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## Learning Outcomes in Social Studies and Parental Involvement of Lower Primary School Pupils in Ondo State, Nigeria

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### **Abstract:**

*The study investigated the level of learning outcomes in Social Studies of lower primary schools in Ondo State and also assessed the level of parental involvement of lower primary school pupils in Ondo State. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population for the study comprised primary III pupils and parents in Ondo State. The sample size consisted of 240 primary III school pupils and 240 parents selected using multistage sampling procedure. One senatorial district was selected from the state using simple random sampling technique. Two Local Government Areas (LGAs) were selected from the sampled senatorial district in Ondo State using simple random sampling technique. From each of the two selected primary schools, 30 pupils and 30 parents each from two intact classes were randomly selected for the study. Two instruments were used for data collection. They are: Pupils End of the Term Exams Scores in Social Studies (PETES) and Parental Interview Schedule (PIS). The data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. The results showed that 115(47.9%) performed below average level of performance, 74(30.8%) had average level while 51(21.3%) of the pupils performed above average level of performance. None of the parents had low level of involvement in their child's learning outcome, 94(39.2%) had moderate level of involvement while 146(60.8%) had high level of involvement in the learning outcome of their children in lower primary schools. The study concluded that parental involvement was a very good predictor of lower primary school in Ondo State.*

**Keywords:** Learning outcomes, parental involvement, pupils, social studies

### **1. Introduction**

Primary Education in Nigeria is very important in the education of the child. A very sound primary education is necessary not only to a very sound secondary and tertiary education, but also to equip the learners with the needed and relevant skills and values that may be applied so as to contribute one's quota to national development. It is also the gateway to whatever individuals can achieve in life through education (Maduwesi, 2005).

Children enter school with their own learning experiences. The school undertakes the responsibility of building further learning on the child's existing experiences. Therefore, at no stage or class do we start from 'No Learning'. A teacher needs to be aware about various pedagogies and the progress of the pupils' learning. This is important for providing quality "Education for All". Learning outcomes are clear statements that describe knowledge, skills, and attitudes which an individual is expected to achieve or do at the end of a study (Bloom, 1956 as put forward later by Armstrong 2001). Units of learning outcomes fell into three possible categories or domains, they are: cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains. Learning outcomes can be achieved through the subjects taught in primary schools and these include Mathematics, English Language, Music, Physical and Health Education, Social Studies. Bloom's Taxonomy is frequently used by teachers in writing learning outcomes as it provides a readymade structure and list of verbs. Bloom was a gifted teacher who carried out his research on the development of the levels of thinking during the learning process so that the correct learning outcomes can be achieved.

Social Studies is one of the core curriculum subject taught in Nigeria primary school and it is a vital instrument that inculcate good attitudes in learners, especially at the early stage of education; it is the study of man and his physical and social environment (Rakum, 2014). National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) provided the objectives of Social Studies to include: inculcation of national unity; inculcation of right type of values and attitude; training the mind in understanding the world around; and acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies (both mental and physical as an equipment to contribute to the development of the society).

The parent is the first and most important teacher in the life of the child and he/she is expected to play an active role in the early education of the child because it was believed that the parent and the child should grow together and have a befitting pre-school experience. The parent is expected to be supportive to the child socially, physically, mentally, emotionally, educationally (Epstein, 2001). The parents could be the mother or the father or both. The main idea about "motherhood" is that mothers are seen as the ultimate caregivers, they invest most if not all of their time on their children which sometimes affects their job. In this present era, "stays at home mothers" are not common; women are seen in

spending more time with children than men, they nurture, support emotional growth and stability of their children. There are fathers that spend more time with their children now compare to the past where fathers were basically the breadwinners and the mothers stayed at home to cook, clean and take care of the children. There are changes in the roles of the fathers, they participated more in parenting roles and taking on responsibilities such as bathing, dressing, feeding, changing diapers and communicating with the children (Rain and William, 2011). Parents are in the best position to provide some demonstrative and instructional materials for the children because they learn through play method. These playing materials may include balls, toys, Picture books, beads, blocks, figures, dolls, cars, puzzles, and slides (Frost, Wortham & Reifel, 2008). Parental involvement in the past indicated that regardless of family income or background, children whose parents are involved in their education are more likely to be academically sound, be promoted, attend school regularly, have better social skills and interaction, show improved behaviour, and adapt well to school environment (Henderson & Map, 2002). According to the National Network of Partnership Schools (2012), for parental involvement to be effective, it must be meaningfully integrated into the school's programs. The network developed a framework of six types of parental involvement that schools can use to guide their efforts. They are:

- Educating parents on their skills and knowledge,
- Communicating with parents about school programs, student progress and needs,
- Volunteering at school and community,
- Support children learning activities at home,
- Involve parents in school decisions making, and
- Collaborating with the community and agencies to provide resources and services for families and students (epstein, 2001).

