



Assessment of Parental and Community Involvement in Secondary Education Curriculum Delivery: A Panacea for Sustainable Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study assessed parental and community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery as a panacea for sustainable development in Nigeria. The study was aimed at assessing the following objectives: to assess the extent of parental involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria; and to ascertain the extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population of this study comprised 357 principals and 7,997 teachers in senior secondary schools in Kaduna State. A sample size of 36 principals, 400 teachers and 36 PTA members, totalling 472 respondents was used in the study. This sample size was arrived at using cluster sampling technique. A “close ended” questionnaire tagged “Parent-Community Involvement Questionnaire” was used for data collection. The questionnaire was pilot tested and a reliability index of 0.78 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha Technique. The data collected were analysed using frequency counts, mean and standard deviation at descriptive level, while Chi-square (χ^2) for contingency table and Kruskal-Wallis was used to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Findings from the study revealed that there is a significant difference in the opinions of parents with regards to the extent of their involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria. Also, a statistically significant difference exists in the opinions of respondents with regards to the extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria. Recommendations were made among others that the school head should sensitise parents on the need to recognize their rights and opportunities to be involve in school curriculum delivery. Likewise, Schools should offer training for parents and community stakeholders on effective communications and partnering skills.

Keywords: Parent and Community Involvement, Curriculum delivery, Sustainable Development



Introduction

Education takes place not only in schools but also within families, communities, and society. The goal of any nation that attempts to involve parents and community in education is to improve the educational delivery so that more children learn better and are well prepared for the changing world. There are various reasons to support the idea that parental and community involvement in curriculum delivery contributes to achieving the sustainable development goal. Parents and community involvement in curriculum delivery correlates with higher academic performance and school improvement. When schools, parents, families, and communities work together to support learning, students tend to earn higher grades, attend school more regularly, stay in school longer, enroll in higher level programmes and attain higher educational aspirations (Belfield & Levin, 2007).

The place of curriculum in education makes it obvious that concerted efforts be made at all times to implement a curriculum that meets the needs of the society. A curriculum is a “plan or programme of all experiences which the learner encounters under the direction of a school” (Tanner & Tanner cited in Yusuf, 2012). It is all the programmes, activities, events and experiences that take place in the school, including the interactions, materials and environment through which children learn (Yusuf, 2012). Curriculum delivery requires an integrated system that considers both human and physical resources. Apparently, curriculum delivery takes place most efficiently and effectively when school, parents and community collaborate.

In the past, parental involvement in curriculum delivery was characterized by volunteers, mostly mothers, assisting in the classroom, chaperoning students, and fundraising (Dennis, 2008). Today, the old model has been replaced with a much more inclusive approach: school-parent-community partnerships now include mothers and fathers, stepparents, grandparents, foster parents, other relatives and caregivers, business leaders and community groups—all participating in goal-oriented activities, at all educational levels, linked to school success and sustainable development. To promote student growth and achieve sustainable development in Nigeria, well thought out parent and community involvement in education is a panacea needed. In addition to the vital role that parents and family members play in a child’s education, the broader community too has a responsibility to assure high-quality education for all students. This support the popular proverb that “it takes a village to raise a child” therefore, the whole community has an essential role to play in the growth and development of its young people.

In fact, studies (Dennis, 2008; Nelson, 2007) have shown that community involvement in curriculum delivery is considered one of the characteristics common to high-performing schools. The community according to Mitsue (1999, p.9) contributes to education delivery through proper advocating enrolment and education benefits; boosting morale of school staff; raising money for schools; ensuring students’ regular attendance and completion; constructing, repairing, and improving school facilities; contributing in labour, materials, land, and funds; recruiting and supporting teachers; making decisions about school locations and schedules; monitoring and following up on teacher attendance and performance; forming village education committees to manage schools; actively attending school meetings to learn about children’s learning progress and classroom behaviour;



providing skill instruction and local culture information; helping children with studying; advocating and promoting girls' education; providing security for teachers by preparing



adequate housing for them; scheduling school calendars; handling the budget to operate schools; identifying factors contributing to educational problems (low enrolment, high repetition and dropout); and preparing children's readiness for schooling by providing them with adequate nutrition and stimuli for their cognitive development.

