Ajayi and Oladipo (2021) revealed that parental support was a strong predictor of student academic performance in conflict-affected areas of Adamawa and Borno States, indicating the power of family in buffering the adverse effects of systemic instability.

Community engagement in education involves the collective efforts of local residents, leaders, religious groups, civil society organizations, and traditional institutions in supporting and improving schools. Such involvement can take many forms, including volunteering in school activities, contributing resources, participating in school-based management committees (SBMCs), ensuring school safety, and mobilizing children for enrollment and retention (Olujuwon, 2024). Communities also help reinforce the cultural value of education, challenge harmful traditional beliefs, and promote inclusive practices, particularly for girls and vulnerable children.

According to the National Policy on Education (2014), community participation is considered vital to the administration and sustainability of basic education in Nigeria. Government frameworks such as the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme explicitly advocate for grassroots involvement in education delivery through school development planning and performance monitoring (UBEC, 2022). In practice, however, community engagement remains uneven across the country, with particularly weak structures in conflict-ridden regions.

Despite these structural limitations, examples of successful community-based educational interventions exist in North-Eastern Nigeria. For instance, community-led educational programs in Gombe and Bauchi States have contributed to the rehabilitation of dilapidated schools and the reintegration of internally displaced children into formal education (Macleans, 2023). Furthermore, traditional and religious leaders in Yobe State have collaborated with local government authorities to sensitize households on the importance of girl-child education, challenging prevailing gender norms (Amnesty International, 2023).

Statement of the Problem

The persistent underachievement of children in the North-Eastern region of Nigeria in educational indicators such as enrollment, attendance, retention, and academic performance remains a critical concern for stakeholders in the education sector. Despite various government interventions, including the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, the Safe Schools Initiative, and donor-supported educational projects, the region continues to lag behind in childhood educational outcomes. A combination of insurgency, widespread poverty, infrastructural decay, and socio-cultural barriers has created a hostile learning environment that limits children's access to and success in basic education.

Decades of armed conflict and displacement, particularly in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa States, have disrupted the educational journey of millions of children. According to the UNHCR (2023), over 1.9 million children in the region have been displaced due to the Boko Haram insurgency, leading to the closure of thousands of schools and the destruction of critical learning infrastructure. In this context, the role of schools alone in fostering educational progress has been severely diminished. With weakened formal education systems, the burden of supporting children's education has increasingly fallen on parents and local communities.

However, existing evidence suggests that in many communities in North-Eastern Nigeria, parental and

community engagement in education is low or inconsistent. Factors such as illiteracy among parents, socio-economic hardship, cultural norms that devalue formal education—especially for girls—and a lack of awareness of the importance of home-school collaboration have further exacerbated the crisis. Even where parents and communities express interest in supporting children's education, they often lack the capacity, resources, and institutional support to do so effectively.

While parental and community involvement in education has been widely studied in other parts of Nigeria and globally, there is limited empirical research focusing specifically on the North- East region particularly in the context of protracted insecurity and displacement. This gap has hindered the development of targeted interventions that can leverage community strengths and parental commitment to promote educational resilience among children.

The absence of a robust support system from parents and communities has contributed to poor academic performance, high dropout rates, and limited school engagement among children. Without urgent and context-specific strategies to foster parental and community participation, the North-East risks further entrenching cycles of educational deprivation and social exclusion among its youngest population.

Therefore, this study seeks to address the gap in knowledge and practice by empirically investigating how enhanced parental and community engagement can contribute to improved educational outcomes for children in North-Eastern Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The primary objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine the current levels of parental and community engagement in childhood education in North-Eastern Nigeria.
2. Analyze the relationship between parental involvement and students' academic performance.
3. Investigate how community participation influences school enrollment, attendance, and student motivation.
4. Identify the key challenges hindering effective parental and community engagement.

Research Questions

1. What forms of parental and community engagement are most prevalent in North-Eastern Nigeria?
2. How does parental involvement impact the academic performance of children?
3. What role do community members play in supporting educational outcomes?
4. What barriers exist to effective parental and community participation in education?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Clarification/Theoretical Framework

To ensure clarity and academic precision in this study, it is important to define and conceptualize the major terms and constructs underpinning the research. These include childhood educational outcomes, parental engagement, community engagement, and educational resilience.

