



## Extent of Parental Participation in Primary Pupils' School Activities For High Academic Achievements In Delta State

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigated extent of parental participation in primary pupils' school activities for high academic achievements. The study was carried out in order to examine factors impacting on pupils' performances and attainment of high academic achievements' in their school activities. The study was guided by six research questions. The descriptive survey research design was employed in the study. Parents whose pupils' were studying in the 1132 public primary schools within the 25 LGAs in Delta State were the most important variables which served as population of the study. The sample of the study constituted 492 parents selected from the public primary schools. The samples were selected using the stratified random sampling technique. Instrument for data collection was a questionnaire personally developed by the researcher, titled: "Parental Participation in Pupils' School Activities Questionnaire (PPPSAQ)" and which contained 84 items. The research instrument was validated by three experts and the reliability determined as well. The data collected were analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation in order to answer the research questions. The findings of the study revealed that the extent to which parents' participated in primary pupils' school activities as regards to such areas like of school-based activities, home-based study and establishing effective communication with the classroom teachers, were to a low extent; except in the area of parenting, where parents' showed active participation in the primary pupils' school activities, which was to a great extent. One of the finding also revealed that parents' agreed to majority of the constraints that inhibited their participation in school activities for high academic achievements. Some possible strategies for increasing parental participation in primary schools in Delta State were also determined. Out of this findings, led to the conclusion of this study in which recommendations were also proffered. Among such recommendations included that: the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) charged with the responsibility of administering primary schools in Delta State should urge and support school administrators such as heads teachers to promote parental participation in school-based activities for high academic achievements. Parents should also actively participate in primary school pupils' home-based study for positive learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** Extent, Parental Participation, Primary School, Pupils', School Activities, High Academic Achievements

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## 1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Education is definitely an instrument for national development. It is the fulcrum on which the human capacity of any nation is sustainably built and developed. Given the importance of education to the Nigerian society need be for quality education to be harnessed. To attain quality for high academic achievements in the entire education system, primary education inclusive, it is important that all stakeholders including parents must be fully involved in the school activities. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013: v) noted in the National Policy on Education (NPE) document, that "given the expanded role of primary education as an investment for socio-economic development and tool for empowerment, strategic plans through collaborative partnerships with key stakeholders must be strengthened for attainment of quality education". One of school strategic plans that will aid to promote quality in education is through parental participation. Parental active participation is one approach towards addressing educational challenges of primary school pupils. It may be an essential factor in the development of the foundation in children's education at the early stages of the primary school level. When schools, families and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer and like school more.

Parental participation over the past decade, indicates that regardless of family circumstances, income or background, "students with involved parents are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, enroll in higher-level programmes, be promoted, pass their classes, earn credits, attend school regularly, have better social skills, show improved behaviour, adapt well to school and graduate to postsecondary education" (Henderson & Map, 2002: 67). Supporting the above statement, Velez and Jones cited in Rahman (2001) research concluded that parent/child interaction lays a firm foundation for academic achievement. The stronger the relationships, especially as they relate to educational issues, the higher the academic achievements. When schools and families work together in a greater magnitude to support learning, children tend to succeed, not only in school, but throughout life, and greater academic achievements are attained (Wherry cited in Rahman, 2001; Jeynes, 2012).

Johnston cited in Rahman (2001) attributes student's academic achievement, school adjustment and good behaviour to parent/family involvement in the educational process. The more actively parents participate in the different aspects of their children's schooling, whether as advocates, parenting, in decision-making, school-based activities, as classroom volunteers, home-study based or as home teachers, the better it is for student high academic achievement. Creating home environments that promote learning, parents who have high but not unrealistic expectations for their children's achievement and future, and those parents who become involved in their children's education both at school and in the community are the most accurate predictors of a student's achievement in school (Henderson, 1994). Parental participation may be defined by Grolnick and Slowiaczek cited in Kavanagh, (2013) as allocation of resources by the parents to their child's educational endeavours. Ndirangu (2012) defined parental participation as engagement of the parent with the children that results to a real difference in education. It can be described as parental involvement in the education of the child in and out of school from early childhood and beyond. Extent of parental participation on the other hand involves the degree or magnitude at which a parent is involved and committed to ensure good performance. In regards, the term 'parental participation' also refers to all the objects, forces and conditions in the dwelling house, which lure the child physically, intellectually and emotionally. Likewise the term parental participation is termed by Adelman and Taylor (2007) as parental collaboration with schools. Parental participation is also seen as one component of learning institution for the children. DCSF Publications (2008) puts it the following way saying that,

*"Most children receive two main educators in their spirits – their parents and their instructors. Parents are the prime educators of the youngsters' before they start school and then parents remain a major influence on children's learning throughout the school age and after it. From that point of view the parents and teachers have the crucial role of developing the child's life. In that respect is no general understanding on what parental involvement is, it can take many shapes, from involvement at the school (as a governor, helping in the classroom on or during lunch breaks) through to reading to the children at home, teaching them songs or nursery rhymes and assisting with homework".*



Parental participation in primary school activities includes a wide range of behaviours but generally refers to parents' and family members' use and investment of resources in their children's schooling. These investments can take place in or outside of school, with the intention of improving children's learning for high academic achievements. Parental participation at home can include activities such as discussions about school, helping with homework, and reading with children. Involvement at school may include parents volunteering in the classroom, attending workshops, or attending school plays and sporting events (Rain & William, 2011). A parent is the child's first and most important teacher in life and he or she is expected to play an active role in the child's preschool journey because it is believed a parent and child should grow together and have a rewarding preschool experience. This follows subsequently by school life where academic performance is expected to be high. The parent is supposed to be supportive to the child in all aspects and ramifications which include socially, physically, mentally and also emotionally (Epstein, 2001). Studies have indicated that children whose parents and/or other significant adults share in their formal education tend to do better in school.