Hence, parents and community involvement in curriculum delivery requires addressing students' social service needs, as well as their academic ones, and this involvement is essential to sustainable development. In the light of this background, this study was carried out to determine the extent of parental and community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

The term "involvement" can be interpreted in various ways, depending on the context. Shaeffer cited in Mitsue (1999) clarifies different degrees or levels of involvement to include: involvement through the mere use of a service (such as enrolling children in school or using a primary health care facility); involvement through the contribution (or extraction) of money, materials, and labour; involvement through 'attendance' (such as, parents' meetings at school); involvement through consultation on a particular issue; involvement in the delivery of a service, often as a partner with other actors; involvement as implementers of delegated powers; and involvement "in real decision making at every stage," including identification of problems, the study of feasibility, planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Parental involvement therefore entails seeing parents as active collaborators in their own children's learning and development and ensuring that they are well informed about their children's school lives and clear about the ways in which they can work with the school (Williams & Ullman, 2002). Gonzalez-Mena (2011) defined parental involvement as a combination of commitment and active participation on the part of the parent with the school and child. Anyikwa and Obidike (2012) described parental involvement as the participation and support of parents in school and at the home, which directly and positively impacts on the educational performance of their children.

The importance of parental involvement was highlighted by Morrison (2007) who notes that parents' involvement in children's learning positively affects the children's performance at school. Besides, when schools and parents work in partnership, students realize that people who take care of them in both environments are investing and coordinating time and resources to help them succeed. Parents and community involvement in curriculum delivery at the school level can occur in various ways. Nelson (2007) identifies some promising factors of parent and community involvement in curriculum delivery at the school level. Among the promises are the involvement of communities in school construction and positive influence on teacher attendance. However, it is argued that parents can support the quality of education and learning outcomes through their role as instructional partners. A small body of evidence shows that interventions that encourage parents to support their children's learning are more valuable (Nag, Chiat, Torgerson & Snowling, 2014).

Parental involvement may also positively affect teachers, as research (Kindiki, 2009) shows that people who have close contact with schools – such as parents who assist in classrooms– often have much more positive attitudes towards teachers than individuals with



little direct contact. Although this research unequivocally affirms the positive and long-lasting effects of parental and community involvement on students' learning, this fact is often

overlooked in national discussions. There is need to ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed through education for sustainable development, sustainable lifestyles, gender equality, culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity. It is against this background that this study is undertaken to assess the extent of parental and community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

This study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. to assess the extent of male and female parents' involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria; and
2. to ascertain the extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to facilitate the achievement of the stated objectives:

1. What is the extent of male and female parents' involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria?
2. What is the extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for the study.

1. There is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female parents with regard to the extent of their involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents with regard to the extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey research design. Descriptive research is concerned with how 'what is' or 'what exists' is related to some preceding event that has influenced or affected a present condition or event (Best cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The target population of this study comprised three hundred and fifty-seven (357) principals and seven thousand nine hundred and ninety seven (7,997) teachers in senior secondary schools in Kaduna State. A sample size of thirty six (36) principals, four hundred (400) teachers and thirty six (36) male and female PTA members, totalling four hundred and seventy two (472) respondents were used in the study. This sample size was arrived at using cluster sampling technique.



The instrument used for data collection was a “close ended” questionnaire tagged “Parent-Community Involvement Questionnaire”. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section ‘A’ sought for the demographic information of the respondents, while section ‘B’ contains 15 items structured in line with the research questions and hypotheses.



All the 15 items were structured using the modified 4-point Likert rating scale of strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, and disagree. Three experts in the rank of senior lecturer in the Department of Educational Foundations and Curriculum from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria validated the instrument. The reliability level of the instrument was found to be 0.78 using Cronbach Alpha Technique. The researcher with the help of three research assistants administered the questionnaire to the respondents. The questionnaire administered was sorted, tabulated and coded before taken for analysis. In answering the research questions, mean and standard deviations were used while Chi-square (χ^2) for contingency table and Kruskal-Wallis was used to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.5 alpha level of significance.

Results

This section presents the result of each of the research questions and hypotheses tested. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while chi-square was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question 1: What is the extent of male and female parents' involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria?

