

***Contribution of Parent Teachers Association in Funding Secondary Schools in
Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State***

Roland Inah, Ph.D

*Department of Educational Management
University of Calabar, Calabar*

¹Celsus A. Undeshi, Ph.D

[*celsusakom@gmail.com*](mailto:celsusakom@gmail.com)

¹Richard A. Adie

*¹Department of Educational Foundations
School of General Education
Federal College of Education, Obudu*

Abstract

This study focused on contribution of Parent Teachers Association (PTA) in funding secondary education in Obudu Local Government Area (LGA) of Cross River state. The study was guided by two research questions using physical facilities and instructional materials as its independent variables in relation to funding secondary education in the study area. The study adopted descriptive survey research design with population of 2,016 out of which 100 was sampled. A self-structured questionnaire titled “Parent Teacher Association and Funding Secondary Education Questionnaire” (PTAFSEQ) was used to elicit information from the respondents. Data generated from the instrument were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation at 2.50 benchmark. The result indicates that PTA has contributed to secondary education funding in terms of provision of physical facilities and instructional materials. Based on the findings, the study recommended, among others, that in order to enhance the provision of school physical facilities using PTA funds, school administrations should be transparent and exhibit proper accountability in utilization of available PTA funds.

Keywords: parents, teacher, association, funding, secondary

Introduction

Education is a capital-intensive venture and as such requires huge sum of money for effective functioning. Ayigi (2013) lends credence to this assertion when he articulated that adequate funding of education plays a very crucial role in the provision of school physical facilities, teaching-learning resources, school personnel, school activities and programmes, which are indicators for measuring educational effectiveness and

achievement. This is necessary because no matter how polished and well-intended the educational policy may be, the realization of its goals depends largely on commitment of adequate finance to the implementation of its programmes. Akpakwu (2008) maintained that in Nigeria, the poor state of the economy has affected government financing of education, hence he posited that the contribution of parents has become necessary due to the inability of government to meet even the basic school financial needs.

Over the years, the government has been the sole sponsor of education at all levels. However, due to population explosion which led to increase in enrolment, coupled with public awareness of the importance of education, the financial demand of education has become too unbearable for the government alone. The high rate of inefficiency, dilapidated structures and poor education delivery in Nigerian schools are traceable to poor funding. Akpa (2002) stated that funding is critical to the success of education; he called on other stakeholders to assist the government in funding education. Similarly, Offem et al. (2019) concluded in their study that fund is necessary for the provision of infrastructures, employment, re-training and payment of staff salaries, provision of materials and equipment and for the conduct of researches. The effects of poor funding of secondary education, especially public secondary schools, are evident in the high rate of indiscipline among students, poor teaching due to the low morale of teachers, regular industrial action by teachers, uncondusive learning environment, poor performance of students, poor teacher training and many other educational problems that are accompanied with their undesirable consequences to the society.

As a strategy to have a stable financial base as source of complimenting government efforts in Cross River State, the funding of secondary education through parents under the umbrella of PTA became necessary when viewed especially against the changing and unpredictable economic condition of the time. Parents Teachers Association is defined as a coalition of parents and teachers of the children in a specific school. According to the Cross River State Ministry of Education (2008) formulated guidelines to direct the operation of PTA in schools in Cross River State, in Section 2(d) specifically, one of the objectives of resuscitating PTA in schools is to enable parents through their association to give financial support to schools. Sub- section 6(2) and 6(17) indicates that one of the major functions of PTA in public schools is to provide moral and financial support to schools through generating funds for minor projects and repair of school facilities. How effective PTA are carrying out this expectation in the state seem to leave much to be desired, even now when most parents cannot afford to send their children to schools.

It is on this note that a healthy community involvement is a central and most crucial function of all activities in an organisation. Mbipom (2006) submits that since the school

is an integral part of the society in which the school is located, its administration should involve both the people within the school and other citizens outside the school for effective administration. Ndu (2012) cited in Ayigi (2013) affirms that the involvement that exists between the school and the community matters a lot in secondary school administration. They stress that if the involvement is cordial the community will assist the school in building classroom blocks, provision of school facilities and funds for effective administration. Greenfield et al. (2017) emphasized that school administrators should always make themselves available to parents for complaints. He said that if at any time they come with complaint and it is well handled, the parents go home to make impressive statement about the effectiveness of the principal.

