

THE ROLE OF LEARNERS AS A DETERMINANT FACTOR FOR QUALITY EDUCATION IN BAUCHI STATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS - NIGERIA

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Abstract: This study was carried out to determine the “The Role of Learners as a Determinant Factor for Quality Education in Bauchi State primary schools.” This study employed T- test statistics and mean in analyzing the data collected. The population for the research constituted teaching staff drawn from lower basic primary schools of 2013/14 Academic session. Altogether, 180 teaching staff were randomly selected and used out of the 18 selected primary schools of the state. Information were obtained through school interview and questionnaires. The findings of the study revealed that most Primary School Pupils cannot read, write nor communicate effectively in English language. They tend to have non-challant attitude toward studies. In short, they don't have the spirit of hard-study habit. All these accredited to poor quality education in primary schools of the state.

Keywords: Learners, factor, Quality Education and Primary Schools.

Introduction

It is imperative to note that learning is much more than memory. For perfect learning to have taken place, learners should be able to apply whatever knowledge acquired in solving practical problems in the society. In fact, one of the most vital principles of learning is that teachers cannot just offer students knowledge. Learners must struggle to construct knowledge on their own effort. The teachers can only facilitate this progression by teaching in ways that will build information meaningful and relevant to the learners by motivating them to consciously employ their own strategies for learning, which could be through hard-study, hard- work and self determination. The learners should therefore be able to discover and transform complex information themselves.

Objectives

This study aimed at:

1. Examining the status of primary school pupils towards qualitative education in Bauchi State.

2. Motivating learners to inculcate the spirit of hard-study habit towards qualitative education.
3. Proffering possible solutions and suggestion to the problems identified.

Research Questions

1. Can the primary school pupils read, write and communicate effectively in English?
2. Do they attend school consistently?
3. Do the school pupils have the spirit of hard – study habit?

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between the urban and rural primary school teachers on the learners' study habit as a determinant factor for quality education in Bauchi state primary schools.

Significance of the Study

This study will be of great importance to, policy planners and stakeholders in taking appropriate measures towards improving quantitative and qualitative primary education in Bauchi state. In addition, the study will be of great importance to teachers, parents in motivating school pupils to inculcate the spirit of hard-study habit towards ensuring qualitative education in schools.

Methodology

In this study, the researcher adopted two methods: Questionnaire and Interview. The target population of this research consist primary school teachers and Head teachers in Bauchi state. Considering the size of the population and the time frame, eighteen primary schools were selected for sampling, ten in each of the selected schools. They were randomly selected. Altogether, a total number of 180 questionnaires were distributed with the help of some teaching staff. The researcher conducted verbal interview with the few purposively selected teaching staff who voluntarily participated in the exercise for further verification and confirmation of data. The data collected were then analyzed and presented using Mean and t-test statistical data.

Related Literature

Quality Learners:

School systems work with the children who come to them. The quality of children's lives before beginning formal education greatly influences the kind of learners they can be. Many elements go into making a quality learner, including good health, early childhood experiences and home support.

(i) Good Health and Nutrition:

“Physically and psychosocially healthy children learn well. Healthy development in early childhood, especially during the first three years of life, plays an important role in providing the basis for a healthy life and a successful formal school experience”, (McCain & Mustard, 1999). Adequate nutrition is critical for normal brain development in the early years, and early detection and intervention for disabilities can give children the best chances for healthy development. Prevention of infection, disease and injury prior to school enrolment are also critical to the early development of a quality learner.

(ii) Early Childhood Psychosocial Development Experience

Positive early experience and interactions are also vital to preparing a quality learner. A large study in 12 Latin American countries found that attendance at day care coupled with higher level of parental involvement that includes parents reading to young children is associated with higher test scores and lower rates of grade repetition in primary school (Willms, 2000). “Evidence from the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Turkey, and has shown that children who participate in early intervention programs do better in primary school than those who do not benefit from formal early child programs, and studies from India, Morocco and Latin America demonstrate that disadvantaged children benefit the most from such programs”, (UNICEF, 1998). In addition to cognitive effects the benefits of Good early childhood programs include better psychosocial development. Effective and appropriate stimulation in a child’s early years influences the brain development necessary for emotional regulation, arousal, and behavioral management. “A child who misses positive stimulation or is subject to chronic stress in the pre-school years may have difficulty with psychosocial development later in life”, (McCain & Mustard, 1999, UNICEF 2000). A high level of quality in early childhood development programs can be achieved when health and nutrition components are combined with structured psychosocial development in the pre-school years.

