



Community Service Perspective on Intervention Strategies by Parents-Teachers Associations: Challenges and Prospect

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ABSTRACT

Parents Teacher Association (PTA) is a formal organization of parents and teachers that is formed to get parents involved in their children's academics toward school systems reform. The two groups meet to assess teachers and find ways of improving life and performance. PTA's provide parents and teachers a mutual platform to work for the betterment of the school, teaching and influencing the physical and intellectual growth of a child. PTA meeting helps both parents and teachers to solve any particular issues they are facing. This study examined the parents-teachers association intervention strategies: challenges and prospects. We did this from a community service perspective. The school should develop good human relationships with the parents to facilitate landmark development in the school by the members of the association. It was concluded that parental involvement in children's education has a powerful impact on their attainment and adjustment. The parents need to understand the value of co-parenting with the teachers to achieve high academic achievement among the students.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The intention of the government to promote a good understanding and cooperation between the school and the parents would make it possible for every one of them to contribute towards the creation of a conducive atmosphere in the school. The Parents-Teachers Association [PTA] is an organization composed of parents and teachers. The two groups meet to assess teachers and find ways of improving life and performance. The main role of the PTA is to promote closer relations between schools and families. PTA aims to enhance the collective participation of parents and teachers in the education of children (Palma et al., 2021). It is therefore sensible for families and schools to actively collaborate when it comes to managing the education of children. PTA is mainly formed for the basic reason of taking into account the welfare and education of the learners. Both parents and teachers seek effective ways of developing each child's potential. PTA helps in fundraising for the welfare of part-time teachers and gives their points of view to the teachers concerning academic improvement and moral standards (Bermudez et al., 2021). Parents have developed a very positive interest in what goes on in school.

It is an appropriate forum for disseminating official policies, explaining needs, problems, and expectations of either party about how to solve problems and satisfy identified needs. Today, PTA has become an integral part of the Nigerian present education system and is backed up by law mandating every parent and guardian to be an official member in the schools where a child is registered. The promotion of understanding and cooperation between the teachers and parents makes it possible for each to contribute towards the creation of a conducive atmosphere that will facilitate the process of learning and teaching in schools. PTA functions in the general school program as a volunteer worker and sponsors school activities in promoting school events as well as assisting the school to receive support from the community. Elui (2007) confirmed that PTA can solve the problem of inadequate teaching staff by recruiting and paying part-time teachers. Parents and teachers interact and take decisions on the management and welfare of the children, teachers, and the school. PTA helps in fund-raising events such as award ceremonies, athletic achievements, inter-house sports, seasonal festivals, and cultural festivals. The raised money is usually used to finance capital projects of the school such as the construction of new administrative or classroom blocks, fencing of the school, and provision of staff quarters, staff rooms, and laboratories.

2. METHODS

This study is a literature survey based on the need for community service. Data were obtained from internet sources, especially articles in international journals, which were then collected and summarized to create ideas in this paper.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Reasons for establishing parents-teachers association

There are numerous justifications for the formation of parents-teacher associations, some of which are stated in the following:

- (i) To bring an equation fresh insight into the improvements that are needed.
- (ii) It improves home-school communication by providing two-way communication between parents and teachers.
- (iii) To raise funding that provides students with extra facilities.
- (iv) To improve parental relationships and teachers get to know about students' home life.
- (v) It provides an opportunity to talk about the academic performance of each student.

3.2. Parents-teachers association intervention strategies in secondary schools

Parent involvement is a strong determining factor in the academic performance of students. Classroom intervention is a set of steps a teacher takes to help a child improve in their area of need by removing educational barriers. There are four key components of classroom intervention (Ahmad, 2021):

- (i) Proactive: Deals with areas of need before they become a larger obstacle to education.
- (ii) Intentional: Specifically addresses an observed weakness.
- (iii) Formal: Uses targeted methods for addressing specific needs and tracks progress.
- (iv) Flexible: Adjusts methods based on the needs of the student.

Teachers may observe and identify problems with a student's behavior or academic performance. Sometimes the same child needs improvement in both areas, these issues are addressed using different types of interventions:

- (i) Behavior interventions address a child's problem behavior at school such as disrupting class, refusing to do homework, unresponsiveness, inappropriate language, and aggression. When using this method, teachers work to determine the driving force behind a student's wrong action. They may use a functional behavior assessment to aid in this discovery process. Once the motivating factor behind the behavior is identified, teachers can construct an effective behavior intervention plan for teaching more appropriate behaviors while meeting the child's needs.
- (ii) Instructional interventions also called academic interventions deal with a student's academic problem areas, like reading, mathematics, or another subject. For example, when a child struggles with reading skills, educators will employ reading intervention strategies. This type of intervention involves more detailed tracking of progress and frequent adjustments to reach a student's optimal academic proficiency. The instructional intervention definition also includes Response to Intervention, which involves three tiers of intervention that become increasingly intense while attempting to address the child's core academic need.

