PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOLING PROCESS FOR STUDENTS' ACADEMIC SUCCESS: A CASE STUDY IN THE STATE OF KATSINA, NIGERIA

By

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DEDICATION

"Families are the compasses that guide us. They are the inspiration to reach great heights, and our comfort when we occasionally falter." (Brad Henry, 2011)

I dedicate this dissertation to the one who provided me with the creative spark and to those precious to me who gave me the inspiration to move on that spark. This dissertation is the result of Allah's creative spark within me. In my quest to bring something new and imaginative to research, I found a writing of the thesis that I didn't think I was capable of.

This research study is in honour of, my Daddy and Mom, Alhaji Ibrahim Muhad and Hajiya Aishatu. Thank you for your untiring belief in me. Your strength and guidance have made me the person I have become. I am eternally grateful for your support and selflessness.

To my wife Hauwau Ahmad, I love and appreciate you more than any words can express. Thank you for your patience throughout this seemingly endless endeavour.

To my sons and daughter, Ibrahim Ahmad, Al-Amin Ahmad and Fatima Ahmad, you are my sunshine. My support for you is endless, and my love for you is inconceivable. I pray that your future is filled with protection and blessings of Almighty Allah.

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I am a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide,
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise into a daybreak that's wondrously clear,
I rise.
(Excerpt from "Still I Rise," by Dr. Maya Angelou, 1997)

These very poignant words are reflective of the journey that is about to be completed. I could easily have been overcome by the dark waves of fear, uncertainty, and doubt. So many obstacles and distractions vied for immediate attention that there was no way that this study could have been successfully completed alone. I am very fortunate, indeed blessed, to have had Supervisors, friends, and family who served as encouragers.

My main supervisor Dr. Hazri Bin Jamil taught me the value of commitment, honour, and seeing things through to the end. I have never known a more optimistic person and a most faithful supporter. The passion you displayed in your supervision, coaching, and counselling inspired me to think I could be like you someday. Thank you for your countless hours of supervision, your unwavering faith, and for providing the many writing retreats at your office. I couldn't have done this without you. Thank you for all of your enthusiasm. Sir you have other fathered me into Allah's creative spark and helped me to conceive of a work that I initially thought was inconceivable in qualitative research. You provided an equilibrium that allowed me to see this work to its completion. You were patient as I slowly processed the relationship between theory and practice and demanding when there was a hint of me being idle. You were available for consultation when I was unsure of my writing while conversely affording me the autonomy to develop my work. Your knowledge and contributions to the field of research helped to nurture my writing. I am better because of your commitment to exposing your students to the complexity and diversity of research, theory, and practice.

I would also like to thank my second supervisor Professor Anna Christina for her mentorship in my academic career, her patient and thoughtful guidance in my study.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PTA   Parents Teachers Association

PTO   Parents Teachers Organization

SA   School A

SB   School B

HD/A   Head Teacher School A

HD/B   Head teacher School B

IT/A   Teachers' Interview School A

IT/B   Teachers' Interview School B

ST/A   Students' Interview School A

ST/B   Students Interview School B

IP/A   Parents' Interview School A

IP/B   Parents' Interview School B

HO/A   Home Observation School A

HO/B   Home Observation School B

SO/A   School Observation School A

SO/B   School Observation School B

SR/A   School A Record Book

SR/B   School B Record Book

VK/A   Visitors Book School A

VK/B   Visitors Book School B

SH/A   School-Home Communication Book For SA

SH/B   School-Home Communication Book For SB

PENGLIBATAN IBU BAPA DALAM PROSES PERSEKOLAHAN UNTUK KEJAYAAN AKADEMIK PELAJAR: SATU KAJIAN KES DI NEGERI KATSINA, NIGERIA

