



The Extent of Involvement of Parent Teacher Association in the Management of Primary Schools in Gaborone Broadhurst, Botswana

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author TB designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Authors TM managed the literature searches and data collection cleaning and entry into SPSS. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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Case study

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the extent of Parent Teacher Associations'(PTA) involvement in the management of Broadhurst primary schools in Gaborone. To achieve this objective three research questions were developed. The study adopted a descriptive survey type of research design. A sample of 313 was drawn from the population of 1736 out of 8 primary schools in Broadhurst, Gaborone. A random sampling technique was used to select participants from parents and teachers. A structured questionnaire titled "Extent of PTA involvement in Primary School Management" was used for data collection. The instruments were validated by a panel of experts. A reliability coefficient of .76 was obtained from trial testing of parents and teachers rating of extent of PTA involvement in the management primary school. Data collected was analysed descriptively for means and standard deviations. The study indicated that PTA involvement in school management is low on issues of maintaining desirable behaviour in schools and fund raising

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activities. It is however significant (mean 2.52) which is above the criterion mean of 2.50 when it comes to improvement of academic performance. The study concluded that the PTA involvement in management of schools benefits learners as Gaborone region was rated among the best performing in Botswana. It was therefore recommended that policies and guidelines governing PTA should be developed by Ministry of Basic Education and Training to maximise the benefits of this collaboration.

Keywords: School; parent teacher association; management; discipline; effective.

1. INTRODUCTION

Parents Teachers Association (PTA) is a voluntary and welfare organization that brings together major stake holders in education which are parents/guardians and teachers of pupils in a particular school [1]. This association was first started in the United States of America by group of mothers (parents) who were concerned about the welfare of their children [2].

The purpose of PTA is to bring the home and the close to each other, to study the problem of the children and if possible find solutions that are mutually beneficial [3]. The association meets every now and then to discuss matters on education, moral and spiritual welfare of students in school. Parents Teachers Association is not set to take over the running of the school but to provide complement which gives it part of the responsibility in the administrative work of the school. This organization is basically made up of 2 arms; the General Assembly and the Executive. The Executive meets often if need be whilst the general assembly normally meets quarterly or yearly with the executive to get updates of recent meetings. The executive is made up of elected parents and school management such as school heads and school administrators [4].

Teachers spend most of the day with the students whilst parents live with the children and so there has to be partnership between the two bodies as to facilitate proper harmonization of education system by creating a link between home and the school. The Parents' Teachers Associations provide some of the things required by the school both emotionally and financially bridging the gap between the community and the school [5].

The school functions efficiently and effectively by a good management and the involvement of external sources who normally come with fresh ideas and useful inputs. The Parents Teachers Association is involved as an external source in

the efficient and effective management of schools if their inputs and ideas are thoroughly considered and implemented. They also help in the fund raising, maintenance of discipline, seeing to the welfare of the community and creating a bound between the school, the home and the community, between parents and the teachers and building parent involvement at school and other activities relating to the welfare of the school rather than the progress of individual pupils [5]. Although the association has shown to be effective and efficient the attitudes of parents and teachers towards the academic and general development of students can affect it either positively or negatively. Some parents display a lukewarm attitude towards the meeting proceedings of the association and simply not having time to check their children's academic progress. Teachers on the other hand can have a negative attitude toward developing a relationship with some student's parents due to either the behavior of the student or lack of commitment of some parents in their children's work [6].

The role of Parents Teachers Association in management of primary school seems to be varying from showing interest and concern in the affairs of the school which includes fundraising, discipline and assisting in the moral upbringing of students and helping the school in building of infrastructures. The organization's role and extent to which the Parents' Teachers Associations is involved in administration is determined or controlled by the school or stipulated by the government. Schools appreciate the role of Parents' Teachers Associations differently as some see them as only fundraisers whilst others see the organization as a major decision making body of the school. This association has however, proved to be a major stakeholder in education if effectively utilized since it is comprised of parents of students in the school and have the best interest of their kids at heart and will do their best to contribute positively to their education [7].