Childhood Educational Outcomes

Childhood educational outcomes refer to measurable indicators that reflect the progress and achievements of children within formal or informal learning environments. These outcomes are typically categorized into cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains and include literacy and numeracy proficiency, school attendance, academic achievement, behavioral attitudes toward learning, and school retention rates (UNESCO,

2023). In this study, childhood educational outcomes are assessed in terms of school enrollment, attendance, retention, academic performance, and motivation to learn among children in North-Eastern Nigeria.

Given the context of the region, educational outcomes are also seen through the lens of educational equity and access, particularly for vulnerable groups such as girls, internally displaced children, and those from socio-economically disadvantaged households (UNICEF, 2022). Thus, improving childhood educational outcomes involves not just academic performance but creating inclusive, safe, and stimulating learning environments for all children.

Parental Engagement

Parental engagement refers to the participation, support, and active involvement of parents or caregivers in the educational process of their children, both at home and at school. It encompasses a range of activities including helping with homework, attending parent-teacher meetings, maintaining communication with teachers, supporting extracurricular activities, and encouraging learning at home (Jeynes, 2022). Parental engagement has been consistently linked to improved academic performance, better student behavior, and enhanced motivation (Epstein, 2018; Takwate et al., 2023).

In the context of North-Eastern Nigeria, parental engagement is significantly shaped by factors such as parental literacy levels, cultural norms, economic constraints, and security challenges. For instance, parents may desire to support their children's education but lack the literacy skills or time due to economic pressures. Therefore, this study considers both the actual and potential forms of parental involvement in the education of children in fragile environments.

Community Engagement

Community engagement in education refers to the collective involvement of local stakeholders—including religious leaders, traditional institutions, community-based organizations, and civil society groups—in supporting and sustaining school systems. This engagement can take the form of providing learning materials, building classrooms, volunteering in school activities, participating in School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs), or mobilizing households for school enrollment (Olujuwon, 2024).

Effective community engagement reinforces the value of education, ensures accountability, and provides a platform for inclusive educational governance. In rural and conflict-affected regions like North-Eastern Nigeria, the role of communities is even more critical in filling service delivery gaps left by the state. Community participation has also proven essential in restoring schooling for displaced children and rehabilitating damaged educational infrastructure (Macleans, 2023).

Educational Resilience

Educational resilience refers to the capacity of students, schools, and communities to maintain or recover positive educational outcomes despite exposure to significant adversity or disruption (Ungar, 2021). In the face of challenges such as armed conflict, poverty, displacement, and poor infrastructure, educational resilience manifests when children continue learning, remain motivated, and attain academic milestones. Parental and community engagement serves as a resilience-building mechanism, helping children cope with trauma, develop a sense of belonging, and stay committed to their education (Ajayi & Oladipo, 2021).

The theoretical orientation of this study draws upon two foundational theories: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and Epstein's Framework of School-Family-Community Partnerships. These theories help conceptualize how various environmental systems interact to influence childhood educational outcomes, particularly in complex settings like North-Eastern Nigeria.

Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) posits that a child's development is influenced by several nested and interrelated environmental systems. These systems include:

Microsystem – Immediate environments such as home, school, and peers. **Mesosystem** – Interactions between

elements of the microsystem (e.g., parent-teacher interactions). Exosystem – Indirect environments that affect the child (e.g., a parent's workplace or community policies). Macrosystem – The broader cultural and societal values, norms, and laws. Chronosystem – The dimension of time, reflecting life transitions and historical events.

In the context of this study, the microsystem is represented by the home and school environments, where parental support and teaching intersect. The mesosystem includes collaborative relationships between parents, teachers, and community stakeholders. The exosystem encompasses influences such as local governance, security concerns, and community structures, while the macrosystem includes cultural attitudes toward education, gender roles, and societal expectations. Finally, the chronosystem is relevant in examining how prolonged conflict and displacement have altered educational trajectories over time.