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini didorong oleh isu penglibatan ibu bapa dalam proses persekolahan kanak-kanak di Katsina yang seolah-olah diabaikan. Tujuan kajian kes ini adalah untuk menyiasat penglibatan ibu bapa dalam proses persekolahan anak-anak mereka untuk kejayaan akademik di dua buah sekolah di negeri Katsina, Nigeria. Secara khusus, kajian ini bertujuan untuk menjawab empat persoalan: (1) Apakah jenis penglibatan ibu bapa dalam proses persekolahan anak-anak mereka? (2) Bagaimanakah penglibatan ibu bapa menyumbang kepada kejayaan akademik kanak-kanak? (3) Bagaimanakah ibu bapa boleh melibatkan diri dalam proses persekolahan anak-anak mereka melalui aktiviti penglibatan ibu bapa? (4) Bagaimana sekolah boleh mengukuhkan kerjasama dengan keluarga dan masyarakat bagi meningkatkan kejayaan akademik pelajar (4a) Apakah kekangan yang menghalang kerjasama itu? (4b) Apakah cadangan-cadangan untuk meningkatkan kerjasama sekolah dan komuniti? Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kajian kes kualitatif. Kajian ini menggunakan temubual separa berstruktur yang melibatkan pelajar, ibu bapa dan guru di dua buah sekolah di negeri Katsina. 32 peserta telah ditemubual dalam kajian ini. Selain temu bual, pemerhatian dan kajian dokumen sekolah juga digunakan oleh penyelidik sebagai kaedah pengumpulan data. Kajian dan analisis data kajian ini adalah berpandukan teori Epstein (1987, 1992), iaitu teori sfera-sfera pengaruh bertindih yang menekankan kepentingan sekolah, keluarga dan masyarakat bekerjasama untuk memenuhi keperluan kanak-kanak. Analisis data telah dijalankan melalui triangulasi dan pengurangan data kepada tema-tema untuk menghubungkan isu-isu penting berkaitan fenomena yang dikaji. Analisis data kualitatif menunjukkan bahawa pelajar yang mempunyai ibu bapa yang terlibat dalam pendidikan mereka mencapai kejayaan yang lebih baik dalam bidang akademik berbanding pelajar yang ibu bapa mereka kurang terlibat. Dapatan kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa terdapat kekurangan penglibatan ibu bapa di Sekolah B (SB) dan ini menyumbang kepada kurangnya kejayaan pencapaian akademik kanak-kanak di sekolah tersebut, dengan tahap yang rendah dalam aspek hubungan yang bermakna antara sekolah dan ibu bapa. Ini mengakibatkan wujud sikap acuh tak acuh dalam kalangan ibu bapa, ekspetasi yang rendah dalam kalangan guru besar dan guru-guru, dan kurangnya struktur organisasi yang membantu interaksi antara ibu bapa dan sekolah. Seterusnya, bagi sekolah A (SA), dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa ibu bapa yang terlibat dalam proses persekolahan anak-anak mereka menyumbang kepada kejayaan pencapaian akademik di sekolah. Rahsia di sebalik kejayaan ini ialah Sekolah A telah memperkenalkan Program Lawatan ke Rumah yang telah membantu menjalinkan hubungan di antara para guru dan ibu bapa. Kajian ini telah menyumbang kepada ilmu pengetahuan melalui penambahan maklumat yang mendalam kepada pengetahuan asas tentang kerjasama di antara sekolah, keluarga dan masyarakat dan pengaruh aspek ini terhadap proses persekolahan kanak-kanak untuk mencapai kejayaan akademik. Melalui kajian ini, pengkaji telah menjana atau menyumbangkan tema-tema yang baru dikenal pasti: 1-School visit; 2-Penglibatan ibu bapa yang aktif; dan 3- Pembelajaran di Rumah. Dapatan kajian ini bersesuaian dengan kajian-kajian yang pernah dijalankan. Namun, kajian ini adalah signifikan berbanding kajian-kajian terdahulu kerana ia belum pernah dijalankan di negara berkenaan mahupun di negara-negara berhampiran. Tambahan pula, kedua-dua buah sekolah yang dipilih untuk kajian ini berbeza dari kajian-kajian yang lain dari segi latar belakang budaya, ekonomi dan agama. Perbezaan utama di antara kedua-dua buah sekolah tersebut adalah pelaksanaan Program Lawatan ke Rumah oleh Sekolah A. Program ini membantu guru-guru berhubungan dengan para ibu bapa, mengetahui masalah mereka dan anak-anak mereka, menjemput mereka ke sekolah di masa lapang, membenarkan mereka memberi sumbangan, mengaitkan wajah dan nama, menjalinkan hubungan positif dengan keluarga, menunjukkan kepada ibu bapa keprihatinan mereka terhadap anak-anak, dan meningkatkan keyakinan para pelajar. Inilah rahsia di sebalik kejayaan akademik

pelajar-pelajar Sekolah A. Akhirnya, kajian ini juga meneliti pelaksanaan pengelasan Epstein dalam kawasan yang belum pernah terlibat dengan kajian sebegini.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOLING PROCESS FOR STUDENTS'ACADEMIC SUCCESS: A CASE STUDY IN THE STATE OF KATSINA, NIGERIA

ABSTRACT

This study was encouraged by the issue of parental involvement in the schooling process of Katsina children, which seems to be neglected. The purpose of this case study is to investigate parental involvement in the schooling process for academic success in two primary schools in Katsina State, Nigeria. Specifically, this study aims to answer four research questions: (1) What is the nature of parental involvement in the schooling process of their children? (2) How does parental involvement contribute to the children's academic success? (3) How can parents get involved in the schooling process of their children through parental involvement activities? (4) How can schools establish schools, family, and community partnership to foster academic success? (4a) What are the barriers that restrict the partnerships? (4b) What are the suggestions to enhance the partnership? 32 informants were interviewed. The approach adopted is qualitative case study phenomenological in nature. The study thus utilized semi-structured interviews involving students, parents and teachers of two selected primary schools in Katsina State. In addition to the interviews, the researcher used observations and document analyses as methods of data collection. This study and its data analyses are located against the theoretical considerations of Epstein (1987, 1992) theory of overlapping spheres of influence which emphasizes the importance of schools, families, and communities working together to meet the needs of the children. The data analysis was conducted by triangulating and reducing the data to themes to make a connection to the pertinent issues of the phenomenon under study to be materialized. This study revealed nine unique themes that reflected the experiences of the participants with regard to parental involvement in the selected schools. The qualitative data analysis demonstrated that students whose parents were involved in their education achieved more academic success at school than students whose parents were less involved. It also indicated that there is a lack of parental involvement in School B (SB). This has contributed to the lack of successful academic achievement of children in the school, by having low level of meaningful contact between school and parents. As a result, apathy exists on the side of parents, low expectations on the side of head teacher and teachers, and an organizational structure facilitating parent-school interaction is lacking. However, for (SA) the study indicated parents' involvement in the schooling process of their children, which bring about successful academic achievement in the school. The secret behind this success is that, SA introduced a home visit program, which helps connecting teachers with parents. Finally, the study contributed to the body of knowledge by adding insightful information to the knowledge base surrounding school, family and community involvement and their influence on the children's schooling process for the attainment of academic success. In fact, this study generates or contributes three new identified themes: 1-School visit; 2-Active parental involvement; and 3-Home schooling. The findings of this study fit other past studies closely, but the study is particularly significant compared to the previous studies in this field considering the fact that the geographical area has apparently not been studied for this topic before. Furthermore, the two selected schools in the study are different from other studies in terms of their cultural, economic, and religious background. Moreover, the major difference between the two schools is that, SA introduced the home visit program. This program helps teachers of the school to relate to parents, know their problems and their child's problems, invite them to school at their free time, allow them to give their contributions (to contribute?), connect faces with names, establish positive relationships with family, show they care about the children to the parents, and give more confidence to the student. This is the secret behind the academic success of SA students. Lastly, this study also explores the implementation of Epstein's typology in an area where a study of that kind had never been conducted.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

