



Perceptions Of Parents On Overschooling At Primary Education Level In Private Primary Schools In Delta State

By

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Abstract

This study was carried out to find the perceptions of parents on over schooling in private primary schools in Ika Educational zone of Delta State. Three research questions and one hypothesis were formulated to guide the study. A purposive sampling technique was used in collecting data. The sample size consisted of two-hundred and eighty parents drawn from twenty private primary schools. A questionnaire was constructed by the researcher to measure the construct "parents' perceptions on over schooling of primary 1 and 2 school pupils in private primary school (PPOPSPS). Experts in measurement and Evaluation validated the instrument. The reliability Cronach alpha was 0.78. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that many parents are not aware or are ignorant of over-schooling of their children in lower primary schools. They agree on over-schooling in private primary schools but refused to accept overschooling as having negative influence on their children. It was therefore recommended that that government should monitor the operation of private primary school to ensure that educational principles are

maintained. Seminars should be organized by school heads, Teachers and parents on over schooling of the primary level of education.

Key Words: Overschooling, private primary schools, parents' perceptions, primary education level, civic servants parents, business men/women parents academic work

Introduction

The privatization of education occupies an increasingly large place in the education industry today. Education is seen as a dynamic instrument for development. In the 6th edition of the National Policy on Education, section 2, article 28, it states that "In addition to public schools government welcomes the establishment of Day care centres, Nursery, pre-primary and Junior secondary schools by voluntary agencies, communities and private individuals, provided the set minimum standard are met (FGN 2013) while private education refers to a type of education, privatization is a process that can be defined as the transfer of activities, assets and responsibilities from government to private individuals and agencies. Private primary schools are not operated by public authorities/ government but are controlled and managed whether for profit or not by private bodies such as Non-governmental organizations, (NGOs) religious bodies, special interest groups, foundations and business.

The unbridled proliferation of private primary schools had led to competition among this private education providers in many areas such as fees paying. Uniform, various programmes and above all the lesson teaching after the normal school hours. Staying at schools after the normal school hours has been a strategic employed by all the private primary schools. To them it seems is a way for boosting their quality in education and academic excellence. For parents leaving their children in school after normal school hours may be seen as way where children learn more.

Primary means first and the first stage of formal education primary education studies as a field of study has attracted much attention and concern from government, educationists and parents because this primary education level is most crucial and fundamental to Nigerians future educational stability. It serves as the springboard and

holds the key to the success or failure of the whole system of our education. Primary education plays vital roles in national development such as eradication of illiteracy by training the child to read and write, poverty reduction and character molding. Primary education is the stepping stone to every educational achievement. According to Akintude (2011) it is the foundation upon which all other levels of education are built, foundation we know is vital to building because the strength and durability depends on its foundation. Therefore primary education as a stepping stone for education achievement must receive the desired attention in order to achieve the expected objectives because education has the task to transform and prepare the human resource development for national development. Here primary education serves as the process of ensuring the development of the child and preparation for national development (Omotere 2011).

However, considering the importance of primary education in the future development of the child in particular and the nation at large, It becomes very crucial to examine the issue of over-schooling at this level of education. Over-schooling from existing professional literature usually draw on three criteria. From the economists view over-schooling is the decline in the relative to historically levels. According to Ibiam (2012) over-schooling could be said to defined as the condition of having a level of education higher than that required to adequately perform a specific job. Furthermore, Leuven and Oosterbeck (2011) perceived over-schooling as the difference between a worker's completed level of school and the level of schooling required for job the worker holds. The qualification of the worker exceed the level of job he is doing. In the context of this research over-schooling is considered in a very different perceptive.

Over-schooling to the researcher could be explained in relation to keeping children in school after the normal school hours as stipulated in the school's Time table for primary classes one and two. For the private school owners, the hours spent in schools after school hours spent in schools after school hours for lessons. As seen by Okonkwo 2014 over-schooling is a situation in which an individual has more education than required. Therefore on over-schooled primary school pupil in primary classes one

and two is one who has been schooled or been taught in a school beyond the level expected of him or her. This becomes mis-match to the child's development in education. It is required that children should be taught to their level of education.

As opined by Joshua (2012) over-schooling involves keeping young children back in schools compulsorily for extra teaching till 3-4pm. This is very contrary to any known learning principle or education stipulation. The hours the primary classes one and two pupils spend in school is too much for ages. The normal closing time for primary classes one and two between 12:30-1.00pm.

In Nigeria, over schooling can also be explained in the volume of assignment as homework these young children are being given to take home after the lesson hours. According to Ibiam and Aleke 2012 they observed over schooling in relation to work load given to young children. The teachers no longer consider the National policy on primary school education as it affects infant classes one and two.

Apart from teachers and private school owners being involved in over-schooling, the parents of the children are contributing to over-schooling of primary school pupils. Nowadays schools are seen as a place not only for learning but as a 'second home' for children. Parents would prefer that children being kept at school than staying with them at home. Parents when schools are on holidays often complain that their children are disturbing them and wished schools have resumed.