Some benefits that have been identified that measure parental participation in school activities and education include; higher grades and test scores, long term academic achievements, positive attitudes and behaviours and more successful programmes (Epstein, 1998a & 2001b). Aside, primary school pupils' academic achievements as defined by Ndirangu (2012) refer to hopes and expectations of the child in school and what a child becomes after school. According to Mwiricha (2013) academic achievements refers to the outcome of education and the extent to which a student, institution has achieved their educational goals. The magnitude or extent in which parents devote positive attitude in making efforts to encourage their pupils to undergo the learning for better results by supplying the needed support by actively engaging in school-based activities and home-based study motivates the pupils' to put high efforts for high academic achievements. Adelman and Taylor (2007) opined that the gap among parents, community, teachers and schools has effect on one other, for the good or ill outcome. Referable to the mutual interest of society, all have goals to share, which relate to instruction and socialization of the young, to minimize problems and maximize outcomes. And then the parent participation leads to the better academic achievements in field by solving some problems and making encouragement. Nonetheless, the extents to which parents participate in school activities might be influenced by some factors.

Luchuck (1998) and Lyman (2014) in their studies discovered several factors which acted as constraints to parental participation in children education and they included parents socioeconomic status, lack of time, not being valued school policy and not knowing how to contribute. Further barriers to parental participation include not understanding the educational system, childcare difficulties, language, cultural differences and transportation difficulties, among others (Jackson & Cooper, 1992). Baker (2003) pointed out that different home environments vary in many aspects such as the parents' degree of education, economic status, occupational status, spiritual background, attitudes, values, interests, parents' expectation for their baby birds, and family size, among others.

Parents' participation differs from one family to another and so is their influence and effect on pupils' academic performance and achievements. Where things like gifts, prizes and curse of their favourite and desirable places are provided, make positive reinforcement and impact on children and likewise generate higher performance and achievement (Jeynes, 2012). Therefore, workable strategies should be employed in order to improve parental participation in the primary pupils' school activities, which seems to be limited in Delta State. Delta State is popularly counted as one of the advantaged States still providing free education at the primary school level. The State has high expectations when it comes to providing quality education for her inhabitants but on the other side students' academic performance at the primary school level seem to be dropping drastically which calls for urgent attention. A look on the other side, the researchers seems to imagine the extent of parents' contributions and participation towards their children educational pursuit and career given that they are future leaders. Even if the possibility exists for parental participation and involvement, the basic question which arises is what is the extent of parental participation in school activities for pupils' high academic achievement factors such as their performances, engagement, attendance and attitude towards school?



This is thrust and what the present study sought to determine. In essence, extent of parental participation in school activities can be measured through the questionnaire which is provided to parents. Researchers such as Allen (2000), Epstein (2001), Jeynes (2012), Mutodi and Ngirande (2014) claim that increased parental participation will result in greater student engagements, productivity and academic success, all which are indices or factors of high academic achievements. Epstein's research, for the most part, relates to the influence of parent involvement in the lives of elementary-aged students. Very little of Epstein's research deals with the issue of extent of parent participation in primary school pupils' school activities and education lives for high academic achievements. Upon this background and from the discussions above, that has motivated the researcher to conduct this present study. Therefore, the study of this nature sought to shed more light on the extent of parental participation in primary pupils' school activities for high academic achievements.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

One of the problems facing the Nigerian education system is how to involve parents in academic matters and school activities in order to enhance pupils' high academic achievements. Parental participation in the form of engagement with school-based activities, child's home study and their encounter with the teachers in order to foster interest and support has a major influence on the primary school pupils' attitude towards learning, their educational outcomes and equally attainment of high academic achievements. Yet many parents feel less concerned, uninformed about current educational practices and how they can be more involved with their child's learning. A number of initiatives have been implemented internationally to encourage home-school links, but given the documentation of these initiatives; particularly in the area of study, this is limited and found wanting.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) legislation like the National Policy on Education compels all stakeholders including parents to actively participate in school activities for the attainment of quality education, but in the real manner, this seems to be lacking, including in Delta State. Observations have shown that most school administrators are reluctant to get parents actively involved in the school programmes, except for financial matters. Where such is practiced, parents' active involvement and participation in school activities is restricted. This also has consequences on the children attaining academic success. Most schools believe that parents have tight schedules, therefore their contributions in education is insignificant. On the contrary, parents must be motivated and trained to participate actively in their children education. Many researches like that of Allen (2000), Epstein (1988; 2001), Ndirangu (2012), Mutodi and Ngirande (2014) have proven that parental participation is of utmost important in child's learning, although the extent of parental participation is yet uncertain.

More so, parental participation at the early stages of the pupils' primary education has been shown to be of utmost benefit towards the attainment of high academic achievements. It is likewise an important variable that positively influences children's education. Despite all these benefits, many parents do not appear to be actively getting involved and participating in their children's education. According to Shinn (2002), parents are usually very involved in their children's early education but this involvement tends to decrease when children proceed higher. This lack of parental participation and involvement which have negative impact on student academic performance/achievement in and out of the classroom and ultimately affect their continuing educational development and success might have been inhibited by some constraints. Given these constraints, workable strategies observed in few studies like that of Fredricks and Rasindki (1990), need to be adopted in order to improve or rather increase parental participation in their children school activities and academics. In a bid to fill the existing gap in order to promote quality education within the primary education system, has warranted this present study to investigate the extent of parental participation in primary pupils' school activities for high academic achievements in Delta State. And this still remains the problem of the study.