This question was responded to using response mean and standard deviation. The summary of this analysis is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Extent of male and female parents' involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD
1.	Parents are provided space for comment in their children's daily school activities planners.	7	14	13	2	2.58	0.84
2.	Some parents volunteer as experts or mentors from outside the school to work alongside teachers during lessons.	4	8	11	13	2.52	1.10
3.	Parents are involved in decisions on student placement, course and textbook selections.	12	3	14	7	2.75	0.24
4.	Parents always ensure that students do their take-home assignments.	19	8	5	4	2.81	0.64
5.	Parents provide teaching and learning materials such as maps, textbooks, computers, television sets, radios, and so forth.	14	13	2	7	2.65	0.40

Response Mean = 2.67, Standard Deviation = 0.650

Table 1 revealed that the response mean of 2.67 is higher than the benchmark mean of 2.5. Also, the total response mean is more than 2/5 of the standard deviation of 0.650. This result indicates that the response of the parents in respect of the extent of male and female parents' involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable



development in Nigeria varies but it is tilted towards a positive direction. The implication of this result is that male and female parents' involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery is to a great extent essential for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria?

This question was responded to using response mean and the standard deviation. The summary of this analysis is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD
1.	Communities are powerful resources to be utilized not only in contributing to the improvement of educational delivery but also in becoming the core agent of education delivery.	55	154	121	142	3.32	.94
2.	Involving communities in curriculum delivery helps in linking the culture of the pupils' home with the culture of the school.	263	90	39	80	3.10	.99
3.	Communities' involvement helps achieve curriculum and learning materials that reflect children's everyday lives in society.	185	58	126	103	3.00	1.13
4.	The involvement of community can help identify and address factors that contribute to educational problems, such as low participation and poor academic performance.	274	80	42	76	3.32	.54
5.	Community involvement in curriculum delivery include, providing support to supplement and reinforce government action.	167	89	127	89	3.52	1.05
6.	Community involvement in curriculum delivery can help school understand why girls do not attend schools.	230	51	159	32	2.90	.87
7.	Community involvement enables community life, such as festivals, customs, musical instruments, and local business activities, to be reflected in the curriculum.	210	63	97	102	3.00	.88
8.	Communities contribute in curriculum delivery by sending respected community members, such as religious leaders or tribe heads, to the classrooms and talk about community history, traditions, customs, and culture, which have been historically celebrated in the community.	111	149	88	124	3.42	1.12
9.	Involving communities in school activities also helps to identify possible teachers in the community, especially local female teachers which greatly help girls' education.	222	120	11	119	3.65	.77
10.	Communities' involvement helps develop a series of basic learning needs, skills, attitudes, values, and knowledge that enable the children to continue learning and applying what	236	93	22	121	3.30	.68



they learn in their communities.

Mean = 3.25, Standard Deviation = 0.90

Table 2 revealed that the response mean of 3.25 is higher than the benchmark mean of 2.5. Also, the total response mean is more than 2/5 of the standard deviation of 0.90. This is an indication that the response of the respondents in respect to the extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria is tilted towards a positive direction. The implication of this result is that community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery is to a great extent indispensable for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Null Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female parents with regard to the extent of their involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Data gathered from the questionnaire administered was analysed using non parametric statistics of chi-square. Table 3 present the summary of the analysis.

Table 3: Summary of Chi-square (χ^2) statistics on the extent of male and female parents' involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria

N	χ^2 Cal.	df	α	P-value	χ^2 Crit.	Decision
36	45.75	12	0.05	0.003	21.02	Rejected

Result of the non-parametric statistics in Table 3 revealed that χ^2 obtained (45.75) is higher than χ^2 critical (21.02) and $P < 0.05$. This means that there is a significant difference in the opinions of male and female parents with regard to the extent of their involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female parents with regard to the extent of their involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria was rejected. The implication of this result is that sustainable development can be achieved through parental involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery.

Null Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents with regards to the extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Data gathered from the questionnaire administered was analysed using Kruskal-Wallis non parametric statistics. Table 4 present the summary of the analysis.