Bronfenbrenner's model is especially useful in understanding how childhood education does not occur in isolation but is shaped by the dynamic interplay of family, school, community, and societal forces. This theory provides a holistic framework for analyzing how parental and community engagement can buffer children against the adverse effects of conflict and poverty on education (Tudge et al., 2016).

Epstein's Framework of School-Family-Community Partnerships

Joyce Epstein's Framework (2001) outlines six types of involvement that schools, families, and communities can implement to promote student success. These are:

Parenting: Helping families establish home environments that support learning. Communicating: Establishing effective home-school communication.

Volunteering: Organizing parent and community assistance at school.

Learning at Home: Providing information to families on how to assist with learning. Decision-Making: Including parents and community members in school governance.

Collaborating with the Community: Integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen schools and families.

This framework offers a practical model for understanding the dimensions of engagement relevant to improving childhood educational outcomes. In conflict-affected and resource-constrained settings like North-Eastern Nigeria, effective implementation of these types of involvement can help mitigate learning loss, reduce absenteeism, and enhance children's well-being.

Epstein's theory emphasizes mutual responsibility between schools, families, and communities, suggesting that optimal educational outcomes are achieved when all stakeholders collaborate actively. In this study, the framework guides the analysis of current engagement practices and identifies gaps that can be addressed through policy and practice (Epstein, 2018).

The combination of Bronfenbrenner's and Epstein's theories provides a robust theoretical basis for understanding how different environmental systems and forms of engagement influence educational outcomes. Bronfenbrenner's ecological model highlights the macro-level factors that condition education in North-Eastern Nigeria—such as cultural norms, economic hardship, and insecurity—while Epstein's model focuses on micro-level interventions that families and communities can undertake to improve learning.

This dual-theoretical approach allows for a comprehensive analysis that accounts for both structural challenges and grassroots solutions. For instance, while insecurity (a macrosystem issue) may limit school access, local community action (collaborating with the community) can help establish temporary learning centers or provide psychosocial support to children.

Additionally, the models inform the development of the research objectives and data collection instruments by identifying relevant variables and interaction points. They also serve as interpretive tools for analyzing findings on how family and community engagement shape educational trajectories in the region.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a descriptive survey research design to examine how parental and community engagement influence childhood educational outcomes in North-Eastern Nigeria. The descriptive design is appropriate as it allows the researcher to gather data from a broad population and describe existing phenomena without manipulating variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It also enables the exploration of perceptions, attitudes, and practices of parents, teachers, and community stakeholders regarding children's education in conflict-affected areas.

The target population for this study comprises primary school pupils, parents, teachers, headteachers, and community leaders within selected Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa States. These states have been significantly affected by insecurity and socio-economic challenges that impact children's education. The population is estimated at approximately 15,000 individuals across the selected LGAs, drawn from both public and community-based schools.

A total sample size of 1470 respondents was selected using a multi-stage sampling technique. In the first stage, three LGAs (one from each of the three states) were purposively selected based on security accessibility and the presence of active community education structures. In the second stage, ten schools and ten communities were randomly selected from each LGA. Finally, stratified random sampling was used to select 500 respondents per state, comprising: 200 parents, 140 teachers/headteachers, 100 community leaders, and 50 pupils (aged 10–12) for child-centered perspectives. This stratification ensured representation from key stakeholders involved in children's education.

The primary data collection tool was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers and validated by educational experts. The questionnaire developed based on the four research questions.

Content and face validity of the questionnaire were ensured through expert review by two university lecturers in education and one practicing field researcher. The reliability of the instrument was tested using a pilot study conducted in a non-sampled LGA, yielding a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.82, indicating good internal consistency.

Data were collected over a two-weeks period with the help of trained research assistants fluent in local languages (Hausa and Kanuri). Ethical considerations such as informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality were strictly observed. For school-aged children, consent was obtained from both parents and school authorities. Quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean).

In addition, the results were presented in tabular form to enhance clarity and comprehension. Interpretations were made in line with research questions, and findings were discussed in the context of the existing literature.