Although the Parents' Teachers Associations ensures or is taken as a major stake holder of education, it has also raised a number of questions the major ones being:

- How does the association influence the performance of the teaching staff of the school?
- What is the relationship between the activities of the Parents' Teachers Associations and the development of education in Botswana?

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The influence of Parent's Teacher Association in the management of primary school is of great importance. A very effective and efficient management in primary schools is often associated with a good relationship between parents and teachers. For a better education sector, one must be able to know the extent of the role of this association in schools and as a result of its contributions the principals might see their shortcoming and involved in a more effective approach to school management. The educational performance of Botswana students and standard of education in Botswana today is gradually falling thus leading to this question as to the role of the parents' teachers' association in the management of primary schools in Botswana in improving this malady in the educational sector. Botswana Examination Council report (2015) showed Broadhurst primary schools as among underperforming schools in the greater Gaborone region. There is also a growing concern over the poor performance of Broadhurst Primary schools in the just released Primary School Leaving Examinations thus leading to this study in examining the role of PTA in school management. Do Parents' Teachers Associations help in improving the general management of schools in Broadhurst? Are their inputs as stakeholders required to improve the declining education sector? On the other hand, schools have accused Parents' Teachers Associations of only being visible during school prize giving ceremonies, Botswana Daily News 11th August 2016. All these are the problems that led to this survey.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to find the collaboration of the Parents' Teachers Associations and school management in ensuring smooth running of primary schools. Specifically, the objective of the study is:

- To measure the extent involvement of Parents' Teachers Associations in the management of primary schools in Broadhurst

1.3 Research Questions

In order to examine the extent of the Parents' Teachers Associations in schools in Broadhurst, Botswana, the following question guided the study:

- How are Parents' Teachers Associations get involved in maintaining desirable behaviour in primary schools?
- How are PTAs involved in fund raising primary schools?
- How are PTA involved in improving academic performance in primary schools?

1.4 Review of Related Literature

Albez1 and Ada [8] conducted School Administrators Skills in Organizing the Parent Participation in Turkey. The research examined school administrators' skill in organising parent participation efforts. It was a descriptive study conducted in the relational survey model on the perception of administrator, teacher and parent. The population of the study consisting of teachers 3831 teachers from primary schools, secondary schools and high schools. Due to the fact that parent - teacher association executive board members participate directly in parent - teacher participation efforts, in the study the population consisting of parents comprises 575 parents, 30 of which are members of executive boards of parent - teacher associations in high schools, 40 in secondary schools and 45 in primary schools. The sample size of the study was 273 school administrators, 916 teachers and 395 parents from primary schools, secondary schools and high schools, determined according to the stratified sampling method. The study reached the conclusion that school administrators' skills in organising parent participation efforts and the parent participation efforts conducted were inadequate.

Thakur and Gupta [9] conducted a descriptive study on the Role of Parents' Teachers Associations in Development of Schools, Teachers and Children. Its population consisted of 14 head teachers, 57 teachers, 39 parents and 20 students of class eight and nine. Quantitative data collected from 18 items in the questionnaire were analysed. Interaction with the head

teachers revealed that they had a number of limited opportunities and faced many challenges in the implementation of Educational programs. They concluded that Parental involvement in schools is characterized by varied level of interaction that exists among the school administration, teachers and parents. There is a need of parental involvement in their children's education but parental involvement is found to be limited. Parents and teachers acknowledged that there is need of more parental involvement for up-gradation of quality of their children's education.

A study done by Chykodili [10] was designed to find out the modalities for improving Parents' Teachers Associations participation in the Administration of Secondary Schools. It was conducted in Enugu Education zone, in Nigeria. The study employed a survey research design and stratified random sampling was used to select the 472 respondents out of a population of 2126. Four research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The research instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire, the instrument consisted of twenty-four (24) item questionnaire captioned Parents' Teachers Associations Participation in the Administration of Secondary School. The analytical tools used for the research questions were mean and standard deviation while the null hypothesis were tested using the t-test statistics of difference between mean samples at an alpha level of 0.05. Based on the above findings, a number of recommendations were made which suggested; government should make policies regarding school community relationships and empowering PTA to make levies to help provide for the school, teachers and the PTA should see themselves as partners in the process of educating the children, and finally government should provide guidelines for the Parents' Teachers Associations.