Table 4: Summary of Kruskal-Wallis test on the extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria

Variable	Group	N	Mean Rank	Chi-square (χ^2)	df	P-value	Decision
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Extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria.	Principals	36	27.41	28.86	2	0.006	Rejected
	Teachers	400	66.37				
	PTA	36	31.06				
	Total	472					

Table 4 revealed the Kruskal-Wallis statistics calculated to determine whether there is statistically significant difference on the opinions of principals, teachers and PTA members with regards to the extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria. The table shows the group ($\chi^2 = 28.86$, $p = 0.009$ at 2 degrees of freedom), this result depicted that a statistically significant difference exist in the opinions of respondents with regards to the extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Table 5: Cross-tabulation for the Kruskal-Wallis test

Respondents		Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Total
Principals	Count (%)	6	12	8	10	36
	within group	(16.7%)	(33.3%)	(22.2%)	(27.8%)	(100%)
Teachers	Count %	184	57	119	40	400
	within group	(46%)	(14.3%)	(29.7%)	(10%)	(100%)
PTA Members	Count %	11	7	13	5	36
	within group	(30.6%)	(19.4%)	(36.1%)	(13.9%)	(100%)
Total		201	76	140	55	472
		(42.6%)	(16.1%)	(29.7%)	(11.6%)	(100%)

Table 5 on the cross-tabulation of Kruskal-Wallis test revealed that teachers were the most positive about the variable ‘The extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria’. The table shows that teachers have the highest percentage on the ‘strongly agree’ option, indicating that they are significantly different in their opinion compared to the principals and PTA members.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the non-parametric statistics on Table 3 revealed that there is a significant difference in the opinions of male and female parents with regard to the extent of their involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female parents with regard to the extent of their involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria was rejected. The implication of this result is that parental involvement in curriculum delivery is to a great extent, because male and female parents’ involvement can support the quality of education and learning outcomes through their role as instructional partners. This finding is supported by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) (2009) as it states that for effective learning, parents should participate in curriculum implementation in schools by encouraging visits to places of interest, like, zoos, museums, local craft centres, shopping,



market places, enrolling the child in extra lessons, discussion of school courses, and other students' class work with teachers. This finding also concurred with the assertion of Dennis (2008) that parental involvement in education correlates with higher academic performance and school improvement. In contrast, this study contradicts the finding of Eyiuche (2014) which indicated that parents are involved in schools curriculum implementation only to a little extent.

The Kruskal-Wallis statistics calculated in Table 4 revealed that a statistically significant difference exist in the opinions of respondents with regards to the extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria. This result was further subjected to cross-tabulation which revealed that teachers were the most positive about the variable 'The extent of community involvement in secondary education curriculum delivery for sustainable development in Nigeria'. The cross-tabulation result shows that teachers are significantly different in their opinions compared to the principals and PTA members. The implication of this finding is that, community involvement in school activities helps to identify possible teachers in the community, especially local female teachers which greatly influenced girls' education. This finding agrees with Mitsue (1999) that, community contributes to education delivery through proper advocacy visits, enrolment; fund raising activities for schools; ensuring students' regular attendance and completion; constructing, repairing, and improving school facilities; contributing in labour, materials, land and funds.

Conclusion

Education of a child needs multidimensional efforts. Parents and communities all have their importance in this process. It is an admitted fact that parental and community involvement help develop a series of basic learning needs, skills, attitudes, values, and knowledge that enable the children to continue learning and applying what they have learnt in their communities through the knowledge gained from school. Although some communities have historically been involved in their children's education, it has not been fully recognized that communities themselves have resources to contribute to education, and provide local knowledge for their children. Involving parents and communities in curriculum delivery can reveal to them factors that contribute to lower enrolment and attendance, and poor academic performance in their schools. Likewise, parents are usually concerned about their children's education, and often are willing to provide assistance that can improve the educational delivery.

Recommendations

In view of the findings from this study, the following recommendations were made that:

1. School heads should sensitise parents on the need to recognize their rights and opportunities to be involved in school curriculum delivery.
2. Schools should offer training for parents and community stakeholders on effective communications and partnering skills.
3. There should be infusion of parent and community involvement in education into teacher preparation programmes in all teacher training institutions, colleges and universities.

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