Several studies have shown the impacts and contribution of PTA in financing education in the Nigerian educational system. For instance, Ayigi (2013) conducted a study on the role of PTA in the implementation of Universal Basic Education in Northern Senatorial District of Cross River State. The study was guided by five research questions and hypotheses with a population of 1,850 PTA members in the study area. The study adopted survey research design and the instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled “Parent Role and Implementation of Basic Education Questionnaire” (PRIBEQ). Data collected was analyzed using inferential statistic of chi-square goodness of fit at 0.05 level of significance. The result indicates that there is inadequacy in the provision of financial support, infrastructural facilities, instructional materials, supervision and involvement in enlightenment campaigns by the PTA in the study area. The study concluded that PTA financial support and involvement in school administration influence effective implementation of the UBE programme. The findings of the study revealed that PTA funds are inadequate in sustaining the provision of physical facilities with 66% for financial assistance, and 88% for learning resources.

Kituu (2012) conducted a study on parents’ and teachers’ associations’ funds in sustaining day secondary schools’ education in Machakos District. The study employed a survey research design. A sample of 30 PTAs/BOG members, 10 principals, 145 teachers and 200 students was selected. Questionnaires, interview schedule and an observation checklist were used to collect data. The findings of the study revealed that PTA funds are inadequate in sustaining the provision of physical facilities and financing school activities indicated by 66.7% and 75.0%, respectively, of the principals that took part in the study. PTA funds were also found to be inadequate in sustaining the provision of teaching and learning resources as indicated by 87.5% of the school personnel and 100% of principals that participated in the study. The study recommended among others that government and other stakeholders should also increase funding for provision of teaching and learning

materials, the government should hire more teachers to alleviate shortage of personnel and also increase funding for school activities and programmes.

Other studies such as Allah (2015), Bassey and Archibong (2003), Balenardo (2000), Bessong (2001) and Beck (2018) revealed a significant relationship between PTA in particular and other community leaders in financing school administration in the attainment of school goals. Levin (2019) in his study observed that a school principal who handles parents' complaint well enjoys from the community numerous benefits including financial support in the provision of needed facilities that aid administration of schools. This he said was due to the fact that parents want to be heard and be recognized.

The gaps between the above researches and the present study are that some were undertaken outside this study area with different research designs, variables and statistical tools. Even the one carried out in the same study area was done in the primary schools, while the current study was in the secondary school system. This shows the importance of this study which aimed to investigate the contribution of PTA on funding secondary education.

Statement of the problem

Financing of education, according to the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2014), is a joint responsibility of government and the private sector. In this connection, individuals and other organizations such as the Parent Teachers' Associations (PTAs) are to be actively involved. But unfortunately, the public secondary school education system in Cross River state in general and Obudu Local Government Area in particularly appears to be suffering from a myriad of problems and series of setbacks due to poor or inadequate funding of the sector by government and the negative attitudes of parents and the PTA, who are supposed to be greatly concerned about matters of their children/wards' education and developments by contributing immensely. Sadly, many of the various school Parent Teachers' Associations have not been able to perform their role effectively as expected of them by the society. A personal observation during visits to some of the public schools in the study area revealed that there is inadequate provision or short supply of infrastructural facilities and learning equipment in the schools which are traceable to poor funding. The above scenario necessitated this study which aimed to investigate contribution of PTA in funding secondary education and enhance its administrative effectiveness in the study area.

Purpose of the study

This study focused on residual contribution of PTA on funding secondary education in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State. Specifically, the study sought to examine:

1. the extent to which PTA funds sustain the provision of school physical facilities in secondary schools.
2. the extent to which PTA funds sustain the provision of teaching and learning resources in secondary schools.

Research questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. To what level do PTA funds sustain the provision of school physical facilities in secondary schools?
2. To what extent do PTA funds sustain the provision of teaching and learning resources in secondary schools?

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design with a population of 2,016 PTA members in the thirty existing public secondary schools in the study area. Out of this population, the study sampled 100 respondents which were selected using simple random sampling technique. Simple random sampling was used in selecting ten (10) respondents from each of the 10 selected schools in the study area making a total of 100 students. This was most preferred because it gives every member of the population equal chance of being selected. The technique employed by the researchers is hat-and-draw method; where the researchers wrote the names of all the schools (public secondary schools) in a slip of paper, roll each slip into a paper ball, mix these paper balls well in a container and then blindly drew the required number of sample subjects from the container.

A self-structured questionnaire titled “Parent Teacher Association and Funding Secondary Education Questionnaire” (PTAFSEQ) was used to elicit information from the respondents. This was divided into two parts. The first part was on demographic information used to elicit information in such variables as name of school, qualification, gender and years of experience. The second part consisted of ten items based on the study variables (measuring physical facilities and learning resources). Four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) was used to score the items and it weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 points respectively. The instrument was face-validated by two experts in Test and Measurement and Educational Administration/Planning, from the Federal College of Education, Obudu. The experts vetted the items and approved the instrument to be used in collecting data.