### 1.2 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study was to determine extent of Parental Participation in Primary Pupils' School Activities for High Academic Achievements in Delta State. Specifically the study sought to:

1. Find out the extent of parental participation in primary pupils' school-based activities for high academic achievements in Delta State.
2. Assess the extent of parental participation in primary school pupils' home-based study for high academic achievements in Delta State.
3. Examine the extent of parental participation in primary school pupils' parenting for high academic achievements in Delta State.
4. Determine the extent of parental participation in effective communication with the classroom teachers for high academic achievements in Delta State.
5. Ascertain the extent to which some constraints inhibit parental participation in primary pupils' school activities for high academic achievements in Delta State.
6. Determine possible strategies for increasing parental participation in primary pupils' school activities for high academic achievements in Delta State.

### 1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the present study:

1. To what extent do parents participate in primary pupils' school-based activities for high academic achievements in Delta State?
2. To what extent do parents participate in primary school pupils' home-based study for high academic achievements in Delta State?
3. To what extent do parents participate in primary school pupils' parenting for high academic achievements in Delta State?
4. To what extent do parents participate in effective communication with the classroom teachers for high academic achievements in Delta State?
5. To what extent do the constraints indicated inhibit parental participation in primary pupils' school activities for high academic achievements in Delta State?
6. What are the possible strategies for increasing parental participation in primary pupils' school activities for high academic achievements in Delta State?

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey design, according to Nworgu (2015) is the research design in which data are collected from sample of a large population to enable the researcher describe in a systematic manner, and interpret characteristic features and facts about things that exist. This study employed descriptive survey design in order to enable the researcher gather information from a sample of the large population of the study (that is: parents only) and thereafter analyze data gathered as they exist in determining the extent of parental participation in primary pupils' school activities for high academic achievements in Delta State.

### 2.2 Population of the Study

The study population cuts across parents whose children were studying within the public primary schools owned by the State-Government in Delta State. In Delta State, there are a total population of 1132 public primary schools scattered within the twenty-five (25) Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Delta State (Source: Planning, Research and Statistics Department, State Universal Basic Education Board – SUBEB, Delta State (2016), Returns of 2015/ 2016 Schools Statistics). Justification for the choice of using only parents is because, they have direct link and relate with the primary school pupils concerning their academic work at the home level. Parents' dispositions and involvement in the present study will help to provide important information concerning their parenting capabilities and expose the true position and reality of things as the existed in the primary schools.

### 2.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for this study constituted a total size of 492 parents and 123 public primary schools which were selected out of 614 primary schools within 13 LGAs using the stratified random technique. The LGAs, public primary schools and the parents' samples were selected using the



stratified random sampling technique. To do this, the 25 LGAs where the public primary schools were spatially spread were firstly stratified and 13 LGAs was only selected for the study at 50% out of the entire population of 25 LGAs. Secondly, in the case of public primary schools, they were stratified randomly according to each of the 13 LGAs (strata) selected and selection done at 20% for the primary schools. The parents were also selected using the stratified random sampling technique in order to randomly stratify and select 4 parents from each of the primary schools selected from the 13 LGAs and 123 primary schools already selected for sampling. Due to the nature of the study, teachers will be used to get to the parents in order to fill the questionnaire. This meaning that the parents were contacted through the teachers.

The criteria for parental selection was based on the fact that only parents who could at least read, write and understand English language (whether highly educated or average) responded to and filled the questionnaire. Such a parent must have at least obtained a primary school testimonial certificate or certificate from any higher institution. The reason for selecting the samples was because of the large population involved in the study and likewise the geographical scope of Delta which was large whereby both the primary schools and parents including LGAs were scattered; it then became necessary that the researcher chose and selected the samples from some selected LGAs and primary schools in Delta State. Nworgu (2015) opined that in the stratified random sampling technique, the population is first stratified in terms of one or more variables of interest to the researcher, according to sex, geographical location/environment, status, qualification, among others. Elements are then drawn from each stratum.

#### **2.4 Research Instrument**

A set of questionnaire developed by the researchers for parents in the public primary schools served as an instrument for data collection. The instrument was titled "Parental Participation in Pupils' School Activities Questionnaire (PPPSAQ)" and contained 84 items. The construction of the questionnaire was guided by the purpose of the study and research questions. The questionnaire was organized into six clusters. Cluster A addressed research question one and had 9 items; Cluster B addressed research question two and had 15 items; while Cluster C which addressed research question three had only 14 items; Cluster D addressed research question four and had 5 items; and Cluster E addressed research question five and had 18 items. Cluster F which had 23 items, addressed research question six. The response for each of the items in the research instrument were structured on a 4-point scale and weighted as follows: (a) Very Great Extent (**VGE**) – 4 (b) Great Extent (**GE**) – 3 (c) Low Extent (**LE**) – 2, and Very Low Extent (**VLE**) – 1, for answering research questions 1-5. Likewise, (a) Strongly Agree (**SA**) – 4 (b) Agree (**A**) – 3 (c) Disagree (**D**) – 2, and Strongly Disagree (**SD**) – 1, for answering only research question 6.