Ngare [11] conducted a study on the Role of Parents Teachers Association in enhancing discipline in public secondary schools in Ongata Kongai zone, Kajiado County, Kenya. The study was guided by four research questions that investigated the following aspects: The activities of Parents' Teachers Associations in enhancing student's discipline, the extent to which Parents' Teachers Associations role enhances discipline, the challenges facing Parents' Teachers Associations in students' discipline management and suggestions on how the PTA can be more effective in enhancing discipline. The study

employed both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies with a cross-sectional survey and phenomenological design. The target population consisted of 4 public secondary schools, principals, discipline masters, PTA members, class teachers, and all students of the 4 public secondary schools in Ongata Rongai Zone. The sample size consisted of 4 principals, 4 discipline masters, 36 class teachers, 36 Parents' Teachers Associations members and 160 students. Data were collected by use of interview guides, questionnaires, and document analysis guide, which were administered by the researcher. Quantitative data was analyzed in frequencies and percentages using Statistical Package for Social Science version 20, while qualitative data was organized into themes and analysed descriptively. The study found that even though Parents' Teachers Associations do many activities towards development of school facilities, very little is done on students' discipline management. In most schools, head teachers rarely involve Parents' Teachers Associations when dealing with student's indiscipline and in case of serious issues such as drugs abuse only the concerned parent is invited. This denies Parents' Teachers Associations the opportunity to forge a common front of tackling the menace. The study also established that as much as the PTA was effective in certain activities they ignored certain important activities where they should have been more effective. For example, visiting the school occasionally (uninvited) to monitor their child's progress. Lack of commitment by some Parents' Teachers Associations members was also noted and difficulties in dealing with drug addicted students. Ignorance on the part of the parents caused by low education levels was also another challenge.

Mutinda [12] conducted a study on the role of Parents' Teachers Association in management of public secondary school in Gatundu North, Kiambu County, Kenya. He noted that the quality of management at the institutional level continues to be a major concern of the Ministry of Education in Kenya. This is because the quality of the school largely depends on its leadership. To accomplish this task survey method was used in conducting the study, used a total of 13 schools out of 26 comprising 9 mixed secondary schools, 2 boys schools, and 2 girls secondary schools. Stratified random sampling technique and purposive sampling were employed to identify study sample. A questionnaire and interview guides were used for data collection. Qualitative and quantitative techniques were

employed to analyse the data. The study revealed the following challenges facing Parents' Teachers Associations in management of public secondary school: shortage of staff personnel; inadequate school finances; misappropriations of funds, insufficient physical facilities; poor performance in national examinations; lack of support from the local community; and interference in the running of school by the local communities. In conclusion, urgent measures should be put in place so as to minimize the hindrances.

Milondzo and Adjei [13] carried out a study on "Parent-community involvement in school governance and its effects on teacher effectiveness and improvement of learner performance: A study of selected primary and secondary schools in Botswana". Four complementary research methods were considered relevant to the study. These were participatory, action, qualitative and quantitative methods. This study surveyed 45 selected primary and secondary schools in Botswana which aimed to identify how parent and community involvement in the governance of schools affect teacher effectiveness and improvement of learner performance. Administration of questionnaires, interview schedules and local conferencing at the chiefs' palaces (kgotla) and in churches were done to gather data. A conclusion that in schools where parents and community involvement is visible, teachers are highly effective and this contributes to learners' positive behaviour and improvement in their academic performance was drawn.

2. METHODS

This chapter describes the methodology to be used in the development of this study, research design and issues of data collection procedures. The study adopted descriptive research of the survey type. The study was conducted in Broadhurst, Gaborone primary school using a questionnaire to collect information from the sample. Descriptive research is the research which focuses on providing an accurate description or picture of the status of the characteristics of a situation or phenomenon [14]. The research design focuses on describing the variables that exists in a given situation, and sometimes on how to describe the relationship that exists among those variables.

