



**THE ROLE OF PARENTS TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION (PTA) IN PROMOTING
EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC PRIMARY AND
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NIGERIA**

Okaforcha, Choice Chimaa

Department of Educational Foundations,
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University,
Igbariam Campus, Anambra State, Nigeria
E-mail: choice.okaforcha@gmail.com

&

Okeke, Nonyem Ifediorah

Department of Educational Foundations,
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University,
Igbariam Campus, Anambra State, Nigeria
ifedinoke@yahoo.com

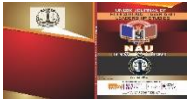
ABSTRACT

Every school child comes to school from home which is made up of the unclear family. The nuclear family comprised of father, mother and children. The family is the first social agent a child finds himself. It is also the child's first environment before the commencement of schooling. Upon starting schools, the parents are still charged with responsibility of liaising with the school authority to ensure the progress of the child. The parents are expected to have a symbiotic function with the school management to foster the attainment of school objectives. When parents belong to parents-teachers' association, they do not just attend meetings but also work hand in hand with the school to ensure the success of their wards. This they do by belonging to some designated school committee, identifying problematic areas of the school, sought ways of combating them so as to meet their children's needs and theirs as well. There is no doubt that many schools are plagued with myriads of problems and the government seems to be unaware of such problems bedeviling the academic flow of the school children. The parents who are closer are often times sought after to tackle such problems through emergency meeting. Parents teachers' association has performed creditably well in assisting schools where they have their children in achieving academic excellence even though not without any setbacks. Some of the challenges distorting the role of the PTA include but not limited to role conflict between the school head and the PTA chairman. It is therefore suggested that rigorous job description and analysis be specified upon the appointment of the chairman as well as other PTA executives.

Keywords: Role, Parents Teachers Association, effective and efficient management,

Introduction

The involvement of the parents in the school management in Nigeria has become a norm in Nigeria polity. It is not just to align with them in the upbringing of their children or following up with the



progress of their children's academic performance. This time around the PTA is partnering with the school administrator to ensure that even the school needed resources are procured for the benefit of their wards. This is evinced in some public primary and secondary school with insufficient numbers teachers, PTA has gone all out to provide temporal teachers which they sponsor, the association has also in some instances procured school furniture for the school to mention just a few.

In congruence with the above expressions, Ojimba (2023); Okeke and Okaforcha (2020); Iloka (2022) affirmed that PTA is an association of parents and teachers of the same school who aim at the improvement of the schools and also benefit of their wards. Similarly, Okaforcha and Okeke (2020); Ibe and Udeoji (2019) Ucheagwu-Okoye (2019) asserted that the purpose of the parents-teachers association is not just to enhance the collective involvement of parents and teachers in the education of their children but also to support government efforts in providing educational resources to the schools. Stemming from the above statements, it is apparent that parents and teachers' association has both parental and administrative functions in the school where their wards are schooling.

The concept of Parents Teachers Association (PTA)

According to Ojimba (2024); Okoye (2017); Okoye (2016); Nwakoby and Nwakoby (2023), parents teachers' association is an organization intended for just the teachers and parents from the onset but has now transformed to include the managerial roles in terms of provision relevant educational resources. PTA has become an integral part of the school system as the association plays significant role in the decision-making process. As noted by Iloka (2023); Nwakoby and Ilodigwe (2022); Ibe (2022); Ibe, Nwakoby & Ihediuche (2024), PTA is a membership organization for parents of the children and their teachers. It is an organized platform that provides opportunities for parents and guidance to play active role in supplement the efforts of the schools with the intent that their wards would benefit at the long run. It is therefore a formal organization. Okaforcha and Okeke (2019); Ezeaku (2014); Ucheagwu-Okoye and Nwadukwe (2021) asserted that PTA is established to foster mutual understanding and extol the effectiveness of educational programmes and activities.