#### **2.5 Validation of the Instrument**

To determine the content validity of the instrument, three copies of the questionnaire together with the purpose of the study and research questions were presented to three research experts (lecturers) from Primary Education Department and Educational Foundations Department for content validation. These experts were requested to examine the items in terms of the appropriateness of language, adequacy of questions in relation to the purpose of the study and research questions. The experts reviewed and affirmed the content validation. Regarding the content items, these experts from various departments in the School of Education made some observations and corrections on vague and double-barreled items. Some items were removed and new ones added based on the comments of the experts. The researchers effected the corrections on the instrument (that is; questionnaire) before printing the final copies for distribution.

#### **2.6 Reliability of the Instrument**

Reliability of the instrument was determined through a pilot-test. This method involved distributing thirty copies of the questionnaire amongst thirty (30) parents within six (6) public primary schools in Edo State, which was not part of the study. Thereafter, the questionnaires were collated and their scores calculated using the Cronbach Alpha formula. Results of the distributed copies of the questionnaire yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.75, 0.87, 0.85, 0.83, 0.69 and 0.70 respectively for each cluster, amounting to a total reliability value of 0.80. The method of using Cronbach Alpha formula to calculate scores was adopted in order to ensure the internal consistency for reliability of research instrument which was arranged in six clusters.



The result indicated the internal consistency of the instrument, which is considered satisfactory and suitable for the study. Reliability of the questionnaire showed that the instrument was reliable, dependable and likewise trust-worthy. Nworgu (2015) identified that the Cronbach Alpha statistical method refers to the degree of consistency with which the items of an instrument measures a given trait and provides a measure of how homogeneous or otherwise the items are.

### 2.7 Method of Data Collection

Copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents on face-to-face basis by the researchers with the help of four (4) research assistants. The research assistants were representatives from various Senatorial zones/districts within the LGAs in Delta State. The research assistants' received briefings and instructions concerning the purpose and how to locate and politely approach the teachers and sampled respondents in order to administer and retrieve the filled copies of questionnaire. The researchers and research assistants personally went to take permission from the head teachers before communicating with the teachers and parents. They also ensured that they visited each school selected as sample, earlier before the assembly or later in the day at school closure in order to get to both the teachers and the respondents (parents). The respondents who were not able to fill their own questionnaire that same day were given one day to go through and fill them. Thereafter, the researchers and the assistants went back and collected the copies of the questionnaire from the teachers who assisted in contacting the parents. Distributing all printed copies of the questionnaires took a period of two weeks after which they were collated for analysis. A total of 492 printed copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents and all copies were retrieved as well. The rate of return was 100%.

### 2.8 Method of Data Analysis

All the copies of the questionnaire were collated using Mean scores, Overall mean and Standard deviation for answering research questions 1-6. The decision rule for the research questions was based on the mean score, which was benchmarked on 2.50. Only mean scores which rated 2.50 and above was regarded as an indication of 'Great Extent' in agreement with the statement, therefore accepted. While mean scores that rated 2.49 and below was regarded as an indication of 'Low Extent' in disagreement with the statement and therefore rejected. Data was also coded into the SPSS (Statistical Software Package for Social Sciences) for computer analysis.

## 3. DATA PRESENTATION

**Table 1: Mean Rating and SD of Parents on the Extent to which Parents Participated in Primary Pupils' School-Based Activities for High Academic Achievements in Delta State**  
N = 492

S/N	Items	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	I attend parent/teacher conferences, seminars and open day in the school	2.35	1.09	Low Extent
2	I always act as a volunteer parent at the school	2.42	1.06	Low Extent
3	I read the school newsletters regularly	2.42	1.06	Low Extent
4	I am always regular at each term's PTA meetings organized by the school	2.73	1.07	Great Extent
5	I attend my child's extra-curricular activities in schools	2.55	1.08	Great Extent
6	I punctually attend other meetings organized by the school	2.33	1.12	Low Extent
7	I attend the academic clinics organized by the school	2.30	1.07	Low Extent
8	I regularly pay for my children academic tours and excursions in the school	2.34	1.11	Low Extent
9	I ensure that I support my children enrolment for holiday lessons in school during long vacations	2.55	1.10	Great Extent
<b>Section Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>2.44</b>	<b>1.09</b>	<b>Low Extent</b>



Results from the responses of respondents as presented in Table 1 revealed that only items 4, 5 and 9, rated above the acceptable mean score of 2.50 in agreement with the statements. All other items 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8, rated below 2.50 in disagreement with the statements. The grand mean and standard deviation of 2.44 and 1.09, showed respondents negative reactions concerning the extent to which they participated in primary pupils' school-based activities for high academic achievements in Delta State, which was to a low extent. The standard deviation of the respondents varied between 1.06 and 1.11 showing that there was a small difference in the scores, but they still clustered within the mean scores.

**Table 2: Mean Rating and SD of Parents on the Extent to which Parents Participated in Primary School Pupils' Home-Based Study for High Academic Achievements in Delta State**

N = 492

S/N	Items	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
10	I see that my child does his/her homework regularly	2.61	1.10	Great Extent
11	My children and I discuss things while reading together	2.71	1.06	Great Extent
12	I have created a study room for my children at home	2.30	1.08	Low Extent
13	I am always available helping my children to organize their home study time table	2.28	1.12	Low Extent
14	I constantly monitor the child homework	2.68	1.09	Great Extent
15	I employ the services of a home lesson teacher in order to improve my children areas of difficulty	2.60	1.10	Great Extent
16	I bought a computer for my children for educational purposes at home	2.23	1.07	Low Extent
17	I invite the school teachers at home for extra tuition in my children weak subject areas	2.33	1.06	Low Extent
18	I explain tough assignments to my children	2.58	1.06	Great Extent
19	I am responsible for making sure that my child/children understands his or her assignments	2.65	1.08	Great Extent
20	I make provisions for interesting educational games that will enhance my child/children study in the school	2.38	1.09	Low Extent
21	I constantly read and study with the child/children at home	2.36	1.08	Low Extent
22	I constantly give my child/children newspapers, passages in English and mathematical applications to respectively read and solve on their own at home	2.21	1.00	Low Extent
23	I teach my child/children how to make use of resources and find meanings of words in text such as dictionaries, encyclopedia, atlas and almanacs.	2.56	1.09	Great Extent
24	I assist in order to reinforce what the child has been taught and studied in the school for the day	2.23	1.06	Low Extent
<b>Section Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>2.45</b>	<b>1.09</b>	<b>Low Extent</b>