The target population of the study was parents and teachers. There are 8 primary schools in

Broadhurst but only four primary schools were randomly selected and used. Total population of the study was 1736 including both parents and teachers. A sample of 313 participants made of 80 teachers and 233 parents was selected based on Krejcie and Morgan's 1970 sampling framework. A four section structured questionnaire titled "Extent of PTA involvement in Primary School Management" was used for data collection. Part 1 of contained demographic information of respondents while other three sections measured various aspects of PTA involvement in school management. The parts measuring parental involvement were structured on a 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (AA) with numerical values of 1-4. The parents and teachers were given the questionnaires at the beginning of the year when the general meetings of Parents' Teachers Associations are conducted. The contact details of the parents who took the questionnaires were taken for a follow up.

To check whether the instrument measure what supposed to measure, the questionnaire was given to lecturers from Agricultural Education and Extension department at Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources for content validity. This panel of experts checked the questions formulated if they represent the outcome they are supposed to represent. It was further trial tested using forty teachers and parents in Francistown primary schools who were expected to share similar characteristics with the study area. For reliability the instrument was subjected to Pearson Moment Correlation Co-efficient (r) Statistical Tool and a reliability coefficient value of 0.76 obtained.

The researcher in the study considered the dignity of the subjects whose responses was solicited hence and participants were kept anonymous and confidential. Consent was sort via a written consent form. The researcher requested for research permit from Ministry of Basic Education and was granted such.

To answer the research question, the mean and Standard Deviation (SD) were utilised. A criterion means of 2.50 was used to determine level of accepting an item while mean below 2.50 was regarded as rejection of item. The standard deviation on the other hand demonstrated convergence or divergence about the item, and that a small the standard deviation showed homogeneity in response to an item by respondents.

3. RESULTS

Research Question 1: To what extent do the Parents' Teachers Associations get involved in maintaining desirable behaviour in primary schools.

Table 1 shows that the mean and standard deviation measures associated with maintaining undesirable behaviour in primary schools in Broadhurst, Gaborone. All items had means of disagree ranging from 1.93 to 2.44. From the analysis PTAs participation in maintaining desirable behaviour is very low. All standard deviations were lower than 1 indicating that they were few dissenting voices regarding the fact that PTA are less involved in maintaining desirable behaviour in schools.

Research Question 2: To what extent is PTA involved in school fund raising activities?

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviations of measures associated PTA involvement in school fund raising. Items 1 and 8 had means

above criterion mean (2.50) which shows agreement that PTA partakes in school fundraising activities. On the contrary Items, 2,3,4,5,6 and 7 had means ranging from 1.95-2.42. The overall or grand mean for PTA involvement in school fund raising initiatives is 2.38 which is below criterion mean of 2.50.

Research Question 3: To what extent is PTA involved in improving academic performance in Broadhurst primary schools?

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviations of measures associated PTA involvement in improving academic performance in Broadhurst primary schools. Of the 9 items measuring extent of PTA involvement in improving academic performance 5 had means higher than the criterion means of 2.50. Items 1,2,3,4 and 5 with means and standard deviations as (3.15, 0.803), (3.00, 0.694), (2.55, 0.857), (2.67, 0.982) and (2.55, 0.857) respectively. This implies there is significant involvement of P.T. As when it comes to strategies of improving academic performance.