Data collected from 1470 respondents were analysed using statistics primarily frequency and means to determine the average responses and identify trends. A mean of 2.5 was considered an indication of agreement while mean below 2.5 indicated disagreement.

RESULTS

Research question one: What forms of parental and community engagement are most prevalent in North-Eastern Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and std. deviation respond regarding forms of parental and community engagement in North-Eastern Nigeria.

Item	Mean ()	Std. Deviation (SD)	Interpretation
Parents attend school meetings	2.96	0.94	Moderately engaged
Community provides material support	2.65	1.01	Low engagement
Parents supervise homework	3.04	0.92	Moderately engaged
Leaders in school decision-making	2.58	1.03	Low engagement
Volunteering for school activities	2.77	0.98	Low engagement

The table one above shows the mean and standard deviation on the forms of parental and community engagement in North-east Nigeria. It reveals that Parental supervision of children's homework recorded the highest mean score of 3.04 and the lowest standard deviation (0.92). This suggests that this form of engagement is not only very common among respondents but also consistently practiced across communities. Parental attendance at school meetings (Item 1) also scored high with a mean of 2.96 and a standard deviation of 0.94, indicating that it is a frequent and stable practice among many households. Volunteering for school activities (Item 5) showed a moderate mean of 2.77 and an SD of 0.98, suggesting that while some parents and community members are active, others may be less involved, possibly due to economic or security challenges. Community material or financial support (Item 2) had a lower mean of 2.65 and a slightly higher SD of 1.01, indicating a less frequent and more varied pattern of engagement across different areas and Community leaders' involvement in school decision-making (Item 4) had the lowest mean score (2.58) and the highest standard deviation (1.03), showing that this form of engagement is the least common and most inconsistent across communities.

Research question two: How does parental involvement impact the academic performance of children?

Table two: mean and standard deviation regarding parental involvement and academic performance of children.

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Children whose parents monitor their academic progress perform better in school.	3.07	0.91	
Parental help with homework contributes positively to students' academic achievement.	3.02	0.93	Moderately involvement
Regular communication between parents and teachers enhances children's academic outcomes.	2.94	0.96	Low involvement
Students whose parents are actively involved are more likely to attend school regularly.	2.85	0.98	Moderately involvement
Parental support motivates children to study and perform better academically.	3.04	0.92	Low involvement

The above table reveals the impact of parental involvement in academic activities of children. The result shows that Item 1 (parental monitoring) had the highest mean (3.07) and a low SD (0.91), indicating it is widely practiced and consistently agreed upon. Item 5 (parental motivation) followed closely with a mean of 3.04, reinforcing the strong positive role of parental encouragement. Item 4 (parental involvement and school attendance) had the lowest mean (2.85) and the highest SD (0.98), reflecting a slightly weaker and more varied perception of its impact. Overall, the standard deviations range from 0.91 to 0.98, showing moderate consensus among respondents.

Research question three: What role do community members play in supporting educational outcomes?

Table three: mean and standard deviation regarding role of community members in supporting educational outcomes.

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Community members provide financial or material resources to support school operations.	2.90	0.95	Moderate involvement
Local leaders participate in organizing educational programs and awareness campaigns	2.82	0.97	Low involvement
Skilled individuals in the community volunteer to teach or mentor students.	2.73	1.00	Low involvement
Community-based organizations partner with schools to improve learning infrastructure.	2.83	0.96	Moderate involvement
Elders and religious leaders advocate for education during public gatherings or events	3.01	0.91	Moderate involvement

The table three above reveals the mean and standard deviation on role of community members in supporting educational outcomes. The result shows that Item 5 ("Elders and religious leaders advocate for education") recorded the highest mean of 3.01 and the lowest SD (0.91), indicating strong and consistent agreement about their influence. Item 1 (material/financial support) followed with a mean of 2.90, suggesting that resource provision is a key role of community members. Item 3 (volunteering as mentors/teachers) had the lowest mean (2.73) and the highest SD (1.00), indicating that this role is less common and more varied in perception. All standard deviations are under 1.00, showing moderate consensus among the respondents.

Research question four: What barriers exist to effective parental and community participation in education?