Involvement of parent at home can include discussions about school activities and events, helping with homework, reading with children, knowing the parents of their child's friends while involvement of parents at school may include parents volunteering at school, attending parent/teacher conferencing, attending school plays and sporting events, Parent – Teacher Association (P.T.A) meeting (Rain and William, 2011). Levels of parental involvement in the child's education vary from one parent to another. Parental involvement is important to the educational success of young children (Epstein, 2005; NMSA, 2003). "Parents" could be the single parents, grand-parents, relative parents, non-relative parents and community parents. Most children have two main educators in their lives – their parents and their teachers. Parents are the first educator to their children. Children with parental involvement from early age have been found to have better learning outcomes particularly in terms of their cognitive development. Some educators believed that pupils are more successful when their parents are involved in their education (Darch, Miao & Shippen, 2004). It is widely recognized that parental involvement plays an essential role in a child's school life, when parents demonstrate an interest in their child's education, such child will flourish. Parental involvement is the level of participation that a parent has in the child's education such as helping their child's academically, communicating well with their child's teachers, assisting their children with assignment, and understanding their child's cognitive styles. It had been defined and measured in multiple ways which included activities that parents engaged in at home and at school and positive attitudes parents had towards their child's education, school and teacher (Epstein, 1996; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Kohl, Lengna & McMahon, 2000). Unfortunately, there are also some parents who are not directly involved in their child's education maybe because they are not educated or they did not value the same things that the school does for their children. Have this idea changed? Do they negatively affect their children's education? Recently, schools now open their doors wide to parents and welcome their ideas in the overcrowded classrooms of some public schools rather than ushering them out and agree to the view that parental involvement is one major way to bridge the gap of pupils learning outcomes. Many schools now engage in programs that increase parental involvement in schools such as games and sports, school-home activities, and different opportunities for volunteers (UNESCO, 2000). Parental involvement in a child's life had an effect on their cognitive, psychological, and emotional development. The way parents interact with their children would influence the outcome of their relationships with others, attitudes, academic performance, and psychosocial maturity. In addition, studies had shown that parents' affection, behavioural control, and psychological control would show the most influence on their children's internal and external problem or behaviours (Aunola & Nurmi, 2005).

### *1.1. Statement of the Problem*

The ultimate goal of any educational system in academic endeavour is promotion of success. To accomplish this task, all hands must be on deck. There are many factors causing pupils poor learning outcomes in lower primary schools; such as lack of qualified teachers in primary schools, unfavourable home environment, parental involvement (Maundu, 1980; Ndirangu, 2007). Lower primary class is important in grounding pupils in educational matters which affect them in their later years of schooling. Pupils would continue to get low scores in their subjects when they fail to adapt to the way of teaching and learning in schools (Baharin, 2000). The excellent performance of pupils in academic is as a result of parental involvement. Parental involvement on children's learning outcome had been shown to contribute to better academic scores. Low level of academic performance of pupils over the years had been the concern of stakeholders and researchers in education (Adeyemi & Adeyemi, 2013). However, in order to achieve better learning outcomes, the parents remain the major factor; hence this study.

### *1.2. Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study is to investigate the level of learning outcomes in Social Studies and the level of parental involvement of lower primary school pupils in Ondo State. The specific objectives are to:

- Investigate the level of learning outcomes of pupils in Social Studies in lower primary schools in Ondo State;
- Assess the level of parental involvement of lower primary school pupils in Ondo State.

### 1.3. Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- What is the level of learning outcomes of pupils in Social Studies in lower primary schools in Ondo State?
- What is the level of parental involvement of lower primary school pupils in Ondo State?

## 3. Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population for the study comprised all lower primary school pupils and parents in Ondo State. The sample size comprised 480 subjects made up of 240 parents and 240 pupils. The sample was selected using multistage sampling technique. Two Local Government Areas (LGAs) were selected from one sampled senatorial district using simple random sampling technique. Furthermore, two primary schools were selected from each of the two sampled LGAs using simple random sampling technique. From each of the two selected primary schools in the selected Local Government Areas (LGAs), 30 pupils each from two intact classes and 30 parents each were also selected. Two instruments were used to collect data for the study: Pupils' End of Term Exam Score in Social Studies (PETES) and Parental Interview Schedule (PIS). PETES was a performance that enabled the researcher to obtain the terminal performance of each pupil in Social Studies from school record. Pupils' performance in Social Studies per term was then summed up. Parent Interview Schedule (PIS) was used to collect data that measured parents' involvement in the learning outcomes of their wards. It contained two sections A and B. Section A contained items that deal with socio-demographic data of the parents while section B contained 22 items that measured the degree to which parents got involved in the learning activities of their children. PIS took on a Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree (4) to strongly disagree (1). Responses of the parents on these items were then summed together. The minimum and maximum scores obtainable in PIS were 22 and 88 respectively. Higher scores represent high level of involvement and vice versa. However, items 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 were reversed in scoring because they depict behaviour of less parental involvement. Parents whose scores ranged between 22- 44 were described as low level of involvement, 45-66 as moderate level of involvement and 67-88 as high level of involvement. The data obtained were subjected to a reliability test via internal consistence approach based on Cronbach's Alpha. Items on CSQ yielded a Cronbach's Alpha 0.62 while PIS yielded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.78. These values were found moderate enough for the instruments to be used in this study. The data collected were analyzed using appropriate descriptive (frequency counts and percentages) to determine the learning outcomes of primary school pupils and parental involvement in pupils learning outcomes.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Research Question 1: What Is the Level of Learning Outcomes in Social Studies of Lower Primary Schools in Ondo State?