Table 1. Means and standard deviations (SD) of respondents on extent of PTA involvement in maintaining desirable behaviour in the school

Statement	Mean	SD
1. PTA encourages teachers to summon parents of students	2.40	.807
2. PTA works closely with ministry of basic education on disciplinary matters	2.29	.762
3. PTA encourages the school to fine students for damaged school property	2.36	.754
4. PTA strictly deal with the issue of students-teachers relationships	2.44	.811
5. PTA encourages the school to suspend students for bullying	1.93	.836
6. PTA encourages the school to punish students for examination dishonesties	2.00	.616
Grand total	2.24	.800

Table 2. Means and standard deviations (SD) of respondents on the extent is PTA involvement in fund activities

Statement	Mean	SD
1. The PTA is involved in organizing ceremonies and donations for fund raising	2.82	.696
2. PTA takes into consideration the economic status of parents before involving them in contributing towards fundraising	2.40	.857
3. The PTA has set up enterprises in the school to raise funds	2.27	.804
4. PTA allows its members the option of financial labour or material contribution	2.42	.809
5. PTA keeps record on the usage of all the funds raised	2.33	.804
6. PTA host and sponsor walks to raise funds	1.95	.870
7. PTA fine members who do not come to meetings as means of raising funds for the association	2.00	.839
8. PTA encourages parents to make donations for academic trips	2.87	.795
Grand total	2.38	.809

Table 3. Means and standard deviations of respondents on the extent of PTA involvement in improving academic performance in Broadhurst primary schools

Statement	Mean	SD
1. PTA hold periodic meetings in schools to encourage staff by addressing school's teaching and learning problems	3.15	.803
2. Parents visit the school uninvited to check academic performance of their children	3.00	.694
3. The PTA ensures that the school environment is conducive for learning	2.55	.857
4. The PTA awards student who have improved academically as means of encouragement	2.67	.982
5. PTA meets once in a while with school administrators' ministers to come up with ideas and solutions to resolve problems of poor academic performance in the school	2.55	.857
6. PTA encourage the school to take strict measures on parents whom their children come to school without doing homework	2.24	.816
7. PTA encourages the curriculum developers to include parents when designing curriculum for primary schools	2.24	.860
8. PTA makes sure the school is provided with all resources which facilitates easy and effective learning	2.27	.706
9. Some PTA members provides tutorial sessions to students on weekends	2.00	.818
Grand total	2.52	.821

4. DISCUSSION

In research question 1, findings showed that the PTA's involvement in maintaining desirable behaviour as part of management of primary schools in Broadhurst is very low. The highest ranking accorded to strictly deal with student teacher sexual relationship may not be surprising as incidences inappropriate sexual relations have been reported frequently of recent times. These findings concur with Ngare (2014), who observed that although PTA was effective in certain activities they ignored certain important activities such partaking in student discipline in general and especially on drug use and addiction.

In research question 2, findings showed that PTAs had low participation in fund raising activities in school. On the overall PTAs participation in school fund raising was just limited to educational trips and ceremonies like prize giving. PTAs participation the above two stated activities could be explained by parents' fear of humiliation of having their children left behind when others embark on external excursions. The overall participation is low and supports the findings of Chykodili (2008), who reported lack of policies and guidelines in empowering PTA to contribute levies to help provide for the school.

In research question 2, findings showed that PTAs overall participation in improving academic

performance was high with mean (2.52) which is above the criterion mean (2.50). This can be explained by parents' desire to associate with a well performing child and lacking of understanding on how other variables like discipline and resources like funds are intertwined in the overall management and enhancement of school performance. This is demonstrated by parents' willingness to visit school uninvited to check on academic performance as shown by a high mean of 3.0. Milondzo and Adjei (2008) observed that parents and community involvement is highly effective and contributes to learners' improvement in their academic performance and this supports the current findings.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- Government should establish policies and guidelines to govern PTA. This provision will make clear boundaries to avoid clashes between teachers and parents.
- The concept of child friendly schools should be extended to parents so as to make them ready to visit schools freely and contribute meaningful.
- Other available forums in the community must be utilised by teachers to sensitise

parents on their role in maintenance of students' discipline in schools.

6. CONCLUSION

Conclusion that can be drawn from the analysis of the results shows that PTA involvement in the management of primary schools is to a lesser extent and when effective the benefits accrue to all stakeholders. If these bodies could work together, the burden could be lifted from the administration and as a result the schools could achieve greater things through this collaboration. PTA also seems to think that their involvement should be limited to performance in the classroom yet a lot of variables are important for realisation of effective school management.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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