The increase in private primary schools in Nigerian and particularly in Ika Educational zone of Delta State is almost becoming a menace. Added to this, is the issue of over-schooling where young children in infant primary classes one and two ages 5-7 ages are made to stay in school till 4-5pm. There is a strong competition among the private providers of education at this level of education in many areas but most noticeable is the issue of lesson teaching after school hours. To them it could be a means of enforcing academic excellence. This trend is against educational principles for this level of education.

This study was carried out to determine the perceptions of parents on over-schooling of at primary school level in private primary schools in primary classes one and two.

Research Questions: The following research questions were formulated to guide this study.

1. What are the perceptions of parents on the private school owners keeping their children after school hours?
2. What are the parents perceptions on the assignments as home work given to the children even after the school lesson daily?
3. What are the perceptions of parents on the academic work of children at this level of education?

Hypothesis One: Civil servants and Business men/women parents do not differ significantly on the influence of over-schooling on the children at this level of education.

Research Methodology

The study was carried out using a descriptive survey design. Survey design is one which involves the assessment of public opinion using questionnaire and sampling method. Again the design allows for the collection and analysis of data from few people considered to be a representative sample who will express their view through the use of questionnaire.

The population of the study comprised of all parents whose children attended the selected private primary schools in Ika Educational zone of Delta State. The sample consisted of (280) two hundred and eighty parents who were purposively selected from the target population of parents whose children are in primary one and two level of education. These are the parents whose children are in primary one and two level of education. The respondents were made up of parents who were civil servants and business men and women. Fourteen private primary schools were selected from Agbor

metropolis and seven schools from each of the Local Government Area that made up the Educational zone to ensure equal representation.

The instrument used for data collection was a researcher designed questionnaire modified on a four (4) point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA) 4 point, Agree (A) 3 point, Disagree 2 points and strongly Disagree (SD) one point. The research instrument which was titled 'Parents' perceptions on over-schooling by primary 1 and 2 school pupils in private primary schools (PPOSPS). The instrument consisted of two sections included the following: Section A: This is made up of Bio-Data of parents. Section B The section measured the perceptions of parents on over schooling of primary schools pupils in primary one and two known as the infant classes.

The items were validated by experts in measurement and evaluation department of the College. It was first administered on fifty respondents in other private primary school not part of the study in order to determine its reliability. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach alpha reliability method. The index of reliability obtained was 0.78 showing evidence of internal consistency of the instrument, is high enough for it to be used for this study.

The instrument was administered with the help of research assistants. Two hundred and eighty copies were administered but two- hundred and forty four copies were returned. Means scores (\bar{X}) and standard deviation (SD) were used for data analysis for research questions and t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

The criterion mean value of 2.5 was used to determine acceptance while values below 2.5 showed rejection. The criterion mean (X) was obtained using the formula.

SA = 4

A = 3 = $\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.5.$

D = 2

SD = 1

Results

Research question one: What are the perceptions of parents on the private school owners keeping their children to attend lessons after normal school hours?

Table 1: Mean scores of parents perceptions of parents on the private school owners keeping their children to attend lessons after normal school hours

| S/N | Items | Mean | SD |
|-----|---|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | Primary school pupils in classes 1-3 staying for lessons after school hours is not necessary for academic reasons | 2.66 | 1.00 |
| 2 | Primary school pupils in classes 1-3 are too young to be kept long hours after school for lessons | 2.86 | 1.03 |
| 3 | Children do not learn but only interact with friends and classmates as they wait for closing time | 2.27 | 0.06 |
| 4 | Children are kept in school after for the benefit of parents | 2.63 | 1.20 |
| 5 | Keeping young children after normal school period for lessons is more beneficial financially to school owners. | 3.41 | 0.82 |
| | | 3.16 | 1.02 |

Table 1 shows the mean scores on the perceptions of parents on private school owners keeping children to attend lessons after normal school hours. Items 1,2,4 and 5 mean scores were above bench mark of 2.50 while items 3 only was below the bench mark of 2.50. Hence the Perceptions of the parents are as follows: Primary school public in classes 1-3 staying beyond normal school hours has not academic benefit, and that they are too young for such over-studying. However, the children staying in school

beyond normal hours is of benefit to them. The schools make financial benefit and this is their main focus.

Research Question Two: What are parents' perceptions on the assignments as homework given to the children even after the school lessons daily?

Table 2: Mean scores of parents perceptions on the assignments as homework given to the children even after the school lessons daily.

| S/N | Items | Mean | SD | |
|-----|--|------|------|----------|
| 1 | Too much assignments for homework after lesson hours help children to develop good study habit | 2.63 | 1.20 | Agree |
| 2 | Children do not need too much homework to succeed at this level | 2.35 | 1.26 | Disagree |
| 3 | Most homework are too demanding for the children's age | 2.43 | 0.36 | Disagree |
| 4 | Too much homework is good to prevent children from much playing | 2.86 | 1.03 | Agreed |
| 5 | Doing too much home work prevent children from learning simple home chores | 2.20 | 1.23 | Disagree |

Table 2 shows the means of scores of parents perceptions on the assignments as homework given to children even after the school lessons daily. Items 1 and 4 means scores were above the bench mark of 2.50 while items 2,3, and 5 were below the bench mark of 2.50. Hence parents are of the opinion that too much assignment as homework after school daily lessons may not be necessary. But there of the opinion that home work occupies the pupil which is seen as academic practice which make pupils succeed.