"Parents are the child's first and foremost influential teachers and often, they are the strongest advocates. They teach model and guide their children"

(Rockwell, Andrew & Hawley, 1996. p. 3)

This quotation challenges the family unit both nuclear and extended families, which are considered traditionally as the outstanding sources of social support for the children. Also, neighbours, community agencies, mosques, churches, and clubs are all regarded as the contributing agents to this form of support. In the best circumstances, these networks form strong and reliable communities based on familiarity, independence, and commitment towards a common purpose, they may add to the support provided by healthy family cultures (Stokes, 2009).

The home environment is where most of the learning process begins, and family are considered to be the first and most significant teachers of their children (Adenike & Oyesoji, 2010). In the views of Swick and Williams (2006), families are referred to as the big picture (those who have an overall knowledge of their children's background) and team members in their child's education. Because the majority of families spends almost all the 360 days of the year to gather with their children, this enables them to know more about their history, interests, and ability. Swick and Williams (2006) assert that families are in a better position to give their children any type of motivation, assistance, and encouragement that will help them to double their efforts and succeed, not only in school but also in their life in general.

In her 1996 speech to the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Senator Hillary R. Clinton focused on the old Nigerian proverb, "It takes a whole village to raise a child" (Yoruba tribe in Stoke, 2009, p. 1). In traditional African society, education was considered as the business of every member in the community. Both the old and young members have a particular role to play in educating the individual members of that society. The society was the school, the individual family, and extended family members who served the role of present day teachers in the school and the various traditional institutions in accordance with the dictates and the demands of the environments that determined the content, type, and value to be inculcated in the individual members of the society (Kazeem & Musa, 2008; Omolewa, 2001) regards this as,

> "… In the traditional African setting, the centre of the learning process of education was the home. This was where everybody learnt the basic requirements of life. The home provided thus, the setting for a holistic approach to education. Herein, the home, the brain, the mind and indeed, the hand are trained". (p. 4)

For the children to function as effective citizens, both the family and school should provide conducive environment for the successful education of their children. Hence, teachers alone cannot promote children's development. However, they can only help with some practices that encourage and guide the parents to be involved in the schooling process of their children, so as to be assisted in teaching the children to achieve desired results (Jekayinfa, 2009, p. 1). Similarly Epstein (1995) has the same view when she indicated that the best practices can be established by allowing open, welcoming, and respectful involvement of parents in the process of their children's schooling. The result will be the establishment of family, school and community partnerships that help students to succeed in school and in their entire life after school (Epstein, 1995; Jekayinfa, 2009). Adenike, & Oyesoji (2010) opined that the first contact place for children the moment they are born into this world is their

family. Family therefore, exerts a lot of influence at this time with the newborn child, whereby the child receives all his/her initial training from his/her family (Adenike & Oyesoji, 2010).

The importance of families and society in the schooling of children are well established in research as indicated in the work of Epstein and Conners (1994), and Henderson and Berla (1994). The ideas derived from these studies established compelling evidences that the interest and support of the family are the primary factors for a child's success or failure in school. Another importance of family and community in the schooling of children was clearly indicated in the analysis of about 51 studies conducted by Henderson and Map Arrenett (2002). The study indicated that children with above-median parent and community involvement records academic success rates that were 30 percent higher than those children with below-median parent and community involvement (Henderson et al., 2002). Similarly, Horn and West (1992) noted that the levels of family and community involvement strongly influenced the drop-out rate among children. Furthermore, parental involvement has been considered to positively affect the attitudes, behaviour, attendance, and higher aspirations of the students. This is in line with the argument of Henderson (1988), Henderson and Berla (1994), and Heath and McLaughlin as reported in Epstein and Sheldon, (2002), where they argued that family and community involvement is significant since the "problems of educational achievement and academic success demand resources beyond the scope of the school and of most families" (Epstein et al., 2002, p. 30). They further presented some reasons such as, family demographics changing, diversity growing among children, and demands of the professional workplace as some of the reasons why families and schools alone cannot provide enough resources to ensure that all students receive

both the support and experiences they need to succeed in the larger society (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). This fact is equally established in the work of Crites (2008).

In addition, the findings of a study conducted by Daramola (1990) indicated a significant relationship between the factors of parental involvement, children's socialization variables as represented by socioeconomic status and their academic success. These findings indicated relationship between pupils' socialization variables and their academic achievement. A possible explanation for these findings could be related to the fact that the home environment produces a conducive atmosphere for both the family and the children to interact closely and discuss issues related to the progress of the young members of the family. The findings could also be considered in terms of family socialization. The family socializes the child, it shapes the child's personality and provides his/her basic needs. All early values, skills and ideas are acquired in the home. The child's parent value orientations and their nature of involvement in his schooling process tend to be the most significant predictors of child's academic success (Idowu, 1990).