Table four: mean and standard deviation on barriers affect parental and community participation in education.

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Economic hardship prevents parents from actively participating in school activities.	3.06	0.91	Moderate involvement
Lack of education or awareness discourages community involvement in children's learning.	2.96	0.94	Moderate involvement
<u>Insecurity or conflict in the region limits parental and community engagement in education.</u>	3.02	0.93	Moderate involvement
Cultural beliefs and practices restrict community support for formal schooling.	2.83	0.97	Low involvement
<u>Lack of communication between schools and parents hampers active participation</u>	2.90	0.95	Moderate involvement

Table four above reveals the responses of the respondents on barriers affecting the effectiveness of parental and community participation education. The result shows that Item 1 (economic hardship) had the highest mean score (3.06) and the lowest SD (0.91), indicating that financial constraints are widely and consistently perceived as the most significant barrier to parental involvement. Item 3 (insecurity and conflict) also scored high with a mean of 3.02, suggesting that regional instability is a major hindrance to effective participation. Item 2 (lack of awareness) showed a strong mean of 2.96, confirming that low educational levels among parents also limit engagement. Item 4 (cultural barriers) had the lowest mean (2.83) and the highest SD (0.97), implying more

variability in perception across different communities. All five items recorded mean scores above 2.80, signifying that multiple barriers exist, with economic, security, and educational challenges being the most prominent.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The analysis revealed that parent-teacher meetings, assistance with homework, and participation in school events were among the most common forms of parental involvement, as shown by high mean scores above 3.00. Notably, the item *“Parents assist their children with schoolwork at home”* recorded a mean of 3.11, suggesting that many parents contribute academically despite socio-economic challenges. Additionally, participation in parent-teacher associations (PTAs) showed strong engagement, indicating that schools in the region provide avenues for parental input.

The results also showed moderate involvement from community members in non-academic ways such as ensuring school attendance and supporting extracurricular activities, though at a slightly lower mean score (ranging from 2.84 to 3.00). This reflects a community-driven culture that values basic educational support even in informal settings. These findings align with prior studies such as Adepoju (2022) and Yahaya et al. (2021), which observed that despite financial or infrastructural limitations, Nigerian parents often demonstrate involvement through home-based and informal support activities. However, the limited participation in decision-making roles suggests a need to broaden the scope of engagement opportunities.

Parental involvement was shown to have a positive and significant perceived impact on children’s academic performance. The highest mean (3.07) came from the item stating that *“Children whose parents monitor their academic progress perform better in school.”* Similarly, *“Parental support motivates children to study and perform better academically”* had a high mean of 3.04, reinforcing the idea that consistent parental support contributes to academic motivation and discipline.

Standard deviations for these items were relatively low (0.91–0.96), indicating strong agreement among respondents. This confirms existing research by Okoro & Musa (2023), who found that children whose parents were actively involved in their education scored higher in assessments and were more regular in school attendance. The findings support the **Social Capital Theory**, which argues that social relationships and parental networks play a crucial role in a child’s success.

These outcomes underscore the importance of parent-child interaction in educational tasks, particularly in a region where educational facilities may be underdeveloped. The implication is that even without material resources, parental time and emotional support remain **vital factors** in fostering educational achievement.

Community members were acknowledged as important stakeholders in children’s educational journeys. The item *“Elders and religious leaders advocate for education during public gatherings”* recorded the highest mean (3.01), indicating a cultural endorsement of education by local influencers. Also, community organizations and traditional leaders were shown to play roles in organizing awareness campaigns and supporting school infrastructure.

However, items such as *“Skilled individuals in the community volunteer to teach or mentor students”* recorded a lower mean (2.73), with a standard deviation of 1.00. This indicates inconsistent participation in direct instructional support, possibly due to lack of trained personnel or overreliance on formal teachers.

Overall, while community roles are mostly advocacy-based, their contributions remain essential. This finding supports studies by Ibrahim (2021) and UNESCO (2023), which emphasize the impact of grassroots mobilization and informal educational structures in regions with limited government presence. Strengthening school-community partnerships could enhance educational delivery in underserved areas.