3.3. Challenges of parents-teachers association in secondary schools

An attempt to highlight some of the problems involved in the school as a result of the relationship between the parents and the school staff. Thus, it is evident that problems do emanate in this direction as observed by studies. These problems include the following among others:

- (i) Lack of understanding between parents and school staff: The parents no longer show sufficient interest in the progress of their children at school, so they do not see the need for a good relationship between them and the teachers (Ana, 2020; Malaguial *et al.*, 2021). For him, some parents no longer deem it necessary to visit teachers for discussions concerning their children or ward. When parents visit school, they do so to come and criticize the teachers and the school instead of using one voice to bring up the children. On the other hand, the teachers are not willing to see and treat parents as their partners in the management and welfare of the children, and the progress of the school.
- (ii) Inadequate funding: Inadequate funding is a major problem facing educational institutions in Nigeria from the primary level to the university level. The success of any secondary school system depends on the number of resources available to it. Money is an input of any educational system that provides the essential purchasing power with which the system acquires its human and physical inputs (Olutola *et al.*, 2022). The

author further argued that with little supply of money, education becomes helpless, while with ample supply, its problems become manageable even though they do not vanish. However, the major problem that compounds schools' financial inadequacy is the irregular payment of school fees and PTA levies, and inadequate financial support of the PTA. It is believed that money generated through this medium would help complement governments' efforts in the provision of funds for secondary schools.

- (iii) Literacy issues on the part of parents: Thus, a considerable proportion of the parents are illiterates. These illiterate parents need to be properly oriented on the purpose of PTA as well as the roles they are expected to play for the good and welfare of their children in the schools.
- (iv) Poor Management of PTA in the Schools: PTA is not allowed to operate freely and independently in the schools where they operate. This view was corroborated by other researcher when she asked the following question, "is the PTA allowed to operate freely and independently without undue interference and meddling with school authorities and officials of the state commission, as well as the Ministry of Education". By implication, he meant that this is one of the major problems that hinder PTA from functioning well in schools.
- (v) Lack of cooperation between the school authority and the parents: PTA no doubt requires full cooperation from the school authority as a viable organ of the school. With this cooperation, PTA will be capable of affecting the type of changes or innovations that will bring progress to the school. Unfortunately, in some schools, PTA is just seen as the organ that is to run to for help whenever the school authority needs money. This is perhaps the reason why someone asked this question, 'do the school authorities treat or see PTA as a body that should never be led into or involved in the "intricacies" and 'musteries' of education about which the member knows little or nothing". He later warned that the extent to which the PTA can realize the objectives for which it is established depends very much on how far those who are supposed to make use of the organization are prepared to employ it. For him, the potentials of PTA in our educational system are limitless provided it is well-guided.
- (vi) Poor supervision of schools: It has been argued that schools are not well-supervised by the agents involved ([Abiodun-Oyebanji, 2004](#)). The supervisors of schools categorized into internal supervisors—the within—the school supervisors such as principals, vice-principals, and heads of departments; and external supervisors—the outside—the school supervisors of which the PTA is part. The primary responsibility of the supervisors is to see that schools are run by the laid down regulations. The negligence of this area of responsibility seems to hinder effective teaching-learning activities in secondary schools.

In addition, some parents are reluctant to attend meetings for fear they would be asked to contribute some money. This hinders discussions on some matters which affect all the parents. At times, some schools are far away. The distance to travel prevents parents from attending meetings. Headteachers also do not always provide enough information to the parents about the roles that they are expected to play in PTA. Some PTA executives may not be sufficiently educated to give sound academic advice to the school personnel.

3.3. Prospects of parents-teachers association in Nigerian schools

Notwithstanding the problems currently facing the establishment of PTA as a tool for change and innovation in our educational system, a lot of benefits are expected to come from it if effectively managed. This paper highlights the effective ways to manage PTA:

- (i) Co-cordial relationship with love and rapport between the parents and school staff is an asset to the school. This is because through that parents will go the extra mile in proving the good of the school in many areas.
- (ii) More involvement of PTA in education financing: To enhance parents' participation in educational financing in secondary schools, members of the PTA should be made members of boards and committees that relate to the rising and spending of funds in the schools. Several levies are collected in the schools (such as PTA levy, and lesson fees, among others) in which members of the PTA can be part of the spending team. The need for probity and efficient utilization of the schools' resources will make parents willing to give more financial assistance to schools.
- (iii) Parents as individuals should be listened to no matter their class in society each time, they bring up a complaint and the school side of the matter should be presented clearly to them.
- (iv) Due recognition should be given to the PTA by the schools, school administration, state commission, and ministry of education should see and treat PTA as a viable organ of school that should be called upon when the needs arise. Government should be more responsive to the problems of the PTA for better performance. This is in agreement with the national PTA that it is responsible for alleviating most problems that the school management might encounter in ensuring that children are properly set for learning, including extracurricular activities like inter-house sports.

School administration should be ready to give every necessary encouragement that will elicit spontaneous Cooperation and relationship from the parents. To achieve this frequent communication with adequate information is vital. Furthermore, the school should organize activities, programs, and meetings during which parents will participate in the decision concerning the needs of the school. The head teacher should see that the parents are encouraged to put more effort into their activities, through proper accountability and strengthening of the PTA records (Ana, 2020; Malaguial *et al.*, 2021). This is achieved through good administration and supervision activities in the schools. The PTA recommended an effective way for effective management: A formal channel of communication can be opened between the school and parents so that whenever each party has a problem, it will be easy to tackle (Obi, 2016). For the author, effective communication helps a great deal in the school's success.

4. CONCLUSION

There is a widely held belief that the PTA is an indispensable and prominent organ of school administration. Its potentials in the educational system are limitless and thus should be given the adequate attention it required to function well in the schools. Educators and parents play major roles in the educational success of students by providing parental support in the education of students beyond the school building. It was concluded that parental involvement in children's education has a powerful impact on their attainment and adjustment. The parents need to understand the value of co-parenting with the teachers to achieve high academic achievement among the students.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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