Finally, the positive benefits of involvement could be reaped by the parties involved as noted by Epstein (2001). This assertion was further explained in the work of Armstrong, (2008a) where she asserted that through parent and community involvement, schools can provide the best possible learning environment for the children by collaborating with parents to achieve the goal of producing success in children. According to her, parents could achieve their goals in their children through supporting their education and involving in their schooling process. The community should reap the benefit of getting young mentally and physically healthy children, educated, and capable of contributing a lot towards their community in particular and

society at large. In conclusion, students should benefit from school; family and community efforts hence they do not grow, learn, and develop in isolation, but rather in concert with their environments (Armstrong, 2008).

1.1 Background of the study

1.1.1 Parental Involvement in Children's Schooling

The No Child Left behind Act (2001) defined parental involvement as the process of parental participation in a regular two ways and effective communication concerning children academic success and other school activities. The North West Regional, Educational Laboratory (NREL, 1999) defined parental involvement as the ongoing, active involvement of a student's family in his/her schooling process. Epstein (1995), refers to the concept of parental involvement as the effort of family and community members in taking active part in creating a caring environment for their children's educational development (Eisenhart & Towne, 2003). Caring involvement here is referred to as parental actual engagement in the schooling activities of their children, through identifying and integrating resources and services that will encourage their children and help them to succeed academically (Epstein, 1995).

These conceptions portray the fact that educating children in this time under the society which has the characteristics of ethnic diversity, economic instability, and social maladjustment requires commitments and contributions of all the community members. Hence, establishing an effective partnership among families, schools, and communities are regarded as crucial for the optimal academic success throughout the child's academic career (Bryan & Holcomb-McCoy, 2007).

Parental involvement in their children's schooling process is linked to the beneficial effects of children's achievements, attitudes, and school climate. These are considered the components for successful schooling process which are directly linked to the increased attendance, achievement, and problems in students' behaviour (Epstein, 1992; Henderson, 1994; Sheldon, & Clark 2001; Johnson, 1996). Badalament (2008) and James (2007) explained the findings from over thirty years of educational research which indicate that parental involvement in the schooling process of their children have a positive impact upon the academic success of those students. Another finding from the research also established that children whose parents are actively involved in their schooling process are more likely to succeed in their education (Henderson et al., 2002). In the same vein, some other studies reveal that parental involvement improves facets of their students learning such as daily attendance (Epstein & Sheddan, 2000), student academic success (Henderson et al., 2002; Epstein, 2001), behaviour (Cotton & Wikelund, 2001; Henderson et al., 2002; Epstein, 2001), and motivation (Brooks, Bruno, & Burns, 1997). In general, effective family participation in schooling is considered to be a crucial component in the academic success of students (Adamski, Peiro, & Fraser, 2000; Stokes, 2009).

Some families are able to sacrifice their time because of the importance they attach to their children's education. Hence they get involved in activities, like attending Parent Teacher conferences, parents' day, volunteering to be involved in school activities and so on; while on the other hand some   may only have time for one or two school activities due to their tight schedules and lack of encouragement from the teachers in the schools. Whatever the nature of parental involvement, consistency matters as it makes a difference in the children's school life (Utah Educational Association, 2008; Olatoye & Agbatogun, 2009). The cultivating effort

of linking family and schools is widely and increasingly seen as a strong component of strategies to be used in improving students' educational outcomes (Flouri & Buchanan, 2004). Other findings also noted having a direct and strong relationship between academic achievement and socioeconomic status (SES), and claimed that parents that are motivated, in respective of their socioeconomic status help in improving the performance of their children through different types of involvement (Flouri & Buchanan, 2004). Another research that has documented the effect of involving parents at both home and school, concluded that differences in the working class and middle class children academic achievement is explained more by the nature of student-family and school interactions than by the characteristics of socioeconomic status (Latta, Dick, Parry, & Tamura, 2008).

The importance of parental involvement in their children's education cannot be overemphasized. The benefits of involvement as reported in Benson and Martin (2003), extends beyond academic work. They include high rates of attendance, higher self esteem, and higher probability of avoiding risk behaviours in adolescence and finally lower drop-out rates. Other benefits may contain, higher attendance rates, higher school achievement, lower delinquency, lower rate of dropout, increased high school completion and higher rates of college and university admission (Benson & Martin, 2003).

However, some barriers get in the way of parental involvement in the schooling process. Finders and Lewis, (1994), and Sheldon and Epstein, (2005) stated that cultural and language barriers prevented families from participating actively in understanding their children's educational needs. They continued to state that different styles of teaching, economic difficulties, limited educational attainment,

socioeconomic status and time constraints are considered part of the barriers to parental involvement in the schooling process of their children. The present research has the intention of lending valuable insights into parent, school, and community partnership's activities that can sustain relationships between the three overlapping spheres of influence, thereby, enhancing the involvement of family and learning of their children in the schools for academic success.

Finally, the preceding discussions indicated that parents are the most crucial actors as far as the schooling process of their children is concerned, because the home environment is viewed as the initial school of every child. Therefore, for the child to be educated, his/her parents must give their contribution (Adenike & Oyesoji 2010).

1.1.2 Nigerian School Systems and the Family and Community Involvement in Children's Schooling Process.

Nigeria is the most populous country in the African region. It is situated on the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa. Nigeria inherited a British system of education with a British philosophy. This system of education no longer meets the needs of an independent Nigeria. Accordingly, in January 1977, the government issued a policy statement on education containing the government's views on the philosophy of Nigerian education from preschool through to the university levels. The specific national aims and objectives to which the philosophy is linked are: 1) the inculcation of national consciousness and national unity; 2) the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society; 3) the training of the mind in the understanding of the world; and 4) the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities, and competencies, both mental and physical, as

equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his/her society (National Policy on Education, 1981, 1994, 2004 p. 3).