Results from the responses of respondents as presented in Table 2 revealed that only items 10, 11, 14, 15, 18, 19 and 23, rated above the acceptable mean score of 2.50 in agreement with the statements. All other items 12, 13, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22 and 24, rated below 2.50 in disagreement with the statements. The grand mean and standard deviation of 2.45 and 1.09, showed respondents negative reactions the concerning extent to which parents participated in primary school pupils' home-based study and activities for high academic achievements in Delta State, which was to a low extent. The standard deviation of the respondents varied between 1.00 and 1.12, still showing that there was a huge difference in the scores, but they still clustered within the mean scores.

**Table 3: Mean Rating and SD of Parents on the Extent to which Parents Participated in Primary School Pupils' Parenting for High Academic Achievements in Delta State**  
N = 492

S/N	Items	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
25	I always speak to my child about the jobs/professions that interest him/her	3.29	0.76	Great Extent
26	My child sees me doing my private reading in order to get motivated to study hard and make good grades	3.33	0.72	Great Extent
27	We go to plays, museums, historical sites, etc together	2.25	1.01	Low Extent
28	I share "old stories" about my high school days with my child	3.18	0.91	Great Extent
29	I regularly attend the school activities my child is involved in	3.18	0.84	Great Extent
30	I reward my child for good grades in school	3.35	0.69	Great Extent
31	I have high expectations for my child's study and assist him/her in achieving the set targets	3.33	0.77	Great Extent
32	I take my child to school always for regular attendance	3.20	0.86	Great Extent
33	I do ensure that my children have enough personal effects as they open school	3.23	0.78	Great Extent
34	I buy enough supplementary reading books and writing materials for the children	3.23	0.83	Great Extent
35	I am always financially prepared and buoyant when it comes to my children's education	3.33	0.70	Great Extent
36	I constantly talk to my children about their school and academic performances	3.36	0.76	Great Extent
37	I constantly check my children's report forms after every term	3.26	0.83	Great Extent
38	I constantly encourage my children to feel successful for simply hard work	3.33	0.68	Great Extent
<b>Section Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>3.20</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>Great Extent</b>

Results from the responses of respondents as presented in Table 3 revealed that only items 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37 and 38, rated above the acceptable mean score of 2.50 in agreement with the statements. This result showed that parental participation in the aspect of primary school pupils' parenting was to a great extent. Only item 27, rated below 2.50 in disagreement with the statement. The grand mean and standard deviation of 3.20 and 0.85, showed respondents' positive reactions concerning the extent to which parents participated in primary school pupils' parenting for high academic achievements in Delta State. The standard deviation of the respondents varied between 0.68 and 1.01, still showing that there was a huge difference in the scores, but they still clustered around the mean scores.



**Table 4: Mean Rating and SD of Parents on the Extent to which Parents Participated in Effective Communication with the Classroom Teachers for High Academic Achievements in Delta State**

N = 492

S/N	Items	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
39	Contacting the classroom teacher if the child seems to be having problem pertaining his/her academics and performances in the school	2.38	1.08	<b>Low Extent</b>
40	Organizing remedial teaching with the classroom teachers for my children whenever they do not meet to expectations	2.25	1.06	<b>Low Extent</b>
41	Encouraging and urging the teachers to consult you as parents because of unsatisfactory academic achievement by their children	2.25	1.04	<b>Low Extent</b>
42	Having frequent face to face interaction and conversations with the teachers concerning the children's school academic progress and challenges	2.30	1.04	<b>Low Extent</b>
43	Engaging in the child's career choice/guidance when summoned by the teacher	2.63	1.09	<b>Great Extent</b>
<b>Section Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>2.36</b>	<b>1.07</b>	<b>Low Extent</b>

Results from the responses of respondents as presented in Table 4 revealed that only item 43, rated above the acceptable mean score of 2.50 in agreement with the statements. All other items 39, 40, 41, and 42, rated below 2.50 in disagreement with the statements. The grand mean and standard deviation of 2.36 and 1.07, showed respondents' negative reactions concerning the extent to which parents participated in effective communication with the classroom teachers for high academic achievements in Delta State, which was to a low extent. The standard deviation of the respondents varied between 1.04 and 1.09, showing that there was a small difference in the scores, but they still clustered around the mean scores.