Still on the same development, Chike Okosa, Ibe and Ojimba (2023); Okeke and Okaforcha (2018) lucidly put that PTA is a dynamic association which serves as an instrument in effective school management if quality must be guaranteed. Nwogu and Nwakoby (2021); Ughamadu, Okaforcha and Okeke (2015) opined that for a school to have effective administration and quality teaching and learning delivery process sustained, PTA is an active voluntary organization in that school. The scholars went on to explicate on the roles of the PTA in partnering with the school to achieve excellent performance. Ilodigwe and Nwakoby (2021); Iloka (2021); Nwakoby (2023) rightly put that the PTA has an executive arm who are duly elected parents or guardians in the company of school's head teachers or the principals as well as any other member of the teaching staff appropriately elected too. Ibe (2019); Okoye (2017); Ezeaku (2013); Okoye and Ucheagwu-Okoye



(2021) espoused that Parents Teachers Association (PTA) was formed under Education Act of 1968 which was revised in 2012. The PTA as an external body plays remarkable role in the life of the school in various ways.

Ezeaku (2012); Okoye (2021); Ani, Iloka and Nwakoby, (2021) submitted that parents teachers association is created to have a common forum where the affairs of the school and that of the students are identified and treated for optimal goal achievement. Continuing, the scholar recognized that the PTA has two notable arms namely; general assembly and the executives. The general assembly comprised all the parents along with executives. The meeting of the general assembly is either done on at the end of each term and/or on yearly basis which is at the end of the academic session depending the school's programme. As noted by Nwakoby (2024); Nwakoby and Chukwujekwu (2020), the executive arm comprised the elected members among the parents of a particular school such as the chairman, vice chairman etc. According to Nwakoby and Nwakoby (2022); Ojimba (2020); Ehigiator and Ucheagwu-Okoye (2021), the principal or school head remains the secretary of the PTA and in some instances, two or more members of teaching staff are included. The meeting of the executive arm of the PTA is schedule from time to time as necessity demands it.

The Role of Parents Teachers Association in the School Management

The role of parents-teachers association in the school management cannot be over-emphasize. Okaforcha and Okeke (2019); Ezeaku (2012); Okeke (2023); Okoye (2018) observed that the main aim of the establishment of PTA is ensure close ties between the school and the parents. This closeness allows parents to identify problem areas pestering the progress of their children and the school at large so as to proffer possible solutions to such problems. The PTA was charged with the responsibility of amiable working relationship between the teachers and the parents. According to Okaforcha and Okeke (2018); Ezeaku (2019); Nwabashili, Iloka and Ucheagwu-Okoye (2022); Okeke (2022) identified the following roles of the PTA;

1. Provision of instructional materials; one of the notable areas where parents- teachers association performs better is in the provision of instructional materials. The association is aware of the importance of instructional materials in the classroom as they make abstract term realistic for better understanding. This explains why the association ensures the availability of learning materials.
2. Maintenance of discipline; the association gives full support to the school authority in the area of administering discipline to the students. Discipline enables the teacher to effectively manage children from different family background for teaching and learning effectiveness.
3. Fund raising; PTA has been performing the role of fund raiser in schools. It is one of the ways the school obtain fund externally to supplement that allocated them. This fund is used by the school to pay PTA teachers (teachers employed by the PTA). Make purchases of relevant educational facilities for the progress of the school and the welfare of their children.



4. Decision making; the parents teachers association as an integral part of the school administration, contributes to the decision making governing the schools where they have their children. The executive arm of the PTA is invited from time to time to participate in critical decision making that projects the school to enviable standard.
5. Building of the school's infrastructures; in many schools in Nigeria, the parents teachers association has erected classroom blocks, hostels and procurement of sports and/or music equipment as well as other related materials.

Furthermore, Ojimba (2021); Okaforcha and Okeke (2018); Ezeaku and Obikeze (2018) listed other roles of the parents-teachers' association as follows:

- a) To represent the opinions of parents and other care-giver in the school vicinity.
- b) To integrate the PTA's interest with that of the school through effective collaboration with the parent representatives on the board of management.
- c) To communicate to parents on issues bothering on their children's academic growth.
- d) To relate with other parents-association through involvement with National Parents Council.
- e) To pave way for parents and teachers to perform symbiotic functions in the proper upbringing of their wards.
- f) To make useful suggestions on the better ways to administer school.
- g) To encourage parents, teachers and students making sure that all students are given equal treatment, no marginalization of any type.
- h) To assist the teaching staff and liaise with them in the teaching/learning delivery process as well as proper assessment.
- i) To influence policy development at the school and national level once affiliated to the national body.
- j) To give financial and emotional support the school when called upon.
- k) To get parents informed about the school programmes, events and activities.