To answer this question, the level of learning outcomes of primary school pupils in Social Studies were categorized into "Low", "Average" and "Below Average" level. In the study, the group average performance was 70 while the standard deviation was 14. Therefore, pupils with less than 70 scores were categorized as below average, pupils with 70-84 (i.e. 70 to 70 + 1SD) were categorized as average performance while pupils with 85 and above were categorized as above average level of performance. Data collected from the categorization were then analyzed with the use of frequency count and percentage and the results are as presented in Table 1

Level of Learning Outcome	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Below Average	115	47.9
Average	74	30.8
Above Average	51	21.3
Total	240	100.0

Table 1: Level of Learning Outcomes of Primary School Pupils in Social Studies

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 1 shows the learning outcomes of pupils in Social Studies in lower primary schools in Ondo State. It is shown in the table that out of the 240(100.0%) pupils that participated in this study, 115(47.9%) performed below average level of performance, 74(30.8%) had average level while 51(21.3%) of the pupils performed above average level of performance. It was shown from this result that 52.1% of the pupils had average and above level of performance.

#### 4.1.1. Research Question 2

What is the Level Parental Involvement of Lower Primary School Pupils in Ondo State?

To answer this question, the level of parental involvement in the learning outcomes of lower primary school pupils in Social Studies took on a Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree (4) to strongly disagree (1). In the study, the minimum and maximum scores obtainable in Parental Involvement Schedule (PIS) were 22 and 88 respectively. Higher scores represent high level of involvement and vice versa. However, items 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 were reversed in scoring because they depict behaviour of less parental involvement. Parents whose scores ranged between 22- 44 were

described as low level of involvement, 45-66 as moderate level of involvement and 67-88 as high level of involvement. Data collected from the categorization were then analyzed with the use of frequency count and percentage

Level of Parental Involvement	Score Range	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Low	22-44	-	-
Moderate	45-66	94	39.2
High	67-88	146	60.8
Total		240	100.0

Table 2: What Is The Level Parental Involvement of Lower Primary School Pupils in Ondo State?

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 2 shows the level of parental involvement of lower primary school pupils. None of them had low level of involvement in their child's learning outcome, 94(39.2%) had moderate level of involvement while 146(60.8%) had high level of involvement in the learning outcome of their children in lower primary schools. It is shown therefore from this result that the majority of the parents had high level of involvement in the learning outcome of their children in lower primary schools.

## 5. Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that majority of the pupils had average and above level of performance. Ways teachers can cope with the pupils' problem is to organize cooperative learning, through this they can develop to be self-regulated such as in 'scaffolding' (Vygotsky in Santrock, 2011). In scaffolding technique, teachers play bigger role at the beginning of lesson. The role of teacher is to explain, give guidance and monitor every pupil's work. But at the end of the lesson, when pupils have shown progress in understanding, and in doing school work, the teacher can now lessen the explanation and monitoring.

Other finding revealed that when parents are involved in their children's schools and education, children have good and standardized learning outcomes, improved behaviour at home and school, better social skills and adaptation to school (Hoover-Dampsey & Sandler, 1997). Moreover, the findings on the level of parental involvement are in agreement with Boethel's (2003) observation that there is a positive correlation between parental involvement and their socio-economic status. As succinctly argued by Taylor, Harris & Taylor, (2004), the belief underlying parental involvement need to be unmasked so as to enable school administrators and teachers come up with ways to involve this very important constituent of children's learning.

## 6. Conclusion

The findings of the study showed that pupils can perform well academically when parents are involved in the learning outcomes of their wards. Teachers and parents should work hand in hand to ensure that the learning outcomes of the pupils can be improved on. To this end, it would be productive if every parents and teachers take pupils learning outcomes as a serious matter. In the same vein, the higher the learning outcomes of the pupils, the better they become.

## 7. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations were made:

- Parents should be educated on the importance of lower primary school education so as to understand their involvement.
- Every school should be able to organize parent-teacher meetings to enable the parents to meet with the teachers and discuss problems affecting their children learning outcomes.
- Teachers should establish effective communication with parents in order to improve on the pupils learning outcomes.
- Schools should communicate guidelines to parents on how to help their children prepare for tests or quizzes.
- Parents should be educated on their roles as the first teacher to their children.

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