**Table 5: Mean Rating and SD of Parents on the Extent to which the Constraints indicated Inhibit Parental Participation in Primary Pupils' School Activities for High Academic Achievements in Delta State**

N = 492

S/N	Items	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
44	I have difficulty helping my child with homework because of my low level of literacy	2.40	1.15	Low Extent
45	Too much emphasis is put on school work and grades and I do not know areas to contribute	2.38	1.12	Low Extent
46	My knowledge and view about schooling as a result of my ugly past experiences affects my child's school activities	2.44	1.06	Low Extent
47	Lack of time as a result of my job and busy schedules affects my participation in my child's school activities	2.85	1.02	Great Extent
48	The school has strict policy and rules that affect my participation in the school activities	2.71	1.10	Great Extent
49	Lack of formal platform for parents communication with other parents affects my participation in school activities	2.53	1.16	Great Extent
50	The tasks my/our child is given at school are not challenging enough and this bores me not to show active participation in his school	2.68	1.05	Great Extent
51	My child dislikes schooling and I care less about his school activities	2.44	1.09	Low Extent
52	The way in which the teachers plan the learning/teaching functions for my/our child bores me to make active contributions to the school activities	2.43	1.11	Low Extent
53	I assume my child is doing alright especially when I don't hear anything from the school in this case I do not have to participate in the school activities	2.70	1.10	Great Extent
54	I get most of my information about my child's progress from report cards so I do not need to participate in the school activities	3.41	0.74	Great Extent
55	Poor communication between parents, teachers and the school affects my participation in school activities	2.69	1.04	Great Extent
56	Parents low socio-economic status affects their participation in their children school work	2.95	0.97	Great Extent
57	I face transportation difficulties/challenges in regards I do not have to participate in my children activities in the school	2.34	1.09	Low Extent
58	Having negative attitudes and behaviour affects my participation in school activities	2.92	1.01	Great Extent
59	Childcare constraints affects my active participation in the school activities	2.36	1.08	Low Extent
60	The school's lack of support for cultural diversity and the primacy of basic needs of parents and families which affects my participation in the school activities	2.70	1.11	Great Extent
61	The PTA meetings are seldom held so that affects my participation in the school activities	2.79	1.02	Great Extent
<b>Section Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>2.61</b>	<b>1.09</b>	<b>Great Extent</b>

Results from the responses of respondents as presented in Table 5 revealed that only item 47, 48, 49, 50, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 60 and 61, rated above the acceptable mean score of 2.50 in agreement with the statements. All other items 44, 45, 46, 51, 52, 57 and 59 rated below 2.50 in disagreement with the statements. The grand mean and standard deviation of 2.61 and 1.09, showed respondents' positive reactions concerning the extent to which the constraints indicated inhibit parental participation in primary pupils' school activities for high academic achievements in Delta State, which were to a great extent.



The standard deviation of the respondents varied between 0.74 and 1.16, showing that there was a huge difference in the scores, but they still clustered around the mean scores.

**Table 6: Mean Rating and SD of Parents on the Possible Strategies for increasing Parental Participation in Primary Pupils' School Activities for High Academic Achievements in Delta State**

N = 492

S/N	Items	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
62	Schools should ensure that their children adhere to the school rules and regulations, likewise parents should comply as well	2.31	1.09	Disagree
63	The head teacher should ensure that parents freely participate in meetings involving decisions that affect their children academic achievement	2.78	1.09	Agree
64	The school authority should ensure that parents are included in schools decision making on goals and objectives of the school	2.96	0.99	Agree
65	Parents should assist in course selection for their children	2.86	1.14	Agree
66	Setting study rooms for children at home	2.88	1.03	Agree
67	Schools should constantly notify and update parents of their children problems and challenges as regards to their education	2.71	1.07	Agree
68	Parents should control and regulate constant watching of TV programmes by their children at home and ensure that children focus more on academic activities	2.74	1.02	Agree
69	Setting home reading rules and timetables at home	2.79	1.02	Agree
70	School should give room in order to strengthen parent-teacher communication	2.79	1.08	Agree
71	Parents should make out time to inspect their children homework, school notes and also assist them in their areas of difficulty	2.81	1.05	Agree
72	Parents should create time to read and study together with their children at home	3.43	0.74	Agree
73	Schools should strengthen their means of communication with parents on children academic progress, performances, test and examinations through note writing, parent-teacher chat, open day, telephoning, school-home visits and home to school relations.	2.94	0.98	Agree
74	Provision of adequate reading and writing materials for children at home and in the school	2.70	1.12	Agree
75	Parents should provide guided computer education materials for children	2.80	1.08	Agree
76	The State government policy on active parental participation in school activities should be established and effectively implemented	2.79	1.07	Agree
77	Providing hand outs and videos to promote parents training on good parenting and different ways of motivating/improving children learning	2.86	1.01	Agree
78	Involving parents in assessment of school policies, practices and programmes	2.82	1.04	Agree
79	Creating room for developing public complaint information and service display boxes and corners in the schools	2.73	1.09	Agree
80	Developing parent handbook for containing guideline tips for involvement in school activities	2.84	1.04	Agree
81	Awarding students with extra credit for parents' involvement and participation	2.77	1.02	Agree
82	Organizing seminars, conferences and orientation programmes concerning their children education for parents in school	2.72	1.08	Agree
83	Providing parents common room where the school counselor can freely chat with parents concerning their children educational activities and performances	2.76	1.11	Agree
84	School-community collaborations should be properly harnessed and strengthened	2.60	1.12	Agree
<b>Section Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>2.77</b>	<b>1.07</b>	<b>Agree</b>



Results from the responses of respondents as presented in Table 6 revealed that only items 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83 and 84 rated above the acceptable mean score of 2.50 in agreement with the statements. This result showed that parents accepted majority of the strategies which will increase parental participation in the pupils' school activities for high academic achievements. Only item 61 rated below 2.50 in disagreement with the statements. The grand mean and standard deviation of 2.77 and 1.07, showed respondents' positive reactions to majority of the statements concerning the possible strategies for increasing parental participation in primary pupils' school activities for high academic achievements in Delta State. The standard deviation of the respondents varied between 0.74 and 1.07, showing that there was a huge difference in the scores, but they still clustered around the mean scores.