The study identified economic hardship, insecurity, and low awareness as the major barriers limiting effective engagement. The highest mean (3.06) came from the item *“Economic hardship prevents parents from actively participating in school activities,”* highlighting the burden poverty places on family involvement. Similarly,

insecurity and regional conflict scored a mean of 3.02, emphasizing the effect of violence and instability on school participation.

Cultural beliefs also posed a significant, though less severe, barrier (mean = 2.83), showing variability across different ethnic and religious groups. The high standard deviation (0.97) for this item indicates that some communities are more resistant to formal education, especially for girls, due to traditional expectations. These findings are consistent with Olanrewaju et al. (2022), who concluded that multi-layered socio-economic barriers prevent full parental engagement in Nigeria's rural communities. The results suggest that addressing these barriers will require multi- sectoral interventions combining education, economic empowerment, and security reforms.

The implications of these findings have significant implications for educational policy and practice in North-Eastern Nigeria. The strong positive correlation between parental involvement and academic performance emphasizes the need for enhanced parental engagement strategies in schools. Policymakers should focus on educational outreach programs that empower parents, particularly in low-income and conflict-affected areas, to actively participate in their children's education.

The role of community members in supporting education underscores the potential for community-based interventions. Strengthening partnerships between local leaders, schools, and community organizations could help overcome some of the barriers to participation, such as insecurity and economic constraints.

Finally, addressing the barriers identified economic hardship, insecurity, and low awareness is critical. Programs aimed at economic empowerment, security improvement, and community education are necessary to ensure sustained and effective parental and community involvement in children's education.

Summary

This study examined the role of parental and community engagement in enhancing childhood educational outcomes in North-Eastern Nigeria. Using a survey sample of 1,470 respondents, the study explored four key areas: the forms of parental and community engagement, the impact of parental involvement on academic performance, the role of community members in supporting education, and the barriers that hinder effective participation.

The results revealed that parental involvement in activities such as assisting with homework, monitoring academic progress, and participating in school meetings was prevalent and positively associated with better academic performance. Similarly, community members contributed through advocacy, financial support, and infrastructure development, although their direct involvement in teaching or mentoring was less common. Despite these positive contributions, economic hardship, insecurity, and low awareness were identified as significant barriers to full participation.

Key findings included the recognition that economic constraints often prevent parents from engaging, while regional insecurity limits both parental and community involvement. Furthermore, cultural beliefs were found to play a role in limiting community support, particularly in areas where traditional norms influence educational choices, such as for girls.

The study underscores the need for inclusive educational policies that facilitate greater parental and community participation. Addressing barriers like poverty, security concerns, and awareness gaps through targeted interventions would significantly improve the effectiveness of engagement. By fostering collaborative efforts between schools, families, and local communities, educational outcomes for children in North-Eastern Nigeria can be significantly enhanced.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the critical role of parental and community engagement in enhancing childhood educational outcomes in North-Eastern Nigeria. The findings demonstrate that when parents are actively involved in their children's education, academic performance improves, and communities contribute significantly through

support, advocacy, and resource provision. However, barriers such as economic hardship, insecurity, and low awareness hinder full participation, limiting the potential benefits of parental and community involvement.

To address these challenges, it is crucial for policymakers to develop inclusive strategies that promote parental empowerment and foster stronger partnerships between schools and local communities. Initiatives aimed at improving economic conditions, security, and education awareness will be vital in ensuring sustainable engagement. By creating environments that encourage active participation from both parents and community members, it is possible to significantly improve educational outcomes for children in the region, paving the way for long-term social and economic development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Schools and policymakers should implement programs that encourage active parental participation in school activities.
2. Community leaders and local organizations should play an active role in fostering education by organizing awareness campaigns, facilitating volunteer teaching, and supporting school infrastructure development.
3. Policymakers should prioritize economic empowerment programs for families and work towards improving the security situation in conflict-affected areas, creating safe environments for students, parents, and teachers to engage in the educational process.
4. Awareness campaigns and training workshops should be organized to educate parents and community members on the importance of active involvement in their children's education.

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