(iii) Regular Attendance of Learning:

When they reach school age, research demonstrates that to achieve academically, children must attend school consistently. A child’s exposure to curriculum – his or her ‘opportunity to learn’ – significantly influences achievement, and exposure to curriculum comes from being in school (Fuller et al., 1999). A study of village-based schools in Malawi found that students with higher rates of attendance had greater learning gains and lower rates of repetition, a finding consistent with many other studies (Miske, Dowd et’ al, 1998).

(iv) Family Support for Learning:

Parents may not always have the tools and background to support their children's Cognitive, psycho social development through their school years. Parents' level of education, for example, has a multifaceted impact on children's ability to learn in school. "In one study, children whose parents had primary school education or less were more than three times as likely to have low test scores or grade repetition than children whose parents had at least some secondary schooling", (Willms, 2000). "Parental education not only influences parent-child interactions related to learning, but also affects parents' income and need for help in the home or field – help that often comes at the expense of keeping Children in school", (Carron & Chau, 1996, UNICEF 2000). Parents with little formal education may also be less familiar with the language used in the school, limiting their ability to support learning and participate in school-related activities.

"The effect of schools in poor areas can often out weight the impact of family background and practices". (Fuller, et'al, 1999). Further, although many constraints exist, schools can play a role in helping parents to enhance the 'home curriculum' and improve the quality of parental involvement in their children's education. Strategies include, for example, partnering with organizations that can affect parenting in the pre-school years such as public health providers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); asking parents to participate in assessment of their child's progress, offering clear, regular, non-threatening communication; and including parents in decision-making groups at the school (Redding, 2000). Successful attempts to increase parental involvement have taken place around the world. One example is the creation of student newspapers in China. "Such newspapers exist at different levels of the education system and in urban as well as rural zones. The result is that, much more than in other countries, pupils and parents have the possibility to read, which is of benefit in particular to the otherwise disadvantaged rural families", (Carron & Chau, 1996, UNICEF 2000). Other forms of family literacy programs have focused on particular aspects of parental involvement. In Sri Lanka, for example, "an eight-week program that sought to improve the literacy skills of low-income, undereducated mothers found that the mother's capacities to help develop their children's language competencies increased, especially in the areas of listening and speaking", (Dharmadasa, 1996). In sum, the home curriculum seems to play a vital role in preparing quality learners for school. Healthy children with positive early learning experiences and supportive, involved parents are thus most likely to succeed in school. Quality teachers need similar support for their tasks in schools. Another essential ingredient for a successful educational system is a quality learning environment.

Means and standard deviations of responses on the learners study habits in the process of teaching and learning in Bauchi State primary schools.

Item No	Item statement	N	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Primary schools pupils attend schools consistently.	180	2.3	1.4	Disagree
2	School pupils often live on nutritional food.	180	2.3	1.4	Disagree
3	School pupils are always ready and interesting in learning.	180	2.5	1.4	Disagree
4	They don't have the spirit of hard-studying	180	3.7	1.3	Agree
5	Most of them can read, write and communicate effectively.	180	2.4	1.2	Disagree
6	Promotion is not purely based on merits and performance.	180	3.7	1.3	Agree
7	School promotes positive values and attitude to the pupils.	180	3.6	1.5	Agree
8	School promotes emotional and psycho-social development of pupils.	180	3.9	1.2	Agree
	Grand Mean		3.0		Agree

Note: N = number of samples, SD = Standard Deviation

The above table depicted the means and standard deviations of responses of primary school teachers on the learners study habits in teaching and learning process in Bauchi state primary schools. The Mean ranges on each item from 2.3 to 3.9. A mean of 3.0 and above indicates a high degree of agreement in the responses, while below 3.0 indicates disagreement on a statement. The standard deviation on each item ranges from 1.2 to 1.5 showing closeness in the responses of the respondents.