#### 4. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of this present study discovered that the extent of parental participation in primary pupils' school activities such as school-based activities, home-based study, and communication with teachers at the school, were to a low extent. Except for their participation in aspect of parenting which was to a great extent. The result of research question one presented in table 1 revealed that parental participation in primary school pupils' school-based activities for high academic achievements were to a low extent. This finding indicated that parental participation in school-based activities as regards to attendance to parent/teacher conferences, seminars and open day in the school, acting as a volunteer parent at the school, reading the school newsletters regularly, punctually attending other meetings organized by the school, attendance to the academic clinics organized by the school, and regularly paying for their children academic tours and excursions in the school, were low. Supporting the above finding, Epstein's (1988; 2001) study of at-risk parents in Maryland found that many of the traditional methods of parent involvement do not work.

More than one-third of the interview parents had not conferred in any manner with any educator during the school year. Sixty percent of the subjects had not even communicated by telephone. Greater than thirty-five percent of the parents surveyed had never attended a parent-teacher conference. Seventy percent of the parents interviewed had never assisted with any type of activity in their child's classroom and only four percent had spent more than twenty-five days participating at a school. The lack of parent involvement has also been a great concern in the preschool years. Another study by Michigan State University on Head Start parent involvement activities showed that only a core of parents provided most of the volunteer hours. The study estimated only three out of four parents' participated (Luchuck, 1998).

The result of research question two presented in table 2 indicated that parental participation in primary school pupils' home-based activities for high academic achievements were to a low extent. This finding discovered that parental participation in creating a study room for their children at home, helping their children to organize their home study time table, buying a computer for their children for educational purposes at home, inviting the school teachers at home for extra tuition in their children weak subject areas, making provisions for interesting educational games that will enhance the child/children study in the school, constantly reading and studying with the child/children at home, constantly giving the child/children newspapers, passages in English and mathematical applications to respectively read and solve on their own at home, and assisting in order to reinforce what the child has been taught and studied in the school for the day, were to a low extent. This finding differ and does not concur with the findings of Ndirangu (2012), Mutodi and Ngirande (2014) whose studies discovered out of the three parental involvement constructs investigated, that is, parenting, parent-teacher communication and home and family support were found to be positively related to high academic performance.



Their findings further revealed that home and family support is the most significant factor that determines a learner's performance. Most of the parents consider themselves to have a good communication with their children at home concerning their education. Children's homework is considered to be important by each parent and they all assist their children with homework. Thus, it may be concluded that by staying involved with their children's education, parents do impact positively on the academic achievement of the students.

Supporting this finding, Jeynes (2012) observed that parental involvement that includes checking a child's homework should be encouraged by teachers and mentioned that pre-service teachers need to be trained on how to promote this type of parental involvement. In order to foster academic achievement, parental homework involvement must be provided appropriately (Lyman, 2014).

The result of research question three presented in table 3 showed that parental participation in primary school pupils' parenting for high academic achievements were to a great extent. This finding indicated that parents' always spoke to the child about the jobs/professions that interest him/her, makes sure that the child sees parents' doing their own private reading in order to get motivated to study hard and make good grades in schools, shares "old stories" about their high school days with the child, regularly attend the school activities the child is involved in, rewards the child for good grades in school, have high expectations for the child's study and assist him/her in achieving the set targets, takes the child to school always for regular attendance, ensures that the children have enough personal effects as they open school, buys enough supplementary reading books and writing materials for the children, is always financially prepared and buoyant when it comes to the children's education, constantly talks to the children about their school and academic performances, constantly check the children's report forms after every term and constantly encourage their children to feel successful for simply hard work.

This finding agrees and concurs with Shinn (2002) who reported that parents through parenting are usually very involved in their children's early education and so this impact greatly on their academic achievements. The finding is also in line with the findings of Luchuck (1998), Lyman (2014), McMahon (2010), Mutodi and Ngirande (2014) and Ndirangu (2012) whose studies on parenting reported that parents' involvement contributed to reading achievements and greater academic gains by their children. Their main findings are that all the parents who responded are highly involved with their children's education. They have high expectations towards their children's education and performance.

The result of research question four presented in table 4 also discovered that parental participation in effective communication with the teachers at the primary school for high academic achievements were to a low extent. The finding reported that parental participation in such areas connected with contacting the classroom teacher if the child seems to be having problem pertaining his/her academics and performances in the school, organizing remedial teaching with the classroom teachers for their children whenever they do not meet to expectations, encouraging and urging the teachers to consult them as parents because of unsatisfactory academic achievement by their children, and having frequent face to face interaction and conversations with the teachers concerning the children's school academic progress and challenges, were to a low extent. This study also differs and is not in line with Mutodi and Ngirande (2014) study, which found, out of the three parental involvement constructs observed, that is, in the aspect of parent-teacher communication found to be positively related to performance. Majority of the parents consider themselves to have a good communication with their child's teachers and the school.

It was also discovered in the finding of research question five represented in table 5 that some constraints to a great extent inhibited parental participation in the primary school pupils' activities for high academic achievements. This finding discovered that the parents' to a great extent accepted the following constraints as inhibiting their participation in primary pupils' school activities for high academic achievements: lack of time as a result of their job and busy schedules affects their participation in the child's school activities, the school having strict policy and rules, lack of formal platform for parents communication with other parents, the tasks given to the child at school are not challenging enough and this bores parents not to show active participation in his school, parents' assuming that their child is doing alright especially when they do not hear anything from the school and in this case do not have to participate in the school activities.