Research question three:

What are the perceptions of parents on the academic work of children at this level?

Table 3: mean scores on the perceptions of parents on the academic work of children at this level.

| S/N | Items | Mean | SD |
|-----|---|------|------------------|
| 1 | Children in primary classes 1-2 should be taught according to their level | 2.38 | 1.07 Disagree |
| 2 | Children should be allowed to play instead of being constrained to long hours of learning after school hours. | 2.66 | 1.00 Disagree |
| 3 | The instruction given to children during normal school hours are just enough for their age | 2.27 | 0.96 Disagree |
| 4 | Most times academic work given to children is too high for them at this age is good | 3.66 | 1.00 agree |
| 5 | Children need to be taught things higher than their age for academic excellences | 3.63 | 1.20 Agree |

Table 3, shows the means of parents perceptions on the academic work of children at this level of education. Items 1 and 3 had means of 2.38 and 2.27 while items 2,4 and 5 means were 2.66, 3.66 and 3.63 respectively. Pupil should learn more through assignments beyond school hours, and should learn more things higher than their age Pupils are not taught enough ding normal school labours

Hypothesis one: Civil servant and Business men/women parents do not differ significantly in their opinions of over-schooling on the children at this level of education.

Table 4: T-test analysis on influence of over-schooling of children at this level of education with respect to parents' occupation.

| Parents' occupation | N | Mean | SD | Df | t-cal | Significant | Decision |
|-----------------------------|-----|------|------|------|-------|-------------|----------|
| Civil servants parents | 154 | 2.52 | 3.42 | | | | |
| | | | | 2.42 | 3.34 | .00 | Reject |
| Business men/ women parents | 90 | 2.33 | 3.37 | | | | |

Table 6 shows that the mean score of civil servants parents on influence of over schooling of children at the level of education is 2.52 (SD = 3.42) and the Business men/women opinion mean score is 2.33 (SD. 3.73).

Table 6 reveals that the calculated t-value of 3.34 (df – 242) was found significant at 0.05 level of significant. The null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore civil servants and business men/women parents differ significantly on the influence of over-schooling on their children at this level of education.

Discussion

The issue of over-schooling at the primary school level of education looks like a new subject to parents. For them the lessons their children/ wards attend after normal school hours look advantageous to them as parents than even to the school proprietors or proprietresses

On the hours children stay at schools for lesson, parents agree that children are too young but they support their staying back at school as a way of keeping the children safe. This in line with the finding with Okonkwo (2014)

Another finding of this study was that parents agreed that home work given to children enhances their academic excellence and study habit despite their ages. This is

contrary to the findings to Bennett and Kalish (2006) who discovered that much homework harm children's health and family time.

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On the hours children stay at school for lesson, parents agreed that children are too young but they support their staying back at school as a way of keeping the children safe. This is in line with the finding of Okonkwo (2014) where parents opined that children staying back at school till the parents collect them at the end of their day's work or business help for the children's safety and security.

Although primary school pupils in classes 1-3 staying beyond normal school hours has not academic benefits, and that they are too young for such over-staying but the schools make financial benefit and this is their main focus.

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The result of level of academic work given to children at this level revealed that parents want their children to be occupied and involved in higher level of academic work load. But this is over schooling and contrary to the provision of the national policy on education for pupils in infant class of primary school. The parents are also ignorant of this provisions.

On the influence of over-schooling in the children at this level of education, finding revealed that parents saw notting wrong in their children being kept in school for lessons, given homework and taught above their level. To them it a means of

academic advancement. This could explain the mad-rush of pupils through the private primary school and increasing patronizing of private primary school which is often seen as better than public primary schools. This finding is his with the study of Okonkwo (2014). Who found that parents disagree on influence of over schooling on their children.

Conclusion

Over schooling have come to stay in Nigeria, especially in private primary schools. Most parents today see privates primary schools as the best for their children in terms of teaching and welfare. Private primary school provide a better education through lesson teaching. But it is pertinent to mention that parents could be ignorant of the influence of over-schooling on young children in primary classes one and two. Schools should ensure a conducive atmosphere and strictly follow educational principles and law governing primary school education in Nigeria.

Recommendations

From the findings of this study the following recommendations are made:

First, government should ensure that private school owners follow educational principles and laws in operation of their schools.

Second the supervisory department of the ministry of education in charge of maintaining standards should do their work efficiently and effectively in private and public schools.

Third, Parents Teacher Association attendance should be made compulsory for all parents so that parents can be made part of the decision making body of the schools.

Fourth Seminars should be organized to teach parents the effects of over-schooling on children in lower primary classes one and two

Fifth, Ministry of Education should organise seminars for school Heads, teachers on the issues of over-schooling.

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