However, in the area of child well being as indicated in the specific national aims and objectives of the Nigerian national policy on education, that training the mind in understanding the world and acquiring appropriate skills, abilities, and competencies both mentally and physically as the best equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of his society (National policy on education, 1981, 1994, 2004 p. 4). It can be understood that this portion of the policy is directly related to the child's well being and education; but these can never be actualized without involving parents. To make it more precise and clear, in 2003 the Nigerian government came out with the Child Right Act. The Child Rights Act (2003), which is an indigenized Nigerian status, this act was passed into law in July 2003 by the National Assembly and it received the assent of the President of the National Republic of Nigeria that same year (Zimbabwe, 1992). Part 11 (comprising sections 3-20) contained the rights and responsibilities of the Nigerian child. They included the right to survival and development, to a name and identity, freedom of association, peaceful assembly, thought, conscience and religion to private and family life, movement, from discrimination, the right to dignity, leisure, recreation and maintenance and to free, and compulsory universal primary education. It is also part of the government's efforts to encourage the child to attend secondary education (Zimbabwe, 1992, p.5). The Act has a provision for the protection and assistance for children in especially difficult situations as well as guarantees for the unborn child, its life, health, and welfare. Emphasis is placed on the responsibilities of families, communities, and guardians of their children (Zimbabwe, 1992).

There has been a consistent increasing demand for educational services in Nigeria. This demand arose as a result of population growth which increases social demands (the desire to educate a good proportion of the population) and the need for more skilled manpower in the country (Abdullahi, 1996). The increasing demand for educational services means the establishment of more schools, particularly primary and secondary schools, and provision of more teachers, and materials. The result is that the burden of funding education in Nigeria, which rests mainly on the various tiers of government, is becoming unbearable. This fact is obvious by the existence of numerous problems affecting the education sector in the country. It is a predetermined conclusion that in Nigeria with a population of over 150 million, a good percentage of which consists of young people, the funding of education can no longer be totally left in the hands of governments. Other sources of funds and assistance are required for any appreciable progress to be achieved. In this regard, Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) are established to serve as instruments of family and community participation in education (Abdullahi, 1996).

Parent Teachers Association (PTA) serves as a body which coordinates relationships between schools and parents. The PTA's intervention here is in relation to finances, whereby they source funds and assistance from parents and the community so as to facilitate an appreciable progress in the school, through supply of teaching materials, constructing infrastructure, provision of social infrastructure, giving soft loans, and other related welfare matters. However, the aspect of involving parents physically into the academic affairs of their children is neglected by Nigerian PTAs association which is the only body responsible for the social well being of the Nigerian students (Abdullahi, 1996). More so, some families do not realize the significance of their roles in schools. Both the policy makers and practitioners do not

know how to facilitate parental involvement in schools (Adeyemo, 2005). Looking at the above situation, there is an urgent need for research to find strategies that are effective in facilitating and developing schools, family, and community, relationships in the Nigerian context. Because it is only when family, school and community are fully meshed that the benefits of educational contribution for the realization of country's objectives could be achieved. (Adeyemo, 2005).

In the developed countries, parents play a crucial role towards their children's education both at home and in the school environments which carries significant implications (Gianzero, 2001). In the same vein, Olatoye and Agbatogun (2009) agreed that the main forecast of research in the developed world is conducting more rigorous studies to help educators in predicting the precise outcomes of implementing particular strategies for involving parents in their children's education (Gianzero, 2001). While developing countries like Nigeria, studies on parental involvement are few; many research reports in the area of parental involvement come from developing countries (Olatoye & Agbatogun, 2009). Some of the researches that were conducted in Nigeria on parental involvement include (Olatoye & Agbatogun, 2009; Adeyemo, 2005; Adenike & Oyesoji, 2010) but these studies are not able to answer some formulated questions related to parental involvement issues in so many parts of Nigeria, because of their narrow focus and their inability to extend their work to other places in the country (Jeynes, 2005). Thus, there is a pressing need for a study to be conducted so as to help in bridging the gap between the developed world and the developing countries like Nigeria by providing literature on parental involvement in the context of Nigeria.

In Nigeria today, parents are engaged in jobs and business. This differs from the previous time where mothers stay at home and take good care of their children. The trend now is working mothers take their babies to daycare schools at about six weeks after their birth the babies will stay there for both their pre-primary and primary education. And their parents may not have time to visit them while in school to see what is going on there (Adenike & Oyesoji, 2010). It is also a common sight in most countries of Africa seeing children of school age getting involved in street hawking and petty trading after and even during the school periods. This resulted in their performing poorly in schools, failure to do their work both in the school and at home, absenteeism, and finally brings about misbehaviour in schools (Benson & Martin, 2003). Therefore there is a need to investigate the nature of parental involvement in schools to promote some ways of controlling the behaviour and activities of the children so that they can succeed academically.