Challenges facing the parents-teachers' association in performing their roles

Parents teachers' association has gained ground in the school operation as a result of immense assistance to the school of their wards but is sometimes confronted by enormous challenges as here stipulated:

1. Lack of participation and commitment; some of the parents portray non-challant attitude towards this lawful organization by not attending meeting when schedules. Many others do not pay their dues as and when due to posing problems to the officers to effectively give their support.
2. Poor Communication; communication being a means of transferring information from one end to another could lead to misunderstanding when the message is not well conveyed. Whenever there is misinformation from the school to the PTA members, there is bound to be confusion.



3. Financial problem; one of the ways PTA assists the school is through rendering financial support and the money is not available, the aim is defeated.
4. Clash of interest; in some instances, the parents interest differs from that of the school resulting to clash of interest. There is also role conflict observed by the PTA executives especially where building project is involved.
5. Lack of cooperation between the school and the parents; some school heads do not give the PTA officials required cooperation needed to facilitate further assistance. They engage them in unnecessary argument which is discouraging.
6. Corruption; some of the officers of the PTA could collaborate with the school administrator to embezzle fund meant for school project. This leads to incomplete projects and shortage of money.

Suggestions

In view of the challenges experienced by the parents-teachers association, the following suggestions were made:

1. Lack of participation; one of the problems confronting the parents-teachers association is non-participation from the members of the general assembly. Some of the parents feel too occupied to attend PTA meetings and other scheduled school programmes. This has been a problem to the association. It is suggested that the parents should sensitize all the members on the importance of PTA to the parents to enable them feel committed and participate on the issues bothering on their children's welfare.
2. Poor communication; communication is the medium through which messages are conveyed from the sender to the receiver and feedback expected. When is channel of communication is distorted, there misunderstand and misconception which is a barrier for the progress of the association. The communication failure could be from the school to the association and vice versa. It could also be from among the executive arm and the general assembly. It is suggested that good communication network be put in place to allow effective transfer of information using appropriate channels like memos, bulletin WhatsApp, newsletter etc.
3. Financial problem; one of the ways parents- teachers association helps the school is through providing financial support. This fund is realized through PTA levies. Some of the parents do not pay this levy and many do not pay as at when due thereby causing shortage of fund for easy execution of projects. All parents should be made to be aware of the how and way PTA money is being expended to enable them keep paying levies. Accounting is very crucial at this point.
4. Clash of interest; there are instances where the PTA chairman and the school head have issues on whose decisions takes precedence. Some of the school's interest could also clash with that of the parents thus pose a problem to the existing relationship. It is suggested that job specification be done to the PTA chairman and the school head.
5. Corruption; some PTA executives could collaborate with the school head to divert the raised fund to their individual pockets. Some also involve themselves in unbudgeted



expenses leading insufficient fund and its attendant problems. There should be annual auditing of the PTA account to ascertain how money incurred is being spent.

6. Lack of cooperation; sometimes, the parents-teachers association chairman could meet strict opposition from the school head thus derailing the cordial relationship that is supposed to spur the PTA to action. It is suggested that there should awareness campaign for the heads of schools by the appropriate education agency to enable them see clearly the essence of the PTA and do well to give it maximum cooperation for better result.

Conclusion

Parents-teachers organization is a formal organization which is made up of the parents and the school management for the purpose of ensuring the welfare of their wards and the progress on the affairs concerning the school. It is a means through which the parents develop close link with the school for easy communication on matters relating to the school, parents and the students. Through this communication process, the problems bothering the school are discussed, identified and lasting solution proffered. This is seen through various ways the PTA has assisted the school in fund raising, provision of facilities and maintenance. Parents-teachers association are facing with some challenges of the school authority not cooperating with the parents in some instances for maximum benefits. School managers are therefore encouraged to do well in giving the PTA necessary cooperation to enable them give the school full support.

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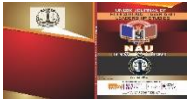
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