Other constraints include that parents get most of the information about the child's progress from report cards so they do not need to participate in the school activities, poor communication between parents, teachers and the school affects parental participation in school activities and parents low socio-economic status affects their participation in their children school work.

Parents' having negative attitudes and behaviour affects their participation in school activities, the school's lack of support for cultural diversity and the primacy of basic needs of parents and families affects parents participation in the school activities, and the PTA meetings which are seldomly held in the school inhibited parental participation in primary pupils' school activities for high academic achievements in Delta State.

This finding is in line with the findings of Luchuck (1998) and Lyman (2014) whose studies discovered several factors which acted as constraints to parental participation in their children education, to include, parents' socioeconomic status, lack of time, not being valued and not knowing how to contribute. Further barriers to parent involvement include not understanding the educational system, childcare difficulties, language, cultural differences, and transportation difficulties. Additionally, parents often do not feel welcomed. Low literacy levels, educational jargon, snobbery, boring meetings, and parents who have unmet needs themselves are also barriers to parent involvement.

The finding of research question six presented in table 6 also revealed possible strategies for increasing parental participation in the primary pupils' school activities for high academic achievements. The finding represented that parents accepted the following strategies that; the head teacher should ensure that parents freely participate in meetings involving decisions that affect their children academic achievement; the school authority should ensure that parents are included in schools decision making on goals and objectives of the school; parents should assist in course selection for their children; they should set study rooms for children at home; schools should constantly notify and update parents of their children problems and challenges as regards to their education; parents should control and regulate constant watching of television programmes by their children at home and ensure that children focus more on academic activities; set home reading rules and timetables at home; school should give room in order to strengthen parent-teacher communication; parents should make out time to inspect their children homework, school notes and also assist them in their areas of difficulty.

Parents should create time to read and study together with their children at home; schools should strengthen their means of communication with parents on children academic progress, performances, test and examinations through note writing, parent-teacher chat, open day, telephoning, school-home visits and home to school relations; provision of adequate reading and writing materials for children at home and in the school; parents should provide guided computer education materials for children; the state government policy on active parental participation in school activities should be established and effectively implemented; and providing hand outs and videos to promote parents training on good parenting and different ways of motivating/improving children learning.

Other strategies included: involving parents in assessment of school policies, practices and programmes; creating room for developing public complaint information and service display boxes and corners in the schools; developing parent handbook for containing guideline tips for involvement in school activities; awarding students with extra credit for parents' involvement and participation; organizing seminars, conferences and orientation programmes concerning their children education for parents in school; providing parents common room where the school counselor can freely chat with parents concerning their children educational activities and performances; and school-community collaborations should be properly harnessed and strengthened.



This finding concurs and agrees with such studies like that of Fredricks and Rasindki (1990), Jackson and Cooper (1992) and Luchuck (1998) whose findings includes such strategies like: using a committee approach to develop involvement initiatives, recruiting parents for a volunteer programme, and offering "family" programmes in math, science, reading, and technology. Also included are tips to make favourable first impressions with parents and guides developed to help young children learn. Home-school connections newsletters sent home on a regularly scheduled basis aid parents with tips for activities to do at home. Videos and handouts made specifically for parent training on self-esteem, reading techniques, responsibility, motivating children, and suggestions for talking with the children are available from the Parent Institute.

Other tips contained in the principal's list include sending folders home every Friday with student's work from the week and communication forms for parents and teachers to use. Single sheet brochures as guidelines describing specific learning outcomes in non-threatening educational jargon should be made available for every grade level. Commercially made brochures that describe activities to do at home with children should also be made available. Supporting, the above findings, Schurr (1992) earlier suggested sixteen parent involvement strategies that school should practice. From all the findings of the study shows that increasing parental participation in primary pupils' school activities stands the chance of improving high academic achievements. This should highly be encouraged and fully be incorporated in the primary school system in Delta State.

## **5. CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Parents' play important roles in the education of primary school pupils' and the extent to which they actively participation in school activities impacts greatly in pupils' academic achievements. This means that when parents' highly participate in pupils' school activities, this means higher academic achievements and when no interest or active participation is shown, then, low academic achievements is experienced. However, the present study submits that the extent to which parents' participated in primary pupils' school activities such the areas of school-based activities, home-based study and establishing effective communication with the classroom teachers, except in the aspect of parenting, were to a low extent. This situation was responsible by numerous constraints demands workable strategies to be employed so as to increase parental participation in primary school pupils' activities in Delta State. Based on the findings of this study recommendations were made below.





## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has proven that active parental participation in pupils' academic work will enhance children's' high academic achievements. In the light of all the findings of this present study, the following recommendations have been proffered:

1. The State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) charged with the responsibility of administering primary schools in Delta State should urge and support school administrators such as heads teachers to promote parental participation in school-based activities for high academic achievements.
2. Parents should also actively participate in primary school pupils' home-based study for positive learning outcomes.
3. Parents' should continue to play active roles in the aspect of parenting in order to assist the primary school pupils' to realize their educational dreams and academic goals in life.
4. School authorities and head teachers should highly support and enhance effective communication between classroom teachers and parents which impacts greatly on pupils' high academic achievements.
5. Parents' to a great extent should curtail and control their excesses which could inhibit their active participation in primary pupils' school activities.
6. Education stakeholders like the State government and policy makers, school administrators, curriculum developers, practitioners, teachers and parents should apply possible strategies through effective policy implementation and plan execution in order to increase parental participation in school activities in Delta State.



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