Academic success is one of the focus areas of Nigerian education, but the major detriment to academic success is lack of parental involvement (Tella & Aremu 2003). In spite of the seeming exhaustiveness of literature indicating the determinants of students' academic success in Nigeria, there seem to be many areas of interest to be investigated. This becomes obvious considering the continued interest of researchers, educational psychologists, government, policy makers, and educational planners (Tella & Aremu 2003). Academic success has been associated with many factors. Most of the children in Nigerian schools face many challenges on how to cope with their school activities under serious emotional strains occasioned by poor environments, lack of teacher motivation in the school, parental inability to get involved and parents who often fail to actively participate in the schooling process of these children (Aremu & Tella, 2003). These would not augur well for

student's school success. In essence, the importance of involving parents in the schooling process of their children has been found to be very significant for academic success (Epstein & Sanders, 2006). Nevertheless, in spite of the reviewed studies in the Nigerian context, there is a need for further investigation on the nature of parental involvement in the children's schooling process within the context of Katsina State study which is the study area .

1.2 Focusing the Research Issue of Parental Involvement

The possibilities of establishing and improving our educational system based on vocal and active parental participation are countless and can raise questions. As noted by Epstein (2001) and Public School Parent Network (2004);

> "Would bullies be quite so troublesome if their parents were aware and got involved in their education? Would standardized test scores be so low in the public schools if parents were more tuned into the schooling process of their children? Would Government financing be jeopardized for any school in any state if parents raised their level of expectation in terms of their children's academic performance? Could checking the homework of their child each night that makes much of a difference? Absolutely!"

(Epstein, 2001; Network, 2004 P. 1)

Epstein (2001) noted that academic success is without doubt considered to be a research topic to both educational sociology and psychologies. In their effort to investigate what brings about the academic success of the student's schooling process, psychologists have come up with more an answered questions, just like in the above statement of Epstein where efforts were being made to find out the actual determinants of academic success (Epstein, 2001).

In recent times, prior literature has indicated that academic success is being determined by variables like, involving parents in the schooling process of their

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children (Aremu & Sokan, 2003, Aremu & Oluwale, 2001, Aremu, 2000). According to Salami and Aremu (2007), academic success is detrimentally affected by such factors like, poor school environments, teaching by unmotivated teachers, parental inability to get involved, parental inability to provide for the family's need. With regard to this, Aremu and Tella (2003) concluded that this would definitely affect the student's academic success. Research findings indicate that parental involvement in the process of schooling has been found to be of benefit to a student's success in the schools (Aremu &Tella, 2003). Similarly, parental involvement serves as a tool for providing academic success. Though, the conceptions of educators with regard to successful students seem to differ from that of Ellis and Worthington (1994) and Scheuermann (2000) who opined that successful students should learn how to effectively balance both their social and academic aspects of school life, expect to succeed, and may be socially proficient, goal oriented, and intrinsically motivated.

Educational research as discussed in section 1.3.1 clearly indicates the significance of involving family in the education of their children in relation to their success in schools (Epstein, 2001; Epstein, 2003; Jaynes 2002). Thus, this study believes that developing school, family, and community relationship are among the important element in promoting success in the students' schooling process.

The research on parental involvement has produced a worldwide acceptable and useful theory and framework of six typologies of involvement activities that guide research policy and practice in the field of family, school, and community partnerships (Epstein & Sanders, 2006). Therefore, researchers start inspecting, dissecting, as well as identifying components and effects of partnership programs in their school systems despite the hardships of studying the three partners

simultaneously. It is therefore, important for researchers to think about the process of students learning and development from their preschool to high school. Also it is equally important for them to think about some means of communications, connections, and provision of coordinated actions to be conducted between the school and the other partners in helping their students to utilize their potential and succeed. (Epstein & Sanders, 2006).

It has become common knowledge that the unending challenge facing Nigeria today as a multilingual society in the 21st century is the role of parents in their children's educational development (Maduekwe, 2007). Several studies such as Oyetunde (1999), Lawal (1985) and Omojuwa (2002) confirm that the potentials of parents as participants in the schooling process of their children have not been fully tapped in Nigeria. Worse still, teachers generally ignore the parents who are considered to be their most effective and accessible source of help in the development of education at the foundation level as reported by Maduekwe and Adeosun (2010). Consequently, Okebukola (2004) highlighted that the level of parental involvement in schools was far lower at the lower basic level as he found most pupils were totally illiterate at the end of primary education. He concluded that the problems underlying educational development in Nigeria are usually spillovers from the earlier stages and levels of the education system. To check the widespread failure in education, the parental factor is seen as critical and imperative (Maduekwe & Adeosun, 2010). This study, therefore, intends to investigate parental involvement in the schooling process for academic success as a means of boosting Nigerian parents' involvement in the educational process of their children so as to check and reduce the widespread school failure. In line with this Kazeem and Musa (2008) have suggested that, a review of the existing relationship between the main educational

pillars in the Nigerian context which include school, family and community should be conducted, so as to save and arrest the declining quality of education in Nigeria.

Finally, this study attempts to provide answers to the question which states how can more families – indeed, all families – become involved in their children's education in ways that contribute to student success?   Answering this question in the context of Katsina State in Nigeria provides an attempt to close the gap in the studies that involves parents in the educational process of their children. This study believes that involving parents in the schooling process of their children would contribute towards enhancing their academic success; this is true not only in the Nigerian context, but in all countries of the world. In many countries as it is going to be explained next, one of the strongest trends in their educational reform has been to give parents and in some cases community members, an increased role in governing schools (Lemmer, 2000).