The reliability of the instrument was determined through test-retest method using 10 PTA members outside the sampled schools. The exercise was repeated after one week on the same respondents. The reliability coefficient of the two tests was established using

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and it yielded a coefficient of 0.74 which was considered adequate for the study. The data collected from the instrument were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions using 2.50 as the benchmark.

Presentation of results

Research question one: To what level do PTA funds sustain the provision of school physical facilities in secondary schools?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on impact of PTA on provision of school physical facilities in secondary schools (N=100)

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Parents financial support enable school to build classrooms	2.63	0.70	Accepted
2	PTA support schools in physical facilities maintenance	3.40	0.84	Accepted
3	PTA support schools in acquiring extra-land for building	2.86	0.76	Accepted
4	PTA supply sport facilities to secondary schools	2.54	0.68	Accepted
5	PTA provide desks/lockers for students' usage in schools	3.34	0.88	Accepted
	Cluster mean	2.95	0.77	Accepted

Results from research question one which sought for respondents' opinion on PTA financial support in providing physical facilities in secondary schools reveal that all the items were accepted. The table also indicated that item four has the highest score of 3.40, seconded by item five with 3.34. All other items were found to be greater than the benchmark of 2.50. This implies that PTA financial support aids the funding of secondary education in actualizing the pre-stated goals in the study area.

Research question two: To what extent do PTA funds sustain the provision of teaching and learning resources in secondary schools?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of impact of PTA on the provision of teaching and learning resources in secondary schools (N=100)

S/N	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
1	PTA funds are used to stock library with instructional materials	2.58	0.79	Accepted
2	PTA funds are used to procure laboratory materials in schools	2.60	0.84	Accepted
3	PTA supports schools in providing teaching aids	2.72	0.86	Accepted
4	PTA supplies secondary schools with writing materials	2.66	0.82	Accepted
5	PTA provides chalkboard and markers used in classrooms	2.64	0.78	Accepted
	Cluster mean	2.64	0.82	Accepted

Results from research question two which sought for respondents' opinion on PTA financial support in providing instructional materials in secondary schools reveal that all the items were accepted. The table also indicated that item four has the highest score of 2.66, seconded by item five with 2.64. All other items were found to be greater than the benchmark of 2.50. This implies that PTA financial support aids the funding of secondary education in actualizing the pre-stated goals in the study area.

Discussion of the findings

The result in respect of research question one revealed that all the mean scores were found to be greater than the benchmark of 2.50. This implies that PTA financial support aids the funding of secondary education in actualizing the pre-stated goals in the study area. The implication of the above finding is that PTA have greater contribution to secondary school education in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State. This finding is consistent with the findings of Allah (2015), Bassey and Archibong (2003), Balenardo (2000), Bessong (2001), and Beck (2018). In their studies, they reported that their results showed a significant relationship between the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and other community leaders in financing school administration to achieve school goals. The study showed that community involvement has a significant impact on a principal's management of school finances, particularly in providing physical facilities in schools. It also found that high levels of community involvement can improve the effectiveness of school financial management, as parents are frequently present to observe how the school's resources are being utilized by the principal. However, this conclusion contrasts with the results of Ayigi (2013), whose research indicated inadequacy in the provision of financial support, infrastructural facilities, instructional materials, supervision and involvement in enlightenment campaigns by the PTA in the study area.

Result of the second research question which sought for respondent's opinion on PTA financial support in providing instructional materials in secondary schools reveals that all the items were accepted because the calculated mean scores were higher than the benchmark of 2.50. This finding lends support from Levin (2019) who observed that a school principal who handles parents' complaint well enjoys from the community numerous benefits including financial support in the provision of needed facilities that aid administration of schools. This he said was due to the fact that parents want to be heard and be recognized. Greenfield (2017) also asserts that school administrators should always make themselves available to parents for complaints. He said that if at any time they come with complaint and it is well handled, the parents go home to make impressive statement about the effectiveness of the principal. The present finding is contrary to finding of Kituu (2012) who reported that PTA funds are inadequate in sustaining the provision of physical facilities and learning resources to schools.

Conclusion

The study sought to investigate the contribution of PTA in the funding of secondary education in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State. Based on the result from the statistical analysis, the study conclude that PTA greatly compliment government efforts in the funding of secondary education particularly in terms of provision of physical facilities and instructional materials in the study area in particular and the state in general.

Recommendations

It is based on the results that the study recommended that:

1. The State Government through the Ministry of Education should collaborate and establish a smooth relationship with PTA to ensure their consistent support in the management and administration of secondary education.
2. Also, in order to enhance the provision of school physical facilities using PTA funds, the school administrations should be transparent and show accountability in the utilization of available PTA funds.

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