Respondents agreed with the statements that school pupils don't have the spirit of hard-studying habits (Mean= 3.7, SD= 1.3); promotion is not purely based on merit and performance (Mean= 3.7, SD= 1.3); schools promote positive values and attitude to the pupils (Mean = 3.6, SD = 1.5); and schools promote emotional and psycho-social development of pupils (Mean = 3.9, SD = 1.2).

However, the primary school teachers in Bauchi state disagreed on the following as par the study habits of their pupils in the schools as follows: primary schools pupils attend schools consistently (Mean= 2.3, SD= 1.4); school pupils often live on nutritional food (Mean= 2.3, SD= 1.4); school pupils are always ready and interesting in learning (Mean= 2.5, SD= 1.4) and most of the pupils can read, write and communicate effectively (Mean=2.4, SD = 1.2).

According to Fuller et'al (1999) – “A study of village – based schools in Malawi found that students with high rates of attendance had greater learning gains and lower rates of repetition. Critical observation on these means and standard deviations, the values are very close showing the closeness in the respondents’ responses.

T-test analysis of mean responses of urban and rural primary school teachers on the learners study habits in teaching and learning process as a determinant factor for quality education in Bauchi state primary schools.

Group	N	\bar{X}	SD	t_cal.	df	p-value	Decision
Urban	90	2.91	1.56	0.47	1.96	0.05	NS
Rural	90	3.08	1.54				

Key: \bar{x} = Mean; SD = Standard deviation; N = Number of Male and Female primary school teachers; df = Degree of Freedom; p-value = level of significance; NS = Not Significant.

The above table showed t-test analysis of the mean responses of urban and rural primary school teachers on the learners study habits in teaching and learning process as a determinant factor for quality education in Bauchi state primary schools. It also revealed the mean and standard deviation (SD) scores of urban primary school teachers (Mean = 2.91, SD = 1.56) and rural primary school teachers (Mean = 3.08; SD =1.54) respectively. The t-calculated value is 0.47, which is lesser than the critical-t-/p-value 0.05 level of significance at 1.96 degree of freedom. This indicates that the urban and rural primary school teachers did not differ significantly on their opinions on the learners study habits in teaching and learning process as a determinant factor for quality education in Bauchi state. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the Mean ratings of urban and rural primary school teachers on the learners study habits in teaching and learning process as a determinant factor for quality of education in Bauchi state.

The stated Hypothesis was accepted as it was confirmed that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female primary school teachers on the learners study habits in the process of teaching and learning as a determinant factor for quality education in Bauchi state primary schools.

Educational Implications and Recommendation

Based on the results obtained from the respondents on the learners' study habits in the process of teaching- learning process, it was discovered that most primary school pupils don't attend school consistently; they tend to have negative attitude towards studies thus, most of them cannot read, write nor communicate effectively in English language been the medium of instruction in schools. It is therefore recommended that school pupils should be allowed to develop and grow in school environments that are supportive and at the same time challenging which nurtures them to become confident, have good self- esteem and willing to strive forward, yet, at the same time feel a sense of responsibility towards others in their community. Demotion should be re- introduced in primary schools in order to compelled school pupils develop the spirit of hard- study habits as many people excel in life as a result of hard- work, hard- study and determination.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to determine the "The Role of Learners as a Determinant Factor for Quality Education in Bauchi State primary schools" with reference to eighteen selected primary schools representing the entire state. In terms of the learners' study habits in the process of teaching and learning, the following were identified: Primary schools pupils do not attend schools consistently, they don't live on nutritional food, most of them can't read write nor communicate effectively in English, they are not always ready and interesting in learning, they don't have the spirit of hard- studying habit. In fact, only few of them can read, write and communicate effectively. In conclusion, based on the findings from the study, the null hypothesis framed is accepted because the results revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of both urban and rural primary school teachers on the learners' study habits in teaching – learning process as a determinant factor for quality education in Bauchi state primary schools.

It is therefore hoped that the findings and recommendations made in this study will be given adequate attention by those concern towards ensuring qualitative education considering the role education plays in nation building and the entire society at large.

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