1.2.1 The Issue of Parental Involvement in the Schooling Process in the Global and Nigerian Contexts.

It has become more and more clear that in recent years many educational systems are struggling to connect with specific communities, families, and more importantly, the students it serves Epstein (2001). This phenomenon is not unique in isolation, or prevalent in certain geographical locations, instead, it impacts the urban schools, the affluent neighbours, and the rural areas. The approach to solving these challenges must be addressed immediately, or we will see detrimental and irreversible consequences in the not so distant future. (Woody, 2010)

According to the U.S. Department of Education (1998), thirty years of research established that parental involvement in their children schooling process helps their

children in earning higher grades and receiving higher scores on their tests, make them attend school more regularly, take good care of their homework, show more positive attitudes and behaviours, graduate from school with higher grade and enrol in higher education than children from the least involved parents. (Eisenhart & Towen, 2003)

The policy of some international countries differs in relation to who takes the responsibility of educating children. In Europe for most of the 20th century, the government took major responsibility of educating children. However, in the recent policies of most European countries like in the 1988 Education act of the United Kingdom, has shown a trend towards shifting responsibilities for educating children to their parents (Bourmina, 1995). This means reinforcing the need for parental involvement in the schooling process. Similarly, in the United States of America, the government declaration of the Child's Rights places responsibility for the child's education on their families, whereas the European convention on human rights requires government to respect families right in respect to their children's education (Tomlinson, 2001).

Educational policy makers in many countries have supported school, family and community interaction, and the initiatives of government have emphasized the need for increasing parental involvement in education. The idea of involving parents in the educational affairs of their children as indicated by the work of Eisenhart and Towne (2003) is no longer a problem in many countries of the world. This phenomenon has already been established in developing countries to the extent that their problem is not how to involve, but how to come up with programs, policy, and strategies that will enhance the involvement. For example, in the United State of America the idea

of involving parents in the schooling process of their children has been selected to be part of the four key ingredients other than teaching and settings for emotional, social, and academic growth of the children (McBride & Lin, 1996). Also in Britain, the rights and responsibilities of parents in the schooling process of their children and the partnership between family and teachers as co-educators in the schooling process continued to be emphasized in the recent legislative developments and many public documents (Thompson, Britain, & Nottingham, 2004). In Australia, it is clear that since the late 70s family and community involvement were the key to the educational improvement and that families were consulted and informed to get involved in decisions affecting educational policy at school levels (Symeou, 2005).

In the above stated countries, families play crucial roles in their children's schooling process both at home and in school environments which significantly influence the children's academic success (Gianzero, 2001; Olataye & Ogunkola, 2008). The fact is that, they agree about the significance of linkages between schools, families, and communities. As a result of this, their main focus of research now is conducting more rigorous studies, which will help educators in predicting the precise outcomes of implementing a particular strategy to get parents involve in the schooling process of their children (Gianzero, 2001).

In Africa, countries like South Africa are not left behind in developing programs of parental involvement. In the context of South Africa since 1994, their schooling legislation introduced important educational reforms which affect parental involvement. The South African schools Act (SASA) No 84 of (1996) defined the concept of parent, described basic parental duties, set requirements for schools and provided for p family and community representation in the mandatory schools

governing bodies (SGB'S). These reforms have created a conducive environment for parental involvement in schools (Dikhutlo, 2006). In the Nigerian context, the introduction of the PTA program brings about the emphasis on the idea of involving parents in the educational process of their children (Abdullahi, 1996). Nonetheless, the level of the involvement is minimal considering the explicit need of such involvement in the challenging nature of the educational process whereby the contribution of the family is highly needed for the survival of the Nigerian educational process (Aremu & Tella, 2003). The country suffered from the prolonged military rule and aborted civilian administration. These administrations bring about the promulgation of the decrees, edicts and laws concerning educational systems at federal, state, and local government levels as indicated by Aremu and Tella (2003).

Studies have also indicated that countries like United States of America, United Kingdom, France, and other developed countries of the world focused on exploring new areas of school, family, and community relationships (U.S. Department of Education, 1998; Eisenhart & Towne, 2003). Nonetheless, in the case of developing countries like Nigeria many families do not understand the importance of their participating in schools and both the policy makers and practitioners are not identifying how to facilitate parental involvement in schools (Adeyemo, 2005). Even though, much research has been conducted in Nigeria on the concept of parental involvement (Olatoye, 2008; Jeynes, 2005; Aremu, A. O., 2005; Noraini, 2006; Adepoju, 2010). However, these studies were not able to provide enough literature in this area in the context of Nigeria which covers a wide area. As a result of this, the literature is still to be provided in many parts of the country where the idea of involving parents in their children's education is not well explored and developed (Jeynes, 2005).

Research evidences have clearly indicated the Nigerian system of education is struggling to provide partnership activities between schools, families, and communities (Abdullahi, 1996). This phenomenon is not uniquely isolated, or prevalent in certain geographical locations of the Nigerian context, but it impacts all urban schools, affluent neighbours, and rural areas (Adepoju, 2010, Aremu, 2005; Noraini, 2006). The need for this partnership has become so pressing to the extent that it has become a challenge that needs to be addressed immediately, or see the detrimental and irreversible consequences in not so distant future in the country's education. This goes in line with Woody (2010) who emphasized the need of partnership activities in educational development. Finally, the quest of providing the way out of this anticipated national problem motivated the researcher to make meaning of the data of this research and conduct study on how to co-opt the three spheres of influence (school, family, and community) in the schooling process of the Nigerian child.

1.2.2 Critical Analysis of the Research Focus on Parental Involvement for Academic Success.

In spite of the evidences which suggested that parental involvement improves student academic success and educational attainment, many are concerned about the rate of research on parent-involvement programs as reported by Fine (1993) in a book called 'Home Advantage' written by Annette (1989) raised concern about the widespread implementation of parental involvement policies everywhere in the world. Their main concern on the effect of parental involvement program stems from their observations that "one-size-fits-all" approach is used by many schools and teachers. This resulted in making some of the schools to support white, upper- and middle-class values, and disadvantage students.

Research evidences indicated some differences in parental involvement, parental beliefs, and the school-home relationships across socioeconomic, racial groups and ethnic (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). These different perceptions between teachers and parents can bring about many misunderstandings and it can bring about the development of negative school to home relationship. Whether and how any program of parental involvement can prove equitable and sensitive to parents from all backgrounds remains a discussion issue (Lareau & Horvat, 1999).

In the spring of 2008, the Harvard Family Research Project asked the nation's leading parental involvement researchers what is the most important research question facing the field today and what the future holds for schools and communities despite the criticisms. Chavkin (1993), Delgado-Gaitan (2004), Hill (2004), and Henderson (2002) all commented that the most urgent need in research today is to look at what strategies are most effective in developing relationships between the school, family, and the community. Furthermore, what are schools "actually doing to engage families" and what can we learn from them (Saleebey, 1997). It is the contention of the present study that schooling process is first and foremost about relationships between and among children, teachers, and the families it serves, and that building community is the basis for school reform that seek to improve the teaching and learning process.

Moreover, critics all over the world challenge the feasibility of establishing partnerships between teachers and parents, citing the time requirements and the potential for difficulties in meeting the diverse wishes of the families. This is clearly indicated in a study conducted in Canada on parent involvement and participation in schools which described the diversity of interests as a major source of conflict

(Kasting, 1994).   According to Clabaugh (1998) the implication of these differing demands could be put simply, that, public educators are expected to satisfy an astounding range of contradictory parent expectations. But by attempting to become all things to all people, the public schools will become incapable of focused and purposeful activity. Another critical challenge towards the implementation of partnership activities in schools is   defining what is meant by the terms used in describing these partnerships, such as "shared aims and goals", "common understanding" and "appropriate opportunities to contribute to school decision-making and governance", as used by Cuttence and Stokes (2000), ACSSO, and APC (2005). Partnerships may also prove difficult to be established within the hierarchical structures of schools and industrial issues of roles, rights, and responsibilities which must be addressed.

However, there is already a well-established body of research on the importance of parental involvement in student academic success. Nonetheless, critics are still emphasizing that there is less research on how schools can effectively invite this involvement or create opportunities for roles that extend beyond volunteering in the school or participating in Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO) and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) (Long, 2010). Additionally, research around the motivations for and ways through which educators can establish partnerships with the greater community is a body of research that has begun to emerge within the last twenty years (Long, 2010). Therefore activities that can engage families and communities in education continue to develop a lot of criticisms where some of the activities sometimes bring unexpected benefits to students, school, or the community (Long, 2010). In line with the above, a study that can come out with clearly recommended and deserving partnership activities to help in creating connections within the larger

social system responsible for raising children is needed. These connections often increase the capacity of the whole system to benefit Nigerian youths.

Research conducted in the Nigerian context by Adepoju (2010) indicated that critics of parental participation in school capitalized on the fact that parents have no time for involvement. And many of the parents do not get involved in the schooling process of their children just because they might consider their weekly schedules too much as it were to add extra burden or they do not have the training and skills for involving themselves in their children's education. This may be true because in Nigeria many families lack the awareness and time that are very essential to parental involvement in education and these families are not oriented on how to support their children learning at home. Parental attitude to their children's education was also considered to be a barrier to their involvement in the schooling process. Parents might assume that since they are not working in schools why going to school all the time in the name of involvement. Families were also not given encouragement to get involved; this lack of encouragement may be from the schools authority or teachers. Another strong barrier to this involvement as perceived by Adepoju (2010) was that parents were reluctant to engage in formal school bodies like PTA and PTO Base on their beliefs that they are formally and closed. Parents might reject these bodies because of other people domination which bring about intimidation by public speaking and ignoring their views. Further, lack of school-home communication was also considered as a barrier to parental involvement. Parents must be informed about any program before they get involved (Adepoju, 2010).

 Therefore, critics on the educational position in the Nigerian context uphold the belief that, in spite of the seeming exhaustiveness of literature on the determinants of

learners' academic success, there seems to be more interesting areas that are yet to be explored. They opined that most children in Nigerian schools confront many challenges on how to cope with their academic tasks under serious emotional strains caused by the student's long taking to school, poor teaching/learning environment in schools, and unmotivated teachers. Coupled with this, is the attitude of parents who more often than not, are tossed by the wind of economic incapacitation of inadequate provision for the family. Thus, most often keep them away from their children and are not able to monitor the academic progress of their children. This clearly indicates the position of education in Nigeria which is in the midst of crises (Aremu & Tella, 2003). However, Nigerian schools live in the shadow of their glorious past because of their inability to provide an effective schooling process to the children and employ right calibre of teachers and put them in the right place at the right time. The Government's lackadaisical attitude to the educational sector, the influence of the society that gives credence to wealth without hard work, the socioeconomic situation affected by the global meltdown forcing parents to stay away from home and fundamental responsibilities to their wards and other reasons have changed the effectiveness in the school and quality improvement in students' academic success in the country (Aremu & Tella, 2003).

In partnerships, teachers assist their children to understand how to conduct traditional communications with their families (e.g., delivering newsletters and report cards) and new communications (e.g., interacting with members of the family about their homework and involving in parents, teachers, and student conferences) (Crites, 2008). Therefore, identifying research-based best practices to assist in removing barriers to family and community involvement and implementing the practices to increase parent and community